

Christmas is a time of celebration (gathered church -- worship today)

1. Love came down

- Luke 2:78-79
Because of God's tender mercy, the morning **light from heaven** is about to break upon us, to give light to those who sit in darkness and in the shadow of death, and to guide us to the path of peace.
- John 1:14, 17
So the Word became human and **made his home among us**. He was full of **unfailing love** and faithfulness. And **we have seen** his glory, the glory of the Father's one and only Son.

For the law was given through Moses, but God's **unfailing love** and faithfulness **came** through Jesus Christ.
- 1 John 4:9-10
God **showed how much he loved us by sending his one and only Son into the world** so that we might have eternal life through him.
This is real love—not that we loved God, but that he loved us **and sent his Son** as a sacrifice to take away our sins.

2. God came near

- John 1:14^a
So the Word became human and **made his home among us**
- Immanuel (Garden, Tabernacle, Eternity... Incarnation + Cross)
- Psalm 73:25-28
²⁵ Whom have I in heaven but You? And besides You, I desire nothing on earth.
²⁶ My flesh and my heart may fail, But God is the strength of my heart and my portion forever.
²⁷ For, behold, those who are far from You will perish...
²⁸ But as for me, **the nearness of God is my good**; I have made the Lord GOD my **refuge**

3. We've been rescued

- 1 Corinthians 6:9-11
⁹ Don't you realize that those who do wrong will not inherit the Kingdom of God? Don't fool yourselves. Those who indulge in sexual sin, or who worship idols, or commit adultery, or are male prostitutes, or practice homosexuality,
¹⁰ or are thieves, or greedy people, or drunkards, or are abusive, or cheat people—none of these will inherit the Kingdom of God.
¹¹ Some of you were once like that. But you were **cleansed**; you were **made holy**; you were **made right** with God by calling on the name of the Lord Jesus Christ and by the Spirit of our God.
- The angel in Luke 2:10-11
Do not be afraid; for behold, I bring you good news of great joy which will be for all the people; for today in the city of David there has been born **for you a Savior**, who is Christ the Lord.

The response:

- The angels in Luke 2:13-14
And suddenly there appeared with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host praising God and saying, “Glory to God in the highest, And on earth peace among men with whom He is pleased.”
- Everyone in Revelation 5:11-14
 - ¹¹ Then I looked again, and I heard the voices of thousands and millions of angels around the throne and of the living beings and the elders.
 - ¹² And they sang in a mighty chorus:
“Worthy is the Lamb who was slaughtered—to receive power and riches and wisdom and strength and honor and glory and blessing.”
 - ¹³ And then I heard every creature in heaven and on earth and under the earth and in the sea. They sang:
“Blessing and honor and glory and power belong to the one sitting on the throne and to the Lamb forever and ever.”
 - ¹⁴ And the four living beings said, “Amen!” And the twenty-four elders fell down and worshiped the Lamb.