

God. I know that idolatry infuriates God, where we aren't loyal to him, but have a bet each way. The way our society celebrates Christmas it is actually a pagan festival; Jesus is left out and we look to other things to give us joy and happiness. Actually we leave Jesus out in favour of having a good time; a good time at the work show, a good time with family and friends, let's all eat, drink and be merry. Sometimes I think we eat, drink and be merry for the sake of eating, drinking and being merry. Jesus isn't even on the horizon in our societies pagan celebration. That's idolatry at its' finest!

So today I thank God that we each know Jesus and can celebrate this season for the right reason; Jesus. I thank God that each of us knows in our hearts; that Jesus is the reason for the season. I thank God we can enjoy Jesus' company this year and jump for joy in his presence.

Let's enjoy Jesus, our brother. Let's celebrate with all our might, and jump for joy with John the Baptist; because Jesus has been born. We're not celebrating a myth, an ideal, or some hope, but we have a brother who loves us like no other. We have Jesus; God in human flesh, born

that we might celebrate life with each other, enjoying each others company.

Let us pray; Jesus help us not to leave you out of Christmas this year. Help us to enjoy, and jump for joy knowing you are alive, born our brother. Born that we can enjoy your company. Free us from introducing other things. Free us from trying to add more meaning and put in our own ideals. Jesus help us see you more clearly and enjoy sharing your birthday with you; and to know you enjoy sharing your birthday with us. Amen.

Christ Church Lutheran

Worship Times - 9.00am & 10.45am
 Pastor: Tim 0427326553
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Reaching Out with the Love of Jesus that All my Know, Worship & Grow in Christ

20 December 2009

ADVENT 4—CELEBRATE

Luke 1:39-55



Luke 1:44 "As soon as the sound of your greeting reached my ears, the baby in my womb leaped for joy."

Christmas is a time of celebration, and today John the Baptist reminds me why. John leaps for joy because of Jesus. This Christmas let's all celebrate with great joy because of Jesus.

Actually that's the reason we celebrate any birthday; because of the person. It's not because of what they have done or will do, but because they're alive, and we're happy about that. We're happy to share life with them

and enjoy their company.

So let's not celebrate Christmas because it is supposed to bring 'peace and goodwill to all'. Jesus actually brings division and judgement. Jesus actually rocks the boat. Just look at the response of the Sanhedrin. They end up crucifying him because he is such a divisive person.

We don't celebrate Christmas, Jesus' birth, because it brings peace.



I received this picture the other day with the

message; 'This is perhaps the cutest Christmas photo going around this year. Please spread throughout the world for everyone to see, so that maybe, just maybe, someday our world will be as peaceful as this.' Which made me think, what a load of rubbish. I'm not after some artificial relationship with some mythological over weight guy with poor dress sense. But Christmas is full of this weak sentimental suff, which offers no real peace and totally eliminates Jesus. The very reason for our celebration. We're celebrating Jesus birth.

Now that is totally amazing, that God should love us so much that he becomes one of us. That we might share his life with him in a real down-to-earth relationship.

At Christmas I don't celebrate some ideal, or some hope, I jump for joy with John in the presence of Jesus.

I read this week that Jesus birth is the most shocking doctrine of the Christian faith – the notion that God connects to us in baby form and human touch. It must be shocking because the advertisers totally ignore it and give heaps of other reasons to celebrate Christmas. All which leave Jesus out, the very reason we celebrate, that Jesus has come, so that we

can live person to person with God.

So Christmas isn't a time for families to get together. Though it certainly is good for families to get together, but Christmas reminds me that in Jesus we have the birth of a

Jesus is the reason for the season.

new family – Jesus' family. A family born out of the Father's amazing love. A family born to share life with their heavenly Father, celebrating each other. Enjoying each other's company. Leaping for joy in each other's presence. What an amazing family is born; with Jesus the first of so many.

This Christmas as you open your gifts let them help you enjoy God's great gift of himself in the person of Jesus. The greatest gift of all. The heart of Christmas isn't giving and receiving gifts, thought I'm sure the department

stores would disagree with me. The heart of Christmas is celebrating Jesus' birthday, the fact

that he is alive, our brother, and we can enjoy his company, without fear.

Of course that's the big problem, how do we approach a holy God without our guilt crucifying us. Without our guilt wrapping God up in layer upon layer of pretty paper till he is safe to handle. Till we've lost him in a mist of myths and nice sentiment.

So God comes to us in a real person, so we can have a real relationship with him. A relationship based on real down-to-earth love, because we have a real down-to-earth person. We don't have an ideal to live up to. We have Jesus to enjoy, to celebrate life with, as he celebrates daily being our brother.

Have you noticed that peace really is a by-product, not the reason for Christmas? Jesus' birth is the reason for Christmas, and because he has come as my brother, he has opened the way for me to approach God with freedom and confidence, because it's not some stranger I first meet. It's my brother, Jesus.

Peace is all about finding fullness of life with God. If you leave God out of the picture you'll never have peace, you'll only have God as your adversary!

Actually that's one of the central messages of Christmas, that

Christmas is Jesus' birthday.

when we leave God out, or try and be our own god, we end up with worst of all adversaries; God himself. God doesn't tolerate anyone trying to dethrone him. He doesn't even tolerate it when angels try to setup their own kingdom. Satan got puffed up with pride, and enjoying life with God wasn't enough. He wanted his own little kingdom, where he could call the

shots, and things were done his way.

Satan won't get his own kingdom, he'll be placed in God's ultimate jail we call hell. God doesn't suffer rebels lightly.

We come to him on his terms or not at all.

Have you noticed that our goal isn't, not to go to hell, but to enjoy Jesus? To celebrate life with

Jesus. Not going to hell is a by-product of knowing Jesus, of being part of his family. I celebrate Jesus, my brother, and enjoy his company. I jump for joy because we can share all of life together, celebrating each other's company.

Sometimes I wonder if the way our society celebrates Christmas actually infuriates