

# ECHOES OF CHRISTMAS

## ECHOES OF CHRISTMAS IN THE GARDEN – PART 3

Pastor Derwin L. Gray – December 18, 2016

1. Open in prayer by reading out loud together:

Holy Spirit, reveal to our hearts the ways in which the Lord Jesus meets all our needs. Draw us deeper into God the Father's love, so that we may be tattooed with His love as His Church. In Jesus' name, amen.

2. Pastor Derwin taught, "In the Garden of Eden, God met every human need: water, food, and relationship."

- a. Read Genesis 2:4-9. God provided water to drink and fruit to eat. How is this an example of God's grace?
- b. Read Genesis 3:8-13. What was the result of Adam and Eve severing their relationship with God? Also, read Romans 5:12-20 and discuss.
- c. Notice how sin causes the "blame game." Adam blamed Eve, then Eve blamed the serpent.
  - Discuss Pastor Derwin's statement, "The moment we take responsibility for our actions is the moment that healing and transformation begin."

3. Pastor Derwin taught, "Christmas is the LORD God's commitment to meet every human need through Jesus (GRACE)." How does this statement help you see Christmas differently?

4. If we don't have water, we die. Jesus is the Living Water that "will become within them [God's people] a spring of water welling up to eternal life." Read John 4:13-15.

- Why is Jesus being the living water important to our life as God's Church? And why is it important for those who have yet to follow Jesus?

5. Jesus is the Bread of Life. Read John 6:35.

- Why is Jesus being the Bread of Life important to our life as God's church? And why is it important for those who have yet to follow Jesus?

6. Read John 6:41-42. Remember, saying that Jesus was the Son of Mary and Joseph was an insult.

a. Joseph was *tsadiq* (righteous). As New Testament scholar Scot McKnight writes, "This label, this reputation is given to anyone who studies, learns, and observes the Torah scrupulously. In Joseph's world, that means he recites and lives the Shema daily, that he follows the food laws, that he supports the synagogue, and that he regularly celebrates the high holy days in Jerusalem." Scot McKnight, Ph.D. *The Jesus Creed*, pg. 77

b. Because he chose to marry Mary, his reputation now became known as a *Am ha-aretz*; a non-observant Jew. He would be considered like a Gentile – a godless person. Joseph lost his reputation.

c. Mary gained a reputation - she became known as an *na'ap* (adulteress).

- "Mary played the harlot with carpenters." –Talmud 106 (The Talmud is the body of Jewish civil and ceremonial law and legend comprising the Mishnah and the Gemara. There are two versions of the Talmud: the Babylonian Talmud - which dates from the 5th century AD but includes earlier material - and the earlier Palestinian/Jerusalem Talmud.)

d. And Jesus' reputation was that He was a *mamzer* (illegitimate child).

e. Discuss Joseph gaining a reputation, Mary losing her reputation, and Jesus having a reputation.

7. Close in prayer.

**Soul-tattoo:** By faith, let Jesus meet your every need!