

“God’s Love in Every Generation”

Good evening, brothers and sisters, and Merry Christmas! Tonight, we gather at the Vigil of Christmas, not only to prepare for the great celebration of Jesus’ birth but to pause and marvel at the extraordinary love of God across the generations.

The readings for tonight remind us of something crucial: the story of Christmas didn’t begin in Bethlehem. It began in the heart of God, who has been at work throughout history, weaving a plan of salvation that reaches its climax in the birth of His Son.

“A Love Story Written Through Generations”

In the Gospel, we heard the genealogy of Jesus, a long list of names that might seem like the Bible’s version of a Christmas fruitcake: dense and hard to get through. But don’t dismiss it! Each name represents a life, a story, and a reminder that ***God works through imperfect people to bring about His perfect plan.***

There’s Abraham, the father of faith, who dared to believe in God’s promises. There’s David, the shepherd-king, who was flawed yet deeply loved by God. There are also surprising names, like Rahab, a non-Israelite, and Mary, a humble young woman who said “yes” to God in a way that changed the world forever.

What does this mean for us? It means that God’s love is not just for the holy or the mighty—it’s for everyone. It’s a love that doesn’t erase our past but redeems it. It’s a love that transforms the ordinary into the extraordinary.

“God’s Love is Faithful”

Isaiah gives us another beautiful image of God’s love. He describes God rejoicing over His people like a bridegroom rejoices over his bride. This is not a distant, cold God. This is a God who delights in His people, who longs for intimacy with us, and who enters into history to make that love real.

Think about it: in Jesus, God didn’t just send us a message of love—He came Himself. He entered into our human story, not as a distant ruler but as a vulnerable child. That’s the kind of love we celebrate at Christmas: a love so faithful, so committed, that it bridges the gap between heaven and earth.

“A Gift That Demands a Response”

In Acts, we hear Paul reminding the people of Israel how God has been faithful throughout their history, leading up to Jesus. And this is where the Christmas story challenges us. Jesus didn’t come to be a footnote in history. He came to change our lives.

Like Mary and Joseph, we are called to respond to God's invitation. Mary said "yes" to carrying Jesus. Joseph said "yes" to protecting and providing for the Holy Family. What will our "yes" look like this Christmas?

Perhaps it's saying "yes" to forgiveness, even when it's hard. Or "yes" to spending time with someone who feels alone. Or "yes" to letting go of the distractions that keep us from experiencing God's love fully.

"Christmas: The Fulfillment of a Promise"

As we prepare to celebrate the birth of Jesus, let's remember that Christmas is the fulfillment of God's promise to be with us. It's the moment when all the hopes of the generations come together in the cry of a newborn child.

And that child, lying in a manger, is God's way of saying to each of us: *"You are loved. You are chosen. And I am with you, always."*

Bring the Gift of Yourself

So tonight, as we gaze at the manger, let's bring Jesus the best gift we can offer: ourselves. Our joys, our struggles, our hopes, and our fears. Because Christmas isn't just about remembering what God did 2,000 years ago. It's about letting Him enter our lives here and now, so His story becomes our story, and His love shines through us to a world in need.

Merry Christmas, and may the joy of Christ fill your hearts and homes tonight and always. Amen.