

December 1

God With Us (Already, AND Not Yet Fully)

Read Isaiah 9:6

In the Bible, we read God's attempt after attempt to dwell (be at home, at peace, at rest) with humankind, and humankind's fear and resistance to it. I get it! God is powerful and righteous; God is GOD, and that's intimidating!

God finds creative ways to be with humankind (In the Garden of Eden, In the Jewish Temple, in the Ark of the Covenant), yet longs for more. Jesus, Immanuel, is another of God's creative attempts.

One might think if God chose to become human, God would come as a king but God came as a lowly infant. In his meditation, "Nativity,"¹ Luther explains:

Divinity may terrify man. Inexpressible majesty will crush him. That is why Christ took on our humanity, save for sin, that he should not terrify us but rather that with love and favor he should console and confirm.

Behold Christ lying in the lap of his young mother... Look at the Child, knowing nothing. Yet all that *is* belongs to him, that your conscience should not fear but take comfort in him. ... Watch him springing in the lap of the maiden. Laugh with him. Look upon this Lord of Peace and your spirit will be at peace. See how God invites you in many ways.

Creator God, Your Divinity frightens us, yet you urge, "Do not be afraid." Help us grasp the magnitude of Your love so our fear may dissipate in Christ's perfect love. Amen.

Today and throughout this Advent Season, let's contemplate the love our Savior shows in becoming an infant child for us, and marvel at the lengths God goes to be with us.

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¹ Martin Luther, "Nativity." Martin Luther's Christmas Book, edited by Roland H. Bainton (Augsburg Fortress, 1997).