

With Us



A  
Christmas  
Message

## What's so Significant about Christmas?

Christmas is God's unmistakable declaration that he is serious about *being with* his people

- That God – a being of unsurpassed glory and wonder – would become one his creatures is astounding
  - Like... A potter becoming one of his pots or a human becoming a dung beetle
  - Phil 2:5-8... <sup>5</sup>Have this mind among yourselves, which is yours in Christ Jesus, <sup>6</sup>who, though he was in the form of God, did not count equality with God a thing to be grasped, <sup>7</sup>but emptied himself, by taking the form of a servant, being born in the likeness of men. <sup>8</sup>And being found in human form, he humbled himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross.

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- That God – a being of unsurpassed glory and wonder – would become one his creatures is astounding
- God created us to be in relationship with us and when sin separated us from him, he promised that he would fix it
- What is Christmas really about? Christmas is God coming through on his promise to do whatever it takes to be *with us*

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### John 1:9-17

<sup>9</sup> The true light, which gives light to everyone, was coming into the world. <sup>10</sup> He was in the world, and the world was made through him, yet the world did not know him. <sup>11</sup> He came to his own, and his own people did not receive him. <sup>12</sup> But to all who did receive him, who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God, <sup>13</sup> who were born, not of blood nor of the will of the flesh nor of the will of man, but of God.

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### John 1:9-17

<sup>14</sup> And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we have seen his glory, glory as of the only Son from the Father, full of grace and truth. <sup>15</sup> (John bore witness about him, and cried out, "This was he of whom I said, 'He who comes after me ranks before me, because he was before me.'") <sup>16</sup> For from his fullness we have all received, grace upon grace. <sup>17</sup> For the law was given through Moses; grace and truth came through Jesus Christ.

## A Tale of 3 Gardens

### 1. The Garden of Eden – God’s Original Design to be With Us

Gen 3:8-15... <sup>8</sup>Then the man and his wife heard the sound of the LORD God as he was walking in the garden in the cool of the day, and they hid from the LORD God among the trees of the garden. <sup>9</sup>But the LORD God called to the man, “Where are you?” <sup>10</sup>He answered, “I heard you in the garden, and I was afraid because I was naked; so I hid.” <sup>11</sup>And he said, “Who told you that you were naked? Have you eaten from the tree that I commanded you not to eat from?” <sup>12</sup>The man said, “The woman you put here with me—she gave me some fruit from the tree, and I ate it.” <sup>13</sup>Then the LORD God said to the woman, “What is this you have done?” The woman said, “The serpent deceived me, and I ate.”

## A Tale of 3 Gardens

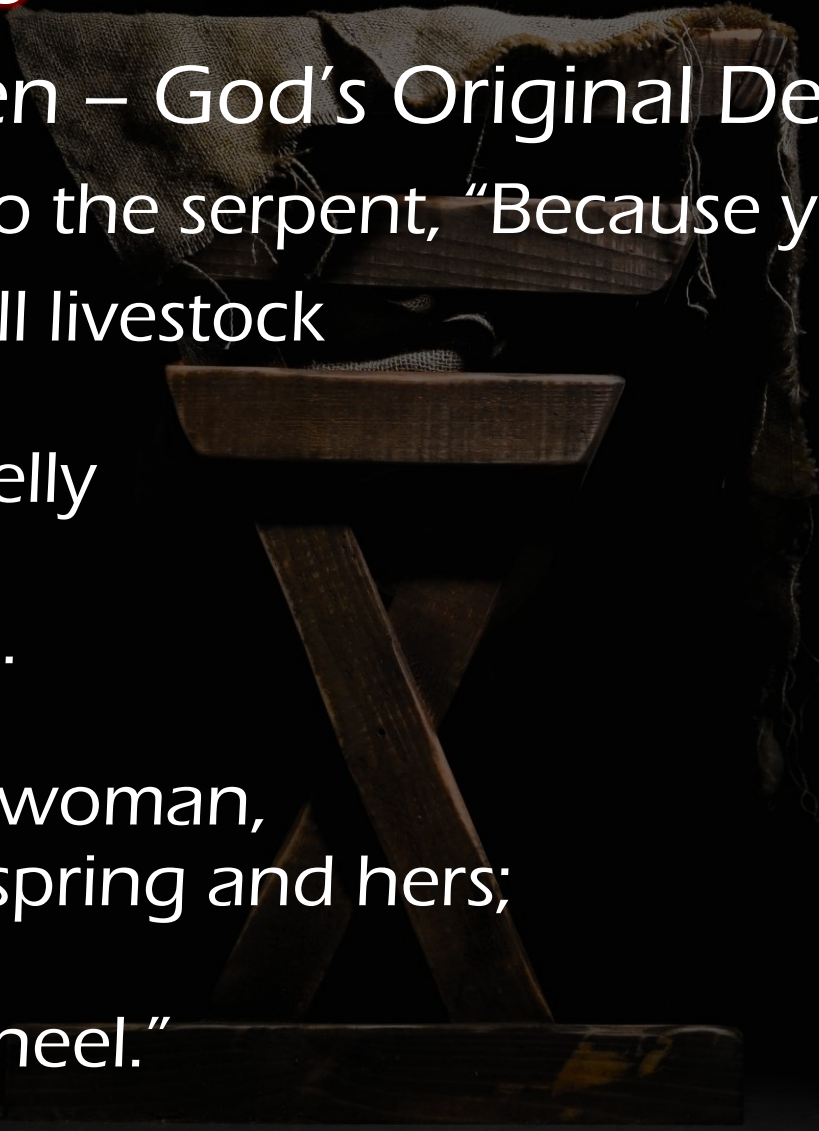
1. The Garden of Eden – God’s Original Design to be With Us

