

Christmas Eve Sermon
Pastor David Brown
December 24th, 2009

This time of year something happens; something changes. People act different. Now, some people act worse, but most people act a little different. I catch myself whistling Christmas tunes and I can tell you that don't happen normally. I'm not a musical person but I caught myself in the hospital the other day I was whistling and I thought that don't ever happen. Wow, thank you for coming out. I know the weather out there is frightful but the fire is really so delightful. Christmas is an exciting time and I know as you get a little older some of the gleam of Christmas kind of fades. I remember being a little boy and Christmas was everything. I couldn't wait for the presents and my mom would always try to get me to go to bed early which doesn't make a lot of sense. For all you parents who are trying to put your kids to bed on the most exciting day of the year. It is not very wise to do that. Now, I get it now, because there is a lot of work that parents have to do and you've got to get them in bed early. In my house there is a rule; if you got up before 6 o'clock you got beat. I know that was a different generation but you got beat if you got up before six. So me and my brother would just lie in the bed and we would count minutes because we couldn't wait for Christmas morning. There was an excitement and as you get older you get to see your children go through that and now I'm getting to see my grandchildren go through that and I know if you're visiting you're thinking you're way too young to have grandchildren. I know, but I do and I am watching them now and that's the joy of Christmas. That's the excitement and you've got to understand that there is something special going on. That special thing has to do with the fact that in this world God shows us a shadow of what's to come. We were made for supernatural things. We were made for death. We were made for life. We're living in this fallen creation so now all we see is a shadow of the great things God wants but I want you to know during this Christmas season, if you will look past the shadow to the form; if you will look past the shadow and see God in everything just like we did the candy cane, you can have an incredible Christmas that you were meant to have. So tomorrow morning when the kids are tearing open the presents and the little girl has the Barbie doll and the little boy has the Tonka truck, the real truck not plastic but metal that someone could get hurt on; when my grandchildren see the little red Mustang, that's the great thing about being a grandparent is that you have more money, when their eyes light up and I think about how happy they are about the presents that I have bought them, I am reminded of the chapter in Matthew 7, Jesus looks at the crowd and says, You parents who are evil give good gifts to your kids. How much more will God give his children? All of a sudden it's not just a Barbie doll or a Tonka truck anymore, it's something incredible. I'm looking at this thinking to myself, how much God must love me because I'm an evil parent and I love my child. I'm an evil person and I love my grandchildren. Here is God who is great and mighty, how much does he love me? Then we sit down to eat and that's good eating. There is no dieting on Christmas. God wants us to feast; the bible talks about feasting so don't even feel guilty so eat all you want. God understands feasting so when I'm sitting there eating that fried turkey and that stuffing and drinking that tea, man that's a great experience in itself and there is nothing

wrong with that experience. But when I'm reminded in Ecclesiastes that that's just a picture of what it's going to be like in heaven. When God says in Ecclesiastes that we're going to have feasts in heaven and it's going to be an incredible thing and it becomes more than just a feast of turkey and mashed potatoes and tea. There will be feasting; I don't know what on, I don't know if we'll have tea or wine, it depends on whether your Presbyterian or Baptist I'm sure, but man what an incredible time we're going to have there. We eating at that table tomorrow are just a glimpse, a picture of what heaven's going to be like surrounded by family and surrounded by the love of God. It becomes a holy event. Listen if you don't see the form behind the shadow, we do some stupid stuff, really we cut down a tree or we get a fake tree and we put it in our house and we put lights around the tree and we risk our life hanging lights on our house and for some reason we put fake deer in our yard. I don't understand that. If there's not a meaning behind that, it's kind of silly, but if you see the form behind the shadow, you'll see Jesus. Because in that little town of Bethlehem 2000 years ago and once again whether you believe in God or not, whether you think all of us Christians are crazy, which most of the time I think we are too, you've got to admit something happened there. Something incredible in the middle of nowhere, I mean like El Paso, and if you're from El Paso don't get offended. I'm sure it's beautiful. I just know you've got to drive through a lot of nothing to get there. That's where Bethlehem was, in the middle of nowhere and here this baby was born to a peasant girl and the earthy father was just a carpenter, no political power, born in the stable but something happened. A light began to shine in a dark place and that light began to spread out and Jesus came into the world and he lived a perfect life and he died on a cross and he rose on the third day and we'll get to that at Easter when I see some of you again, something happened. Two hundred years after that in the Roman Empire every major city had a church. Every major city had a Christian presence. The only people who hadn't heard about Jesus were the people who lived outside the city. In fact they came up with a word, Pagan; this is an old word for red neck because it's just people who lived in the country. Because the cities were swarmed with the story of Christ and it's continued to grow and the light has continued to shine through the generations and governments have tried to shut it down and people have tried to destroy it and there are people today that think Christianity is the worst thing that can happen to mankind and I think to myself, yeah that peace love and joy stuff is pretty rough. But no matter who tries to stop it the lights going to continue to spread. It's going to going to continue to spread the bible says until everyone hears and every tribe and nations have the presence of Christ inside of it. The word of God is going to spread and that light is going to shine and so tonight as we come together I want us to see Jesus. I want us to remember that silent night long ago when that one light started to shine; just one light in the middle of the darkness in the middle of nowhere and it spread and it still spreads today.