**Sermon** – Christmas message 2018

Here we are. Another Christmas, heading into another exciting year.

**Hasn’t the last one been exciting???**

\*some people came and some left. Remember = **The holy spirit draws them, so keep praying.**

\*we moved to this building

\*We went from being a **fellowship** to becoming an official **Church. named the New Plymouth Christian Church or NPCC or a bit quirkier NP2c**

\*We started the **Foundation Group** to learn a little more about **who we are** and **where we are going** and **who our creator really is**.

\***many** have become **stronger and many still growing**

\*Many shared **exciting testimonies** of what God has done in their lives.

\*5 Baptisms. Exciting

\*A few marriage’s and an **engagement**.

And thats only what **I saw**… I’m sure you all saw far more than I did as this group has been together for over **2 years through thick and thin**…. God has **tested** and certainly **blessed you** and **kept you all together**, **preparing you** for **what’s ahead**… Oh so exciting!!!

**Right** Back to the subject at hand Christmas

**Christmas** is the time that we commemorate the birth of the Lord Jesus Christ.

That’s to say. That is the time that we set aside on our calendar for a time of **remembrance** of the birth of Christ. And who was He? **The savour of the world**.

**Now listen.** This is only a Remembrance time. It is **NOT** the actual time that Jesus was born.

This is the same as some or our calendar holiday times, such as the **Queen of England’s Birthday.**

Her birthday is **actually** on the 21st April but the **commemoration time** is Monday 23rd June this new year.

When we look at the historical side of the birth of Christ, you will notice that the animals were around him in the Manger, so historians suggest that the time was more around September October the cooler months in that part of the world. Not December

They say, possibly around the 6th September to the 4th October but we won’t debate that. Evanne says September I say October lol

**Let’s look at some of these biblical statements regarding the birth of Christ.**

**I’m sure you Have heard most of them. But we’ll spend a little time remembering them.**

“But when the fullness of time had come, God sent forth **his Son**, **born of woman**, born under the **law**, to **redeem** those who were **under the law**, so that we might receive **adoption** as **sons & daughters**” (Galatians 4:4-5).

**Let me repeat this slowly. (repeat) - *Holy Spirit move and open your heart on that one.***

“For in him the whole fullness of deity dwells bodily” (Colossians 2:9).

“In Christ God was reconciling the world to himself” (II Corinthians 5:19).

“For to us a child is born, to us a son is given; and the government shall be upon his shoulder, and his name shall be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace” (Isaiah 9:6).

“And the angel said to her, ‘Do not be afraid, Mary, for you have found favor with God. And behold, you will conceive in your womb and bear a son, and you shall call his name Jesus. He will be great and will be called the Son of the Most High. And the Lord God will give to him the throne of his father David, and he will reign over the house of Jacob forever, and of his kingdom there will be……. **no end’**” (Luke 1:30-33).

“Behold, an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream, saying, ‘Joseph, son of David, do not fear to take Mary as your wife, for that which is conceived in her is from the Holy Spirit. She will bear a son, and you shall call his name Jesus, for he will save his people from their ……**sins’**” (Matthew 1:20-21).

*Let’s think about that for a moment. Mary was PREGNANT she was a virgin?*

*How was Joseph feeling about that?*

*Put yourself in his skin for a bit. What great faith he had.*

*What was the consequences in that day if your wife to be was pregnant? What was going through his mind*

“And the angel said to them, ‘Fear not, for behold, I bring you good news of a great joy that will be for all the people. For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, who is Christ the Lord. And this will be a **sign for you**: you will find a baby wrapped in swaddling clothes and lying in a manger’” (Luke 2:10-12).

“For you know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that though he was rich, yet for your sake he became poor, so that **you** by **His** poverty might become **rich**”

 (II Corinthians 8:9).

(Philippians 2:5-7).

“Have this mind among yourselves, which is yours in Christ Jesus, who, though he was in the form of God, did not count equality with God a thing to be grasped, but made himself **nothing**, taking the form of a **servant**, being born in the **likeness of men**”

So let’s NOT get **over involved** in the times, the place of when Jesus was born. But let’s understand the **reason He came**.

1. The birth of Jesus Christ is more than the birth of an ordinary baby.
2. It represents the literal entrance of **Almighty God into the human race.** As **John** puts it in **John 1:14**
3. the Word became **flesh** and **dwelt** among **us.** (Lets change that and say DWELLS. That is to say amongst those reborn into the Kingdom of God) It means that the Son of God, who from all eternity was and is and always will be the Second Person of the Trinity, humbled himself, laying aside the outward manifestation of his deity, and entered our world through the womb of a virgin named Mary.
4. Jesus is much more than a moral teacher or the founder of a great world religion.

He is much more than the foundation of Western Civilization.

He is the true Son of God, the Messiah of Israel,

the promised Seed of a Woman,

and the One predicted by all the prophets.

He is the Savior of the world.

And apart from him, there is no salvation.

1. We shouldn’t be surprised that the world either ignores or attacks Christmas.

Some in this country want to drop the name of CHRIST from Christ-mas

The world has never been a friend to the Son of God.

The people of the world, for the most part, were too busy with their own pursuits 2,000 years ago to pay attention to a baby born to a peasant family in the little village of Bethlehem in the region of Judea. It just didn’t matter. And some, like Herod, found his birth a personal threat, and so they did what they could to kill him.

He was born in the shadow of the cross.

When Simeon took the infant in his arms and offered this word of divine prophecy:

 “**This child is destined to cause the falling and rising of many in Israel, and to be a sign that** **will be spoken against, so that the thoughts of many hearts will be revealed” (Luke 2:34 ESV**).

Did you get that? Jesus is a “**sign that will be spoken against.”** Meaning that even though he is **God’**s “sign” of salvation, many will speak against him. Some will call him **Savior;** others will **“fall”** because of him.

As Jesus himself said many years later**, “I did not come to bring peace, but a sword”** **(Matthew 10:34).**

Interesting to hear those words at Christmas time.

Not **peace**, but a **sword.**

What does the **word** say? The **Word of God** is **sharper than a …… two-edged sword**. Jesus cuts both ways, revealing the **thoughts and intents of every heart.**

When you see him, you have to **choose**. You can’t **remain neutral** forever.

There is one **final conclusion worth mentioning**

1. His birth was attended by **miracles** so that we would know for certain that he was from **God**. HE certainly was NOT born the normal way,
2. He was born of a virgin, announced by angels and had strangers from distant lands follow a star to find his home,

So to finish with Let us NEVER forget

 “For God **so loved the world**, that he gave **his only Son**, that whoever **believes in him** **should not perish** **but have eternal life**” (John 3:16).

So here we are. **Believers in Christ Jesus**. **Dwellers of His Kingdom** on earth.

We are in this world but NOT of it, Blessings to you all over the Christmas and New Year season. Enjoy your family times.

Push aside any debate about the historical facts of Christmas and just remember what it represents.

FINISH.