<sup>14</sup>So the LORD God said to the serpent, “Because you have done this,

“Cursed are you above all livestock  
and all wild animals!

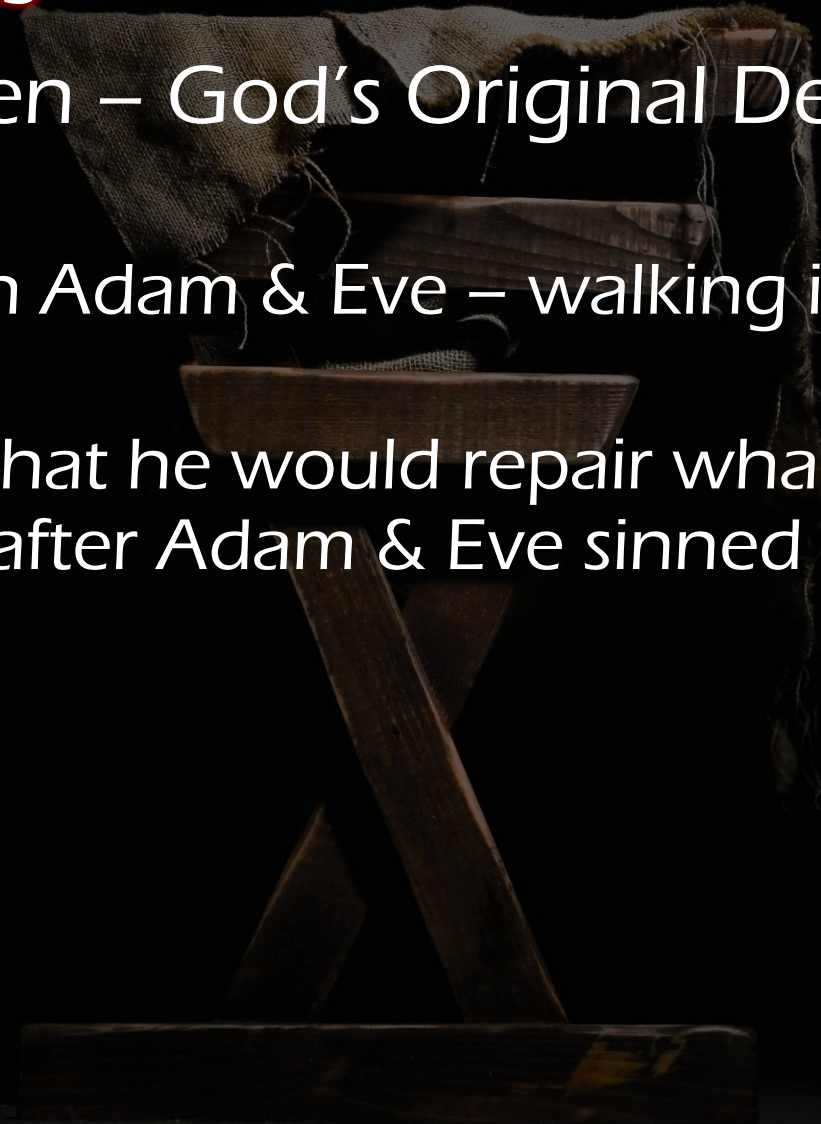
You will crawl on your belly  
and you will eat dust  
all the days of your life.

<sup>15</sup>And I will put enmity  
between you and the woman,  
and between your offspring and hers;  
he will crush your head,  
and you will strike his heel.”



