

# ECHOES OF CHRISTMAS

## ECHOES OF CHRISTMAS IN THE GARDEN – PART 1

Pastor Derwin L. Gray – December 4, 2016

1. Open in prayer. Ask the Holy Spirit to guide and lead the discussion towards a greater understanding of Christmas and the work of Christ in our lives as His people.
2. What comes to your mind when you think of Christmas?
3. Discuss Pastor Derwin's statement, "Christmas is the unfolding story of how God overcame the devastating effects that death has on humanity and creation."
4. Read Genesis 2:4 NIV  
Pastor Derwin said that "The Modern Problem of Reading Genesis" is the following:
  - **Scientism:** the view that only scientific claims are meaningful. Scientism claims that you can only believe things that can be proven by science. This is a self-refuting claim because you can't prove scientism by science. Also, science can't explain love, relationships, forgiveness, morality, etc.
  - **Philosophical Naturalism:** the view that nature is all that exists, therefore God cannot exist because He would be beyond nature. This is not science, but philosophy.
5. Read Genesis 2:5-9, 15-18 and Genesis 3:1-7 NIV
  - a. Pastor Derwin said, "Death destroyed the four vital relationships with God, self, others, and creation."
  - b. How was spiritual death introduced into creation?
  - c. Adam and Eve put on fig leaves to cover their shame and sin as a result of spiritual death. Describe your thoughts about Pastor Derwin's examples of the 'fig leaves' that we use to cover our shame: achievement, money, possessions, victimization, working out. What are other fig leaves we use?
  - d. How has death broken our capacity to have relationship with others?
6. How Does God Overcome Death?
  - a. He gives us life Himself (Jesus). Will you receive it?
    - Read John 1:4-5 NIV. Why is this important?
    - Read Galatians 5:22-24 NIV. Note: in the Garden was the tree of life, and now the Apostle Paul talks about a "Fruit of the Spirit." How does the fruit of the Spirit impact our relationship with ourselves and others?
    - Read John 10:10 NIV
  - b. Jesus died to kill death. Will you receive it?
    - Read Acts 5:30 ESV and 1 Peter 2:24 ESV. Note: It was a tree in the Garden that brought death in the Garden of Eden. Now Jesus dies on a tree to kill death and bring life.
    - Even the Garden, God echoed that Christmas would come so death could be destroyed and life could flourish in God's redeemed people through four vital relationships.

**Soul-tattoo:** Review your sermon notes every day this week and pray for insight and transformation.

Close in prayer.