

Christmas Child

Now the birth of Jesus Christ took place in this way. When his mother Mary had been betrothed to Joseph, before they came together she was found to be with child from the Holy Spirit.

Matthew 1:18 ESV

At that time the disciples came to Jesus, saying, "Who is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven?" 2 And calling to him a child, He put him in the midst of them 3 and said, "Truly, I say to you, unless you turn and become like children, you will never enter the kingdom of heaven. 4 Whoever humbles himself like this child is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven. 5 "Whoever receives one such child in My name receives Me. Matthew 18:1-5 ESV

Jack Davenport's adoptive parents had both died and Jack had a great emptiness inside. When he cleaned out his father's lockbox he found a picture with Clearwater, Texas written on the back. Since Jack was assigned to do a story in Texas he decided to go to Clearwater to find any information he could about his birth family. When he got there he was frustrated that his records were sealed.

Have you ever felt a deep loneliness or emptiness inside?

Jack wasn't able to give Meg the love she needed because he was looking for peace inside himself. Jack admitted, "I'm the one who is stuck, Meg." Each of us needs to feel "valid" inside. If we don't have that assurance of our own self-worth we will fill the void with ineffectual behaviors. Working too much, over-eating, alcohol, drugs, binge shopping, etc. are all ways that people try to fill the emptiness inside.

Where do you seek comfort when you are feeling empty? Does it work?

When the man in the church asked Jack if he was going to come to the Christmas Eve service, Jack said, "I'll think about it." The man replied, "It's a good thing God didn't just think about it. He did it. He came." Emanuel means God with us. God sent His Son to earth to be with us. He came to save us from our sins. God sent His Son so that we can be reconciled to God and have peace.

Do you have the peace of God in your heart? If you ask Him, He will give you peace.

When Jack learned that his birth mother, Carmen Ottolman, had died as the result of a tragic car accident and had taken the identity of his father to her grave, he felt more discouraged than ever. Carmen's father, was hesitant to reveal his identity to his grandson Jack because his drinking had caused the deaths of both his wife and his precious daughter. Both Jack and his grandfather wondered if a man can change.

Have you ever made mistakes that you felt were too big to be forgiven?

The baby in the nativity set was carved with a cross in its heart. For years the cross from the nativity set was missing. When Jack's grandfather revealed himself to Jack he gave him the red cross saying Carmen would want him to have it. Jack took it out to the nativity set and returned it to its rightful place.

Are there missing pieces in your life? How can you put them back into place?

The pastor said, "The God who spoke still speaks. The God who came still comes." When Jesus was born He carried the cross of Calvary in His heart. He knew that He would give His life to save us. We can have forgiveness and reconciliation with God because of Christ. He was willing to give His life so that we can be saved. He rose from the dead, triumphant, so that we can live with Him forever.

Where will you live forever?

Dear Lord, we come to You, empty and alone. On our own we can do nothing but with You we can live triumphant lives in Your name. Forgive our sins. Fill us with Your Holy Spirit. Give us the peace and joy of Christmas. Give us the assurance that we are precious in Your sight and that as Your beloved children we can live in heaven with You forever. In Jesus' name we pray, Amen.