

## **Christmas Day 12 25 18**

**Glad tidings of comfort and joy. That's what it's all about. What greater gift can we wish for than comfort and joy? What greater gift can we wish for *each other* than comfort and joy?**

**And what greater gift could God give us than Jesus?**

**Today is the morning after most of the hullabaloo of Christmas. We're all pretty much exhausted. I know I am. I'm going to go home and lie down and trust in others to do Christmas dinner and relax.**

**And here's the wonderful thing about Christmas Day. This is when I believe we have the most beautiful readings of Christmas.**

**From Isaiah we hear, "How beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of the messenger who announces peace, who brings good news, who announces salvation," Talk about tidings of comfort!**

**Then our psalm instructs us to "Sing to the Lord a new song, for he has done marvelous things." The gift of a savior is certainly a "marvelous thing"!**

**Paul's letter to the Hebrews focuses all the history of God with humankind down to, "...but in these last days he has spoken to us by a Son," and expands on that good news to include that Jesus is "the reflection of God's glory and the exact imprint of God's very being," who sustains everything "by his powerful *word*." In the beginning was the Word. God has spoken to us by a Son.**

**Which leads us right into some of the most beautifully written and complex ideas in the Bible — deceptively simple. "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God." And**

there we have the beginning of our understanding of God and of Jesus Christ and our relationship with him.

Then we have a way to understand Creation and just “being” itself. “All things came into being through him,... What has come into being in him was life,” All things came into being through Jesus. We came into being through Jesus. We came from the mind of God.

This is when I’m reminded of Thornton Wilder, the author of *Our Town* (he was the son of missionaries, by the way). Thornton Wilder had one of the children in *Our Town*, Jane Crofut, receive a letter from her minister that was addressed to:

“Jane Crofut; The Crofut Farm; Grover's Corners; Sutton County; New Hampshire; United States of America, Continent of North America; Western Hemisphere; the Earth; the Solar System; the Universe; the Mind of God.”

Maybe we’re all just living our lives in a Universe that just happens to be within the Mind of God!?! Think about that for a while! It’s enough to blow *our* minds. God is enough to blow our minds. So in our Gospel we are brought back to simpler, more direct ideas.

In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the word was God.

These words from John are deceptively simple. God wanted to tell us, to show us that he loved us. With Jesus, God could communicate with us. God could send his Son, this essential part of himself, the very Word of God, to communicate with us.

And what what Jesus sent to tell us?

That above and beyond anything, God loves us — unconditionally.

**Yes. And that's so hard for us to understand. We believe we need to earn everything in order to deserve anything. We can't earn God's love. God's love is unconditional. God loves us no matter who we are and what we've done. We are saved because God loves us. — unconditionally. We've never done anything, *can't* do anything to deserve that love. We are as helpless as the human baby Jesus. Yet, even as helpless as we are, as ordinary as we are, we are beloved by God. That is Jesus' message for us.**

**Jesus was and is the embodiment of that great and simple message from God. Jesus is God's communication with us, from the very beginnings of time itself until now and beyond into the everlasting future.**

**In the beginning was the Word and the Word was with God and the Word was God. Come to tell us God loves us. And when we can trust in that enough to reach for it and believe we can deserve it and hold it — if we can just listen — then we can know the true scope, the length and breadth — the joy of God's love for us. Then maybe, just maybe we can believe in it. In the beginning was the Word...**

**From there the story, the reality of Jesus builds and grows. If Jesus is God's communication with us, then we can communicate with Jesus - and the world. We can share the Word...The Word was with God and the Word was God. In the beginning. We can have our beginning with God, our comfort and joy.**

