

ADVENT: Anticipating His Arrival

December 6, 2020

Dear FBC Family and Friends,

Isn't it amazing how Christmastime just seems to make us feel better? If that is not true for you, may I remind you to focus on the eternal gift of Christmas, Jesus? I believe that because of Jesus' presence in the world and in our lives, we can experience peace in the midst of pain, heartache, uncertainty, and frustration. While I can hope you have nearly completed your decorating and shopping (ok...at least started!), I most of all pray that you will not neglect the greatest gift of all, the baby born in Bethlehem over 2,000 years ago.

The Gift of Christ

As Christmas time comes again, we pray you have God's peace within.

We are grateful the Christ Child came; now our lives are not the same.

Our hearts are filled with praise because from the grave He was raised.

He sits at the side of God above; He instills in us the gift of love.

We are thankful for friends each day for everyone who has come our way.

We wish for you a blessed year with Christ we can live without fear.

Praise God from whom all blessings come; we know He plans to give you some.

A story is told of a man who found the barn where Satan stores the seeds he sows in the human heart: envy, greed, anger, hatred, lust, and so on. The man noticed that Satan had more seeds of discouragement than any other kind, and he learned that those seeds were hardy and fruitful and could be made to grow almost anywhere. But when Satan was questioned, he reluctantly admitted that there was one place in which he could not get them to grow. "Where is that?" asked the man. Satan replied, "In the heart of a thankful man."

When we choose a thankful attitude, our spirits resist the cynicism, discouragement, and pessimism that weigh life down. We're better able to thrive and survive no matter what life throws at us. And our love for God blooms as does the amount of peace we have in our heart, mind, and soul. Will you join me in praying, "God, give me a thankful heart and please nurture in me a spirit of gratitude and peace. In Jesus' name, Amen."

Choosing to be grateful for the greatest gift of all and receiving His peace,

Bro. Marty

**"SILENT NIGHT, HOLY NIGHT:
THE PRESENCE OF THE SON OF GOD ON EARTH"
MATTHEW 1 & 2 AND LUKE 2 et al**

The Background of the Hymn:

Joseph Mohr (1792-1848), assistant priest in the Church of St. Nicholas in the beautiful Austrian Alps, and Franz Gruber, the village schoolmaster and church organist, had often talked about the fact that the perfect Christmas hymn had never been written. When the organ quit working, Father Mohr felt the need to "write the perfect hymn" for their Christmas Eve service. He then took the words to Gruber who composed the simple but beautiful music that blended so perfectly with the spirit of the words. It was all completed in time for the Christmas Eve service, at which Mohr and Gruber sang their new hymn to the accompaniment of Gruber's guitar. It deeply touched the members that night as it has tens of millions since.

When was the last time you had a "silent night"?! 😊

1. THE PRESENCE OF THE SON OF GOD MEANS _____.

Silent night! Holy Night!

All is calm, all is bright,

'Round yon virgin mother and child,

Holy Infant, so tender and mild-

Sleep in heavenly peace, sleep in heavenly peace.

(1) The Peace of _____ (Matt. 1:21).

(2) The Peace of _____ (Matt. 2:10 & Luke 2:10)

(3) The Peace of _____ (Luke 2:19 & Phil. 4: 6-7)

2. THE SON OF GOD'S PRESENCE MEANS _____.

Silent night! Holy Night!

Shepherds quake at the sight!

Glories stream from heaven afar,

Heavenly hosts sing Alleluia-

Christ the Savior is born! Christ the Savior is born!

(1) Praise the Son for His _____ ("...will be for all people" Luke 2:10).

(2) Praise the Son for His _____ ("Today...a savior has been born to you" Luke 2:11)

(3) Praise the Son for His _____ ("When they had seen him, the spread the word..." Luke 2:17)

3. THE SON OF GOD'S PRESENCE MEANS _____.

Silent night! Holy Night!

Son of God, Love's pure light,

Radiant beams from Thy holy face,

With the dawn of redeeming grace-

Jesus, Lord, at Thy birth; Jesus, Lord, at Thy birth.

(1) The Power of _____ (John 3:16; 1 John 4:7-10)

(2) The Power of _____ (John 1:4-5; 8:12; 9:3-5)

(3) The Power of _____ (John 1:4; 10:10)

What do you need the Christ of Christmas to be for you this year?

1. If you need **peace**, keep on trusting the known God for the unknown future.
2. If you need **praise**, then on Sundays and every day, sing your praises to Him (what is your favorite praise song?).
3. If you need **power**, then tell him how you need His power and walk in the confidence of His strength.