

*Vintage
Christmas*



rediscovering timeless hope

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- Life can be unimaginably hard, but still Scripture says “believe”
- With little evidence of a sovereign or good God, Job said... “I believe”
- This is the world Christ entered at Christmas
- To live in it
- To renew and remake it

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Luke 2:1-7

Now in those days a decree went out from Caesar Augustus, that a census be taken of all the inhabited earth. ² This was the first census taken while Quirinius was governor of Syria. ³ And everyone was on his way to register for the census, each to his own city. ⁴ Joseph also went up from Galilee, from the city of Nazareth, to Judea, to the city of David which is called Bethlehem, because he was of the house and family of David,

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⁵ in order to register along with Mary, who was engaged to him, and was with child. ⁶ While they were there, the days were completed for her to give birth. ⁷ And she gave birth to her firstborn son; and she wrapped Him in cloths, and laid Him in a manger, because there was no room for them in the inn.

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- In the details of the Christmas story we see that Christ came into our painful world
- Israel...Nazareth...David...Bethlehem...Mary...Manger400 years
- Trying to remove pain is like the boy with his fingers in the dam
- Even though some will tell you otherwise, suffering won't be removed in this lifetime
- Christ came to show us that God can recycle it!

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- Christmas is God's way of saying, "Bring it on!" past hurts, memories, and scars
- "God is in the recycling business. He takes bad things and turns them into good things."
~Phillip Yancey
- How does God do this?

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Hebrews 5:7-9

⁷ In the days of His flesh, He offered up both prayers and supplications with loud crying and tears to the One able to save Him from death, and He was heard because of His piety. ⁸ Although He was a Son, He learned obedience from the things which He suffered. ⁹ And having been made perfect, He became to all those who obey Him the source of eternal salvation,

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Hebrews 2:9-10

⁹ But we do see Him who was made for a little while lower than the angels, *namely*, Jesus, because of the suffering of death crowned with glory and honor, so that by the grace of God He might taste death for everyone. ¹⁰ For it was fitting for Him, for whom are all things, and through whom are all things, in bringing many sons to glory, to perfect the author of their salvation through sufferings.

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- Christmas confronts us with one simple question:
- Do you want to be like Jesus?
- Do you want to be ruled by your pain?
- OR do you want your pain and rejection and suffering recycled into something beautiful?

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Romans 8:28-29

²⁸ And we know that God causes all things to work together for good to those who love God, to those who are called according to *His* purpose. ²⁹ For those whom He foreknew, He also predestined *to become* conformed to the image of His Son, so that He would be the firstborn among many brethren;

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- We see the great redeeming purpose of God at Christmas
- To save and perfect broken, cast off people
- To show all people His great character and worth
- Our response is faith
- The Christian way is through pain, not around it
- We respond to God's recycling work with, "I won't let go!"
- The kind of faith Christ is looking for

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- Do you want to be like Christ?
- There's an emptying that comes before you are filled
- Do you wonder if God knows or cares?
- Christmas says He does

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- Do you want to be part of the process that God uses to recycle others?
- Will God put you in the midst of suffering people to help redeem their sufferings?