



The Manse
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“And the Word became flesh and lived among us, and we have seen his glory, the glory as of a Father’s only Son, full of grace and truth.” John 1:14

With all that is going on in the world right now, this world is so in need of adult Christianity and the actual message of Jesus is so urgent that we must not allow the great feast of Christmas, and its preparation in Advent, to be watered down in any way.

Advent is not about a sentimental time of waiting for Baby Jesus. Rather, it could be said that Advent is a time for us to focus on our expectation and anticipation of Jesus who challenges us to make room for him in our hearts, in our lives and in the lives of those around us.

Jesus identified his own message with what he called the ‘Reign of God’ or the ‘Kingdom of God.’ And yet, somewhere along the way, many people have settled for the sweet coming of a baby who asks little of us.

As we prepare for Christmas, may we add to our list, an invitation to people beyond a mere sentimental understanding of Christmas as ‘waiting for Baby Jesus,’ to an adult and social appreciation of the message of the incarnation of God in Christ. May we learn more each day about the teachings of Jesus through the gift of reading the Bible and not live in gloom with this unopened gift because the Word of God confronts us, converts us and consoles us.

The final words of the Bible, “Come, Lord Jesus. The grace of the Lord Jesus be with God’s people. Amen,” makes our entire lives one huge Advent. My hope and prayer is that we remember this because in Jesus’ birth God was already saying that it was good to be human, and God was and still is on our side.

How ever you celebrate Christmas and whatever you do, whether in word or deed, do it all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through him. May you find and savour moments of joy and may the meaning of Christmas be a treasure to be shared.

With warm good wishes for 2025

Reud Carolann Birnie