

# CHRISTMAS FROM ETERNITY

By Pastor Neal Schroeter

John 1:1-18

12/11/11

When you think of the Christmas story, you usually start with Mary & Joseph

Like Matthew begins:

*Matthew 1:18*

*This is how the birth of Jesus Christ came about: His mother Mary was pledged to be married to Joseph*

And you know the rest of the story

You think of angels appearing individually to Joseph & Mary

-you think of Mary riding a donkey to Bethlehem

-& the manger & shepherds & wise men & the crabby king Herod

This morning, I want to widen the lens a bit - a lot

Instead of looking at the approximate 9 months from conception to birth

-let's back up & look at Christmas from before creation

One of my favorite Christmas scriptures is found in John 1

-we don't think of it so much as to do with Christmas

-but it fits well with what we celebrate & understand as Christmas

Christmas is about Jesus coming into the world

But it all starts way back before creation

*John 1:1-2*

*In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. 2 He was with God in the beginning.*

Of course as you look at this, you'll figure out, the Word, is Jesus

*John 1:14 The Word became flesh and made his dwelling among us. We have seen his glory, the glory of the One and Only, who came from the Father, full of grace and truth.*

Why is Jesus called the Word?

He's also referred to as the Word in the description of His return:

*Revelation 19:11-14*

*I saw heaven standing open and there before me was a white horse, whose rider is called Faithful and True. With justice he judges and makes war. 12 His eyes are like blazing fire, and on his head are many crowns. He has a name written on him that no one knows but he himself. 13 He is dressed in a robe dipped in blood, and his name is the Word of God.*

I suppose, words are used to describe things - thoughts, objects, people,

-concepts

-Jesus is the statement of God in person

*Hebrews 1:1-3*

*In the past God spoke to our forefathers through the prophets at many times and in various ways, 2 but in these last days he has spoken to us by his Son, whom he appointed heir of all things, and through whom he made the universe. 3 The Son is the radiance of God's glory and the exact representation of his being, sustaining all things by his powerful word.*

Jesus later said:

*John 14:9*

*Anyone who has seen me has seen the Father.*

How could this world ever see God?

-later in this passage:

*v.18 No one has ever seen God, but God the One and Only, who is at the Father's side, (JESUS) has made him known.*

What better way to see God, than God living & speaking to us!

Jesus is the Word of God!

So, it was Jesus, who was in the beginning

We can call Him, God the Son - as He's called here, "God, the One & Only"

God the Son, was with God the Father before creation

Before, time, before space, before matter - Jesus was God & with God

-that's hard to imagine - before time, space & matter

-& you don't have to ask the question, "Who created God?"

-because that's the nature of God - He wasn't created

-He always was - He's outside the creation of time, space & matter

How did the universe begin?

-most everyone believes it started with some dense matter that expanded

-& it looks like it's still expanding

-but everyone agrees - the big question is - how did the matter start?

Jesus is the answer

*John 1:3 Through him all things were made; without him nothing was made that has been made.*

Before all time, space & matter - Jesus was

& if it wasn't for Jesus - there would be nothing

Jesus was not created, He is the creator!

He is the creator not only of space, time & matter

-but of life itself

-He is the giver of life

*John 1:4-5*

*In him was life, and that life was the light of men. 5 The light shines in the darkness, but the darkness has not understood it.*

Life is likened to light - it shines in darkness

- & there are two ways to put this into English
- the light is not understood by the darkness
- &/or the light is not overcome by the darkness

Let's first think about how the light is not understood by the darkness

The darkness doesn't understand Jesus

- this world is blinded from the truth
- & the devil has a lot to do with that - he's like the god of the darkness

*2 Corinthians 4:3-6*

*The god of this age has blinded the minds of unbelievers, so that they cannot see the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the image of God. 5 For we do not preach ourselves, but Jesus Christ as Lord, and ourselves as your servants for Jesus' sake. 6 For God, who said, "Let light shine out of darkness," made his light shine in our hearts to give us the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Christ.*

As dark as Satan & sin can make this world

- the light of Jesus still shines
- some people, like you & me, we believe
- the light shines through the darkness, so there are believers

As much as Satan tries to defeat God

- the light still overcomes & wins

Let's consider for a moment how the light is not overcome by the darkness

There's a description in Revelation 12

- of the nation of Israel likened to a woman giving birth to a child
- representing Jesus

- & Satan, the Dragon, is standing before the woman,
- like a sinister murderer, impersonating an obstetrician
- waiting for the baby to be born - to snatch him up & kill him

- or, you might see the Devil putting in Herod's mind
- “Kill all the babies in Bethlehem - Get rid of the God-King!”

