Sermon Notes – December 21, 2025
4th Sunday of Advent

<u>Isaiah 9</u> 6 For a child is born to us, a son is given to us. The government will rest on his shoulders. And he will be called: Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.

- We ALL need a Counselor – A Powerful God – A True Father – and Peace
- Jesus provides it ALL! For it is Who He is, and this is what He does
- Whoever you need Him to be in your life right now – He is available and will do what needs to be done – He is an amazing Savior
- We have allowed Christmas to become about us and about gifts, greed, and encouraging material satisfaction
    - – again, nothing wrong with giving gifts and having things but we must guard ourselves from allowing these things to dominate and cripple us in trying to celebrate Jesus
- The world is all about the lust of the eye – the material satisfaction

<u>1 John 2</u> 15 Do not love this world nor the things it offers you, for when you love the world, you do not have the love of the Father in you. 16 For the world offers only a craving for physical pleasure, a craving for everything we see, and pride in our achievements and possessions. These are not from the Father, but are from this world. 17 And this world is fading away, along with everything that people crave. But anyone who does what pleases God will live forever.

- We have seen how a 'thing' will dominate the Christmas season and everyone '*has to have it for their kid*' – and '*the kid has to have it*' or Christmas just won't be the same… --- really?!!
- They made a movie about it because of how crazy we will become over 'the have it gift'… "**Jingle all the Way**"

- When the '*Cabbage Patch Kids*' became the 'have it' item of Christmas in 1983 its original price was $21 – as demand grew stores marked them up between $50-$75 and then people were paying crazy amounts up to $1K when they were sold out!
- Believe it or not – actual Riots took place in stores when people would drive for hours to get to a place that 'might have one'…
- Video
- Tickle Me Elmo saw similar results in the 90's
- We have lost the focus – and it is time to regain the reality and reason for this season being Jesus

Romans 12 2 Don't copy the behavior and customs of this world, but let God transform you into a new person by changing the way you think. Then you will learn to know God's will for you, which is good and pleasing and perfect.

- 2025 Being the year of Transformation – we need to embrace what the Holy Spirit is saying to us and reject what the world is trying to indoctrinate us with
- Let's revisit some of God's original plans for the family

Deuteronomy 6 5 And you must love the LORD your God with all your heart, all your soul, and all your strength. 6 And you must commit yourselves wholeheartedly to these commands that I am giving you today. 7 Repeat them again and again to your children. Talk about them when you are at home and when you are on the road, when you are going to bed and when you are getting up. 8 Tie them to your hands and wear them on your forehead as reminders. 9 Write them on the doorposts of your house and on your gates.

- God is not saying this is all you talk about – no – We are learning that God should weave in and through our daily lives in a way that it is natural, seamless, and part of who we are and what we do

- When we are in need of recentering Jesus' birthday on Him; - we probably have a few other things out of whack in our lives as well.
- Statistics show us - many Christians do not spend time reading their Bible daily… rarely do Christians listen with their prayers –
    - Much like our Christmas lists we simply give God our Wants and Needs, then we walk away from the conversation
- God intends for us to have a conversation with Him
- He IS listening to your conversations and present wherever you go – so, you should think about that before you say, do, or go places!
- Barna Research working with GLOO report a recent increase in Bible reading (Which is Great!)
    - In 2000, 39 percent of U.S. adults reported reading the Bible **weekly**—a number that fluctuated for years before falling to 30 percent in 2024. Now, based on interviews it has climbed back to 42 percent. Among self-identified Christians, the rate reaches 50 percent—the highest level in over a decade.
- 50% of those identifying themselves as Christian – so – only ½ of us even read WEEKLY!
- This is why we ask if you have read 5 days this past week… it needs to be a daily conversation with God not just 5 days
- Let's revisit something Jesus said:

John 14 15 "If you love me, obey my commandments.

- And the scripture we read last Sunday

James 1 22 But don't just listen to God's word. You must do what it says. Otherwise, you are only fooling yourselves.

- We cannot find peace in our ignorance of what God expects of us for we will be held accountable for what is available to us

- We can check ourselves simply in the context of 1 of Jesus many teachings but this will help us get a start on where we are and where we need to get to…

Matthew 12 33 "A tree is identified by its fruit. If a tree is good, its fruit will be good. If a tree is bad, its fruit will be bad. 34 You brood of snakes! How could evil men like you speak what is good and right? For whatever is in your heart determines what you say. 35 A good person produces good things from the treasury of a good heart, and an evil person produces evil things from the treasury of an evil heart. 36 And I tell you this, you must give an account on judgment day for every idle word you speak. 37 The words you say will either acquit you or condemn you."

- Jesus was always blunt with the religious people – for it is that crowd that represents Him to the world and it is that crowd that 'says they know God'
- Most, if not all here in Church and on line today would consider themselves 'Christian' -- and I would say everyone 'thinks you are going to heaven'
- I hope we have a reunion and none of us are missing but the truth of the matter is – Jesus is calling us out and saying the life must line up
- If you wonder where you are in your walk with God revisit the things you have said along with the conversations, you have had this week
- The only way that good continues to flow from us - is if the Holy Spirit truly lives within and the word of God is being planted in our soul on a continual basis.

Action Steps

- Have you accepted Jesus as your personal Savior? (*37 The words you say will either acquit you or condemn you." How is your relationship with God doing?*)

- How often are you stopping and spending time in God's word?
- Do you actually listen for God when you pray or simply give Him your Christmas wish list?
- How are you going to integrate God into your daily life, conversations, and home as we enter the New Year together?
- Come and join us for Carols and Communion Christmas Eve Service from 6-7