

From Pastor's Desk...

"God with us": An amazing experience

We have stronger and distinct inner awareness of God as loving Father in heaven. God is transcendent and also immanent in history. It had been very true from the experience of Adam and Eve. The Lord God was walking in the garden in the cool of the day. They hid from the Lord God among the trees of the garden because of their sin. God called man, where are you? (Gen. 3:9). So real was the presence of God that it was as if they heard God's footsteps.

We come across prayers of many in the Bible addressing as God of Abraham, God of Isaac, and God of Jacob. They had amazing experiences in God who never leaves or forsakes in the world. It is significant to reflect on how God was with them.

Abraham's *faith* shows us what really matters. He heard the voice of God and dared to simply believe he could trust Him in His voice. He risked his life, his security, his reputation, his future and even his son on the word that came from the God whom he could not see but in whom he believed. The Lord made a covenant with Abraham and his descendants (Gen. 15:18:20).

Isaac's *humility* resulted in the fear of Philistines and the King Abimelech. Because of his increasing wealth and power, they came to him and said, "we saw clearly that the Lord was with you and let us make a treaty with you that you will do us no harm". Isaac made a feast before them and they left him in peace (Gen 26:28-29).

Jacob's *commitment* is incredible. Let us go up to Bethel, I will build an altar to God who answered me in the day of my distress and who has been with me wherever I have gone" (Gen. 35:1-3). God named him Israel which changed even the history of this World.

The birth of Jesus was an incredible story with an assurance to Joseph who was a righteous man. He had in mind to divorce Mary quietly to avoid public disgrace. God's Angel appeared and confirmed the fulfilment of the prophesy- the virgin will be with child and will give birth to a son, and they will call him Immanuel which means "God with us" (Mat. 1:19-22). What is true Christmas for us, it's nothing but an amazing experience with the assurance that God is with us in our struggles, doubts and confusions in life. Let us sing together, Jesus name above all names, Beautiful Savior, Glorious Lord, Emmanuel, God is with us, Blessed Redeemer, Living Word.

God bless you.

In His glorious service,

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God with us

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Behold, a virgin shall conceive, and bear a Son, shall call his name Immanuel meaning God with us. Isaiah 7:14. This was fulfilled around 700 years later in Matthew chapter 1:23.

Even though God is with us all the time, life is not always easy; convenience or comfort. But He did promise this over and over, "fear not, for I am with you; but not dismayed for I am your God; I will strengthen you, I will help you, I will uphold you with my righteous right hand." Isaiah 41:10. We always think if God was with us why this and that happened. Think about when Jesus was in the womb, bumped along difficult journey, all the way to Bethlehem. Mary and Joseph struggled to get a place for Jesus to be born, His very own son, to take His first breaths in the humblest surroundings.

There are so many assuring, supporting and promising words in the Bible emphasizing "God with us". Here are few Quotes below. Fear not, for I have redeemed you, I have called you by name, you are mine. When you not drown you. When pass through the waters, I will be with you; and through the rivers, they shall you walk through the fire you shall not be burned, and flame shall not consume you. For I am the Lord your God, the Holy one of Israel, your Savior. Isaiah 43: 1-3.

Even though I walk through the valley through the shadow of death, I will fear no evil, for you are with me; your rod and staff, they comfort me. Psalm 23:4. We always should trust in Him, pour our heart before him; then God will be refuge for us.

God is with all believers and His Holy Spirit indwells in us. This indwelling only can happen if one is born again (John 3:3) 1 John 5:11-13 tells us that it is Jesus who indwells us. "This is the testimony: God has given us eternal life, and this life is in his Son. Whoever has the Son has life; whoever does not have Son of God does not have life."

During this month of December, when the whole world celebrates Christmas remembering the birth of Jesus Christ, as a born-again Christian believer, be assured that God is with us all the time.

God bless you.