- or, we just read from the description of Jesus returning His second time
- it's at the Battle of Armageddon
- where Satan has all the armies of the world
- gathered to fight against Jesus

Satan is trying very hard to defeat the light

- to turn off the heavenly light-bulb

-but, the darkness did not overcome the Light

- Jesus was born on Christmas
- He survived all the attacks
- He was the light of the world
- & He brought hope & salvation - spiritual life to this world
- even as Satan thought he was winning when Jesus was on the cross
  - & the world went dark for 3 hours
  - as Jesus breathed His last breath,
  - the temple curtain tore open - showing access to God was gained
    - people rose from the dead
    - & in three days, Jesus rose from the dead
- it was a total VICTORY over the darkness

*John 1:4-5*

*In him was life, and that life was the light of men. 5 The light shines in the darkness, but the darkness has not understood it.*

This is Christmas - Jesus has been eternally with God before everything

- He makes the universe & this world & life in this world
- but when Satan rebelled, & Adam & Eve sinned
  - darkness entered creation & for the most part, ruled this world

-at Christmas, Jesus came to bring light & life - victory over darkness

Jesus was to proclaim,

*John 8:12*

*"I am the light of the world. Whoever follows me will never walk in darkness, but will have the light of life."*

Jesus is the source of life

- but not only physical life - much more importantly - of spiritual life

Now, the world needs to respond

- to have life rather than death
- to live in light, rather than darkness

-people need to respond

To help us, God sent a special messenger - John the Baptist

*John 1:6-9*

*There came a man who was sent from God; his name was John. 7 He came as a witness to testify concerning that light, so that through him all men might believe. 8 He himself was not the light; he came only as a witness to the light. 9 The true light that gives light to every man was coming into the world.*

God has made it so that we all have plenty of opportunity to see the light

Sometimes, when there's an important need to respond to something

- you'll get a mailing alerting you to the mailing that's coming

"This is an alert - in about one week from now,  
 "you will get an important document in the mail!  
 "Look for it! You will need to respond!"

John the Baptist was like an alert to the world  
“The true light that gives light & life to everyone, is coming!”  
Get ready!

Christmas came - Jesus was born  
He grew up

*John 1:14 The Word became flesh and made his dwelling among us. We have seen his glory, the glory of the One and Only, who came from the Father, full of grace and truth.*

John was later to write emphasizing the contact this world had with God:

*1 John 1:1-4*

*That which was from the beginning, which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we have looked at and our hands have touched — this we proclaim concerning the Word of life. 2 The life appeared; we have seen it and testify to it, and we proclaim to you the eternal life, which was with the Father and has appeared to us. 3 We proclaim to you what we have seen and heard, so that you also may have fellowship with us. And our fellowship is with the Father and with his Son, Jesus Christ. 4 We write this to make our joy complete.*

This is truly “Joy To the World!”

As the angel said to the shepherds:

*Luke 2:10-11*

*"Do not be afraid. I bring you good news of great joy that will be for all the people. 11 Today in the town of David a Savior has been born to you; he is Christ the Lord."*

However, the world needs to respond

*John 1:10-11*

*He was in the world, and though the world was made through him, the world did not recognize him. 11 He came to that which was his own, but his own did not receive him.*

Here's the tragedy of Christmas - people didn't then & don't today,  
-recognize Jesus

-He was the maker, sustainer & owner of this creation  
-people didn't recognize Him

-He had prepared a nation of people to believe in & follow God  
-that nation for the most part - didn't recognize Him or receive Him

That's tragic - but certainly not necessary

-some people have recognized & received Him  
-& people still can to this day

*John 1:12-13*

*Yet to all who received him, to those who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God— 13 children born not of natural descent, nor of human decision or a husband's will, but born of God.*

It's up to us to respond to Christmas

- God the Son - became flesh - Jesus
- He dies as a sacrifice for our sin
- He lives to Save us!

-we need to accept Him & believe in Him

If you haven't, now's the time

If you have, as many of us have

- it does us good, to grow in our appreciation for His salvation
- it helps us to renew our minds as we understand that we're born of God
  - we are now His children
  - we belong to the family of God

-Jesus came here

- the Word of God - who was God
- who made it all
- who is the light & life
  - Who overcomes darkness

-Jesus is our Lord & Savior

- behold His glory
- experience His grace & truth

◇-----◇