

Sunday, December 18, 2022— Immanuel, the Light of the World, & These Earthen Vessels

Feast of Tabernacles and the Birth of Christ

- In Leviticus 23 Moses records the Feasts of the Lord that Israel is supposed to follow each year. The 7th and final feast in Israel’s calendar of redemption was the Feast of Tabernacles.
- Leviticus 23:33-43—this feast was to begin on the 15th day of the seventh month. So the feast of tabernacles was the 7th feast to be observed in the 7th month for 7 days.
- According to verses 40-42, Israel was supposed to build makeshift structures or “booths” and dwell or live in them for seven days. The purpose of the feast was designed to depict the day when God would come and tabernacle or dwell with and among Israel.
 - Nehemiah 8:17—from the days of Joshua down to the time of Nehemiah, the fest of tabernacles had never once been kept.
- The typology of the feast was partly fulfilled though not completely when Christ was born. Through the virgin birth the incarnation or God made flesh could be accomplished. The result of the process was that the son born to the virgin would be Emmanuel, God with us.
- One of the titles of Christ that you frequently hear discussed this time of year is Emmanuel. The titled Emmanuel comes from two Biblical passages that speak to the core meaning of Christmas.
 - Isaiah 7:14—a virgin with child would result in the birth of a son whose name was to be called Immanuel.
 - Matthew 1:23—here we learn what Emmanuel means, “God with us.” It was through the means of the virgin’s womb that God came down to be with us.
 - John 1:1-3, 14—“. . . the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us. . .”
 - Hebrews 2:9-14
 - Philippians 2:5-8
- Matthew 1:23—through the virgin’s womb God incarnated himself in human flesh. Jesus Christ truly was “Emmanuel” God come down to live with us.

Light of the World

- John 9:4-5—as long as Christ was in the world, he was the light of the world. When Christ was out of the world “night” would ensue.

- Acts 1:9-11—Jesus Christ is currently not in the world. He is seated at the right hand of God.
 - Ephesians 1:20-23
- Romans 13:12—Paul writing to the Romans before the close of the Acts period speaks of the “night” as already being “far spent.” The entire dispensation of grace has transpired under the cover of darkness.
- Colossians 1:13—in the absence of Jesus Christ this world is run by the “power of darkness.” As believers we know in our hearts and can feel in our souls that all is not right with this world. When we look around us the darkness seems to be deepening, quickening, and expanding its reach. Fundamental truths and things once taken for granted are being thrown down and trampled underfoot. Many are struggling to keep going. Consider the following conversation between Frodo and Sam from [Lord of the Rings](#).
 - Frodo : I can’t do this, Sam.

Sam : I know.

It’s all wrong

By rights we shouldn’t even be here.

But we are.

It’s like in the great stories Mr. Frodo.

The ones that really mattered.

Full of darkness and danger they were,
and sometimes you didn’t want to know the end.

Because how could the end be happy.

How could the world go back to the way it was when so much bad happened.

But in the end, it’s only a passing thing, this shadow.

Even darkness must pass.

A new day will come.

And when the sun shines it will shine out the clearer.

Those were the stories that stayed with you.

That meant something.

Even if you were too small to understand why.

But I think, Mr. Frodo, I do understand.

I know now.

Folk in those stories had lots of chances of turning back only they didn’t.

Because they were holding on to something.

Frodo : What are we holding on to, Sam?

Sam : That there’s some good in this world, Mr. Frodo. And it’s worth fighting for.

God's Treasure in Earthen Vessels

- There is nothing God about the world but there is still good in this world and it worth fighting for.
- II Corinthians 4:6-7—God has hidden his treasure in these earthen vessels i.e., in us the members of the body of Christ. God has reached into the darkness and shined the light of Jesus Christ into our hearts.
 - Ephesians 5:8, 13-14
- II Corinthians 4:8-11—we have the capacity to manifest the life of Christ in our mortal flesh in the midst of the darkness all around us.
- There is still good in this world. It is the goodness that Christ has placed within every member of the body of Christ. Jesus is still “Emmanuel,” He is still “God with us” in these earthen vessels.
- II Corinthians 5:1—God has tabernacled with us.
 - II Corinthians 6:16
- II Corinthians 4:12-18
- How Deep The Father's Love Us

How deep the Father's love for us
 How vast beyond all measure
 That He should give His only Son
 To make a wretch His treasure
 How great the pain of searing loss
 The Father turns His face away
 As wounds which mar the Chosen One
 Bring many sons to glory

Behold the man upon a cross
 My sin upon His shoulders
 Ashamed, I hear my mocking voice
 Call out among the scoffers
 It was my sin that held Him there
 Until it was accomplished
 His dying breath has brought me life
 I know that it is finished

I will not boast in anything
 No gifts, no power, no wisdom

But I will boast in Jesus Christ
His death and resurrection
Why should I gain from His reward?
I cannot give an answer
But this I know with all my heart
His wounds have paid my ransom