## A Tale of 3 Gardens

1. The Garden of Eden – God’s Original Design to be With Us
  - Gen 3:8-15
  - God’s presence with Adam & Eve – walking in the garden in the cool of the day
  - God’s first promise that he would repair what had been broken is found immediately after Adam & Eve sinned (“crush your head” and “strike his heel”)





## A Tale of 3 Gardens

1. The Garden of Eden – God's Original Design to be With Us
2. The Garden of Gethsemane – God's Desire Tested
  - Jesus – God With Us – has been born, has lived a perfect and sinless life and is now in a very tense situation in another garden
  - It's dark and Jesus has gone to the garden with his friends to pray
  - He knows the hour has come, and he is submitting his will to the Father and readying himself for what is to come
  - The soldiers arrive and he is betrayed by his friend
  - The second garden is the scene of God's continued action to repair what was broken

## A Tale of 3 Gardens

1. The Garden of Eden – God’s Original Design to be With Us
2. The Garden of Gethsemane – God’s Desire Tested
3. The Garden of the Tree of Life – God’s Desire Fulfilled

Rev 21:1-4... Then I saw a new heaven and a new earth, for the first heaven and the first earth had passed away, and the sea was no more. <sup>2</sup>And I saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband. <sup>3</sup>And I heard a loud voice from the throne saying, “Behold, the dwelling place of God is with man. He will dwell with them, and they will be his people, and God himself will be with them as their God. <sup>4</sup>He will wipe away every tear from their eyes, and death shall be no more, neither shall there be mourning, nor crying, nor pain anymore, for the former things have passed away.”

## A Tale of 3 Gardens

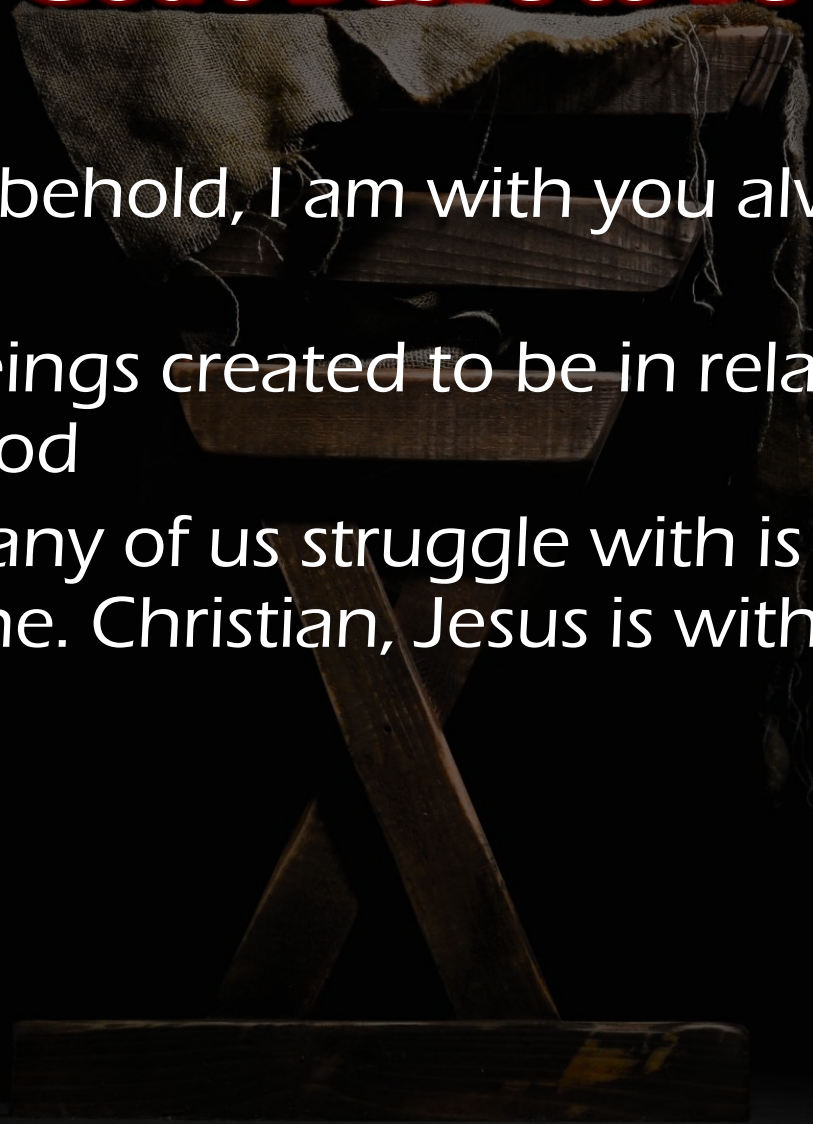
1. The Garden of Eden – God's Original Design to be With Us
2. The Garden of Gethsemane – God's Desire Tested
3. The Garden of the Tree of Life – God's Desire Fulfilled

