

CHRISTMAS AND THE MISSION OF GOD // Galatians 4:4-5

A Christmas sermon from Pastor Neal

Among the key doctrines of the Christian faith is the doctrine of the incarnation--Jesus is both fully God and fully man. God stepped out of heaven to be born as a baby, and he did so for a specific purpose. Christmas reminds us that God is a missionary, and his mission is us--he came to rescue a people for his own possession.

Three Components of God's Mission:

1. God is on Mission to Pursue Sinners (v. 4)

"But when the fullness of time had come, God sent forth his son, born of woman, born under the law."

"But" is possibly the most important term in the Bible--God is an interrupting and intervening God. He takes the initiative--we cannot work our way to God; he comes to us at just the right time. God is a sending God--he sent his son; if he had not, we would still be in our sins.

2. God is on Mission to Purchase Sinners (v. 5a)

"to redeem those who were under the law"

Jesus earned our righteousness for us by keeping the law and then was condemned on the cross; he bore God's judgement for all sin.

Our sin required payment--only Christ's blood could pay.

3. God is on Mission to Possess Sinners (v. 5b)

"so that we might receive adoption as sons."

We are his mission--Jesus didn't come to serve or to teach as much as he came to die.

He purchased us not in a merely clinical, sterile sense, but so that we could be brought in, adopted into the family.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. Are we tempted to see ourselves as initiating in our relationship with God? Why is it important to remember that God pursues us?
2. Has there been a time when God interrupted and intervened in your life? What did this "but God" look like?
3. Are we on mission like God is on mission?