

Considering the Cradle

The Change In Relationship

We anticipate Changes in Life

- independence
- marriage
- children
- retirement

Our relationships change as Life changes

Cradle of Christ Signified A Major Change

Considering the Cradle

1. History and Holiness

- fall brought a separation
- *Rom. 3:23 “For all have sinned and fall short of the Glory of God.” Rom. 6:23 “The wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.”*
- Holiness of God created a gulf between mankind and God in relationship
- God initiated covenant relationship that permitted relationship

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- Gen 12 – call of Abraham
- Gen 17 – external mark of covenant
- Exodus 3 – Burning Bush – *“Do not come any closer, God said, Take off your sandals, for the place where you are standing is holy ground.”*
- Exodus 19:12 – *“Put limits for the people around the mountain and tell them, Be careful that you do not go up the mountain or touch the foot of it. Whoever touches it will surely be put to death.”*
- Distance between a Holy God and His people

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- Rules of Relationship Established – life in the Law
- Presence of God removed when covenant broken
 - Achan in Joshua 7
 - 1 Sam. 6:19 – 77 men die for looking in ark
- History marked God's presence in a location, His holiness separated people and God.

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2. Immanuel – God With Us!

- John 1:14 *“The word became flesh and made his dwelling among us. We have seen his glory, and the glory of the One and Only who came from the father, full of grace and truth.”*

- John 1:1-5 - Jesus is God himself

- Mystery of the incarnation

- virgin birth

- God’s Son – redeemer

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- change in relationship with God
 - see the glory of God evidenced
 - hear the will of God related
 - experience the wonder of God
 - know the love of God
- Jesus established a change in our relationship
- move from law – external symbols, to grace – written on our hearts.

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3. Relationship Restored for Us!

- *“Therefore, there is no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus, because through Christ Jesus the law of the Spirit of life set me free from the law of sin and death. For what the law was powerless to do in that it was weakened by the sinful nature, God did by sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful man to be a sin offering.” Romans 8:3-4*

- 1 John 1:9 – forgiveness for sin – relationship with God

- Boldness to enter the presence of God

- Heirs and joint heirs with Christ

- Adopted as sons and daughters

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So What

1. God is Holy
2. God Sent His Son
3. Full Family Names and Privileges
4. We are Not Bound By Sin – free to live for Christ
5. This is what we celebrate, what our traditions should symbolize, what our focus needs to be.
6. What changes do you need to make when considering the cradle?