Rev 22:1-5... Then the angel showed me the river of the water of life, bright as crystal, flowing from the throne of God and of the Lamb <sup>2</sup>through the middle of the street of the city; also, on either side of the river, the tree of life with its twelve kinds of fruit, yielding its fruit each month. The leaves of the tree were for the healing of the nations. <sup>3</sup>No longer will there be anything accursed, but the throne of God and of the Lamb will be in it, and his servants will worship him. <sup>4</sup>They will see his face, and his name will be on their foreheads. <sup>5</sup>And night will be no more. They will need no light of lamp or sun, for the Lord God will be their light, and they will reign forever and ever.

## The Implications of God's Desire to Be WITH US...

### 1. You are not alone

- Matt 28:20b... "And behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age."
- We are relational beings created to be in relationship with one another and with God
- The great lie that many of us struggle with is that you are all alone, but you are *not* alone. Christian, Jesus is with you!



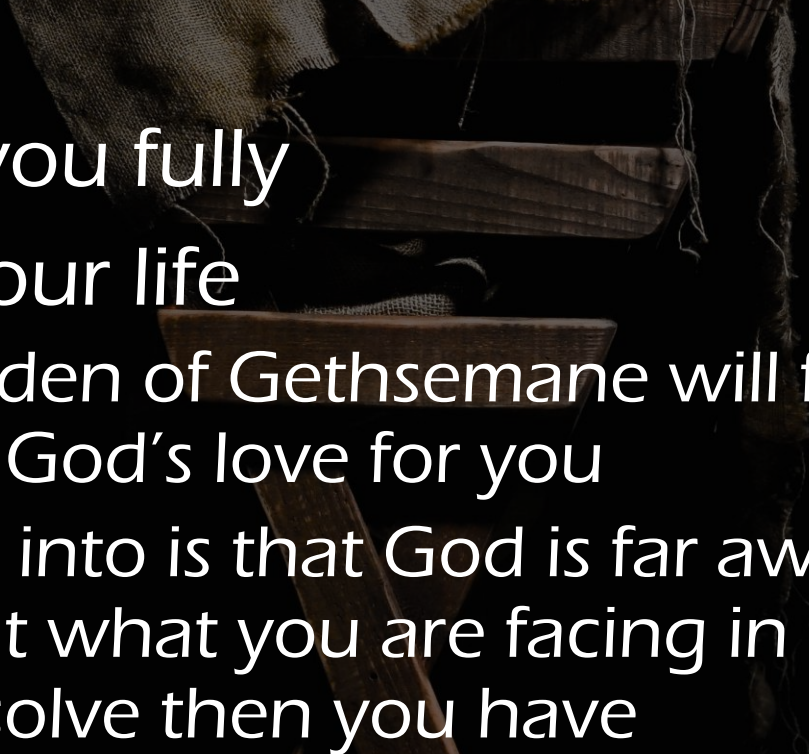
## The Implications of God's Desire to Be WITH US...

1. You are not alone

2. God understands you fully

- Heb 4:14-17... <sup>14</sup>Since then we have a great high priest who has passed through the heavens, Jesus, the Son of God, let us hold fast our confession. <sup>15</sup>For we do not have a high priest who is unable to sympathize with our weaknesses, but one who in every respect has been tempted as we are, yet without sin. <sup>16</sup>Let us then with confidence draw near to the throne of grace, that we may receive mercy and find grace to help in time of need.
- The lie we face continually in difficult days is that no one understands you; know one knows what you're going through

## The Implications of God's Desire to Be WITH US...

1. You are not alone
  2. God understands you fully
  3. God cares about your life
    - The scene in the garden of Gethsemane will forever shout the incredible weight of God's love for you
    - The lie we often buy into is that God is far away and doesn't care about you and about what you are facing in life. After all, he has bigger problems to solve than you have
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## The Implications of God's Desire to Be WITH US...

1. You are not alone
2. God understands you fully
3. God cares about your life
4. God is preparing a place for you so that you can be with him
  - John 14:1-4... "Let not your hearts be troubled. Believe in God; believe also in me. <sup>2</sup>In my Father's house are many rooms. If it were not so, would I have told you that I go to prepare a place for you? <sup>3</sup>And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and will take you to myself, that where I am you may be also. <sup>4</sup>And you know the way to where I am going."