



First Free News

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Visit our Web Site

www.firstfreechurch.org

Do You Know Who Christ Is?

Written by Pastor Joel Sutton

Richard Baxter wrote, "The Heart of the Gospel is to know God." The problem is that so many times our picture of God is warped. It is inaccurate. It is wrong.

And when our concept of who Christ is and what He has done for us is wrong, our response to Him is also mistaken. It is very difficult to yield your life to someone whom you do not know properly!

Jesus in his first two years of ministry taught the disciples who He was. In Mark 8:27 Jesus asked them, "Who do people say I am?" They gave the responses of the crowds, "John the Baptist, Elijah, and one of the prophets." Jesus then asks, "Who do you say I am?" and Peter responds, "You are the Christ."

Following this incident, Jesus then began to teach his

disciples what being the Christ, the Messiah, meant.

Misconceptions about the person of Christ still abound today. Jesus' claim that He is the only way to salvation doesn't go over well in our world. Everything about Jesus is questioned—including His birth.

As we come into this Christmas season, we



need to review our concept of Christ. The idea of the Messiah, the Son of God, coming to earth as a small, helpless infant is humbling. It takes a step of faith.

In those Characters of Christmas, those who surrounded this little baby boy, I witness true faith!

This month, during our Sunday morning worship services, I invite you to look with me at these characters and what they saw.

Come and get to know Christ all over again!

May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing . . .

Romans 15:13 (RSV)

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~ December Sermon Series — *The Characters of Christmas* ~

December 1	John the Baptist - <i>How Prepared Are You?</i>	Luke 3:1-18
December 8	Mary - <i>How Responsive Are You?</i>	Luke 1:26-38
December 15	Joseph - <i>How Desperate Are You?</i>	Matthew 18-25
December 22	Magi - <i>How Curious Are You?</i>	Matthew 2:1-12
December 24	The Shepherds - <i>How Surprised Are You?</i>	Luke 2:8 - 20
December 29	Anna - <i>How Faithful Are You?</i>	Luke 3:36-38



A Note from Pastor Eric

“But just as you abound in everything, in faith and utterance and knowledge and in all earnestness and in the love we inspired in you, see that you abound in this gracious work also.” - 2 Cor. 8:7 -

Have you ever been inspired by love? Over the course of the last three years I've had a couple of families that made an extra effort to care for me as I was finishing my grad school. I remember these families especially. After a snow fall one winter day, I headed through their town to a meeting. My car managed to veer onto the shoulder, only to find that the shoulder no longer existed! Fortunately, I ended up safely in a ditch, within walking distance of my meeting. Through the frustration, I remember Bob (the dad) walking me through the process

of getting the car freed from the ditch. These folks not only let me eat their food, but helped me out when I was stuck—quite literally!

While I was grateful for their support in those days, I feel a greater desire to give something now. As a missionary couple they are in need of financial support, and I know well their heart for people. I want to give a gift to those who've inspired me to love— and not just them, but others in the same way.

I imagine Paul was thinking of this type of response as he asked for help in 2 Corinthians 8. I take it as encouragement to remember



and enjoy those who have shown love to me this past year and to express that love as best I can—verbally, through gifts, hugs, time spent with others, or whatever communicates my love best. I am also challenged to let my heart grow as I participate in new “gracious works” even to folks from whom there may be no return.

What about you? How will your Christmas season go this year? Will you understand the depths of God's love for you, as seen in Christ's first coming? Will you communicate your love to many?

My hope and prayer is that we can “abound in this gracious work” of celebrating this season by loving God and others deeply —*Merry Christmas!*

Angel Tree—A Ministry of Prison Fellowship

What is “Angel Tree” to us?

An opportunity to minister to children and families of prisoners at Christmas.

An opportunity to meet families in need in our Southside neighborhood—to first meet their physical needs and then to be available to meet their spiritual needs.

- ◆ Prisoner's Kids could really use a Christmas Angel.
- ◆ You'd look great in wings!
- ◆ Adopt your angels by Sunday, December 1st.

What is the Timeline?

All angels spoken for by December 1st.

Unwrapped gifts purchased and ready for the Wrapping & Pizza Party after Sunday School on December 8th.

Deliver gifts the week of Christmas, Dec 20-24th.

Pick Up Your Angel

Following worship on November 24 and December 1st, you will be given an opportunity to “select” a child for whom you will purchase a gift (or gifts).

The maximum amount per gift is \$20, and each child will receive one “need” and one “want” gift.

Each angel represents one gift.

Socials, Socials, & More Socials

Youth Group

Saturday, December 18th
 Christmas Party
 6:30-8:30 PM at Church
 Call: Pastor Eric 612-827-4705

Sojourners Class

Saturday, December 7th
 Goldenman's Christmas Tree Farm
 Meet at Church at 10:00 AM
 Call: Lori Peterson 612-722-9793

Fidelis class

Friday, December 6th
 (More details will be shared during class)

Chaim Class

Saturday, December 7th, 5:00 PM
 Jon & Carrie Boyum's Home
 Potluck & White Elephant Gift
 Call: Vanessa Beckett 612-721-6885

Agape Class

Sunday, December 8th
 Timber Lodge Steakhouse
 Meet at Timber Lodge at 6:00 PM
 Call: Karin Olson 612-824-7691



Maranatha

Saturday, December 7th
 4:00 PM, Svenskarnas Dag
 Girls' Choir & Lutefisk Dinner
 Call: Marcia Hibst 952-997-6675



Holiday Schedule

December 1st

Last Sunday to pick up
your angel for *Angel Tree*

December 3rd

All ladies welcome
12:30 PM Women's Guild
Christmas Lunch

December 7th

4:00 PM
Svenskarnas Dag Girls' Choir
Concert & Dinner

December 8th

Angel Tree Gift Wrapping
& Pizza Party
Following Sunday School

December 15th

9:30 AM Choir Concert
A Christmas Tapestry
A perspective of Christ's birth
told by Mary and Joseph

December 16th

5:45 PM
Dinner & a Movie
Bring a friend or neighbor!

December 20-24th

Deliver Christmas gifts
To *Angel Tree* families

December 22nd

Children's Christmas Program
Journey to Bethlehem
During 9:30 AM Service

December 24th

4:30 PM
Christmas Eve Service
*Have a Christmas filled with the
love and joy of Christ!*