

He's Staying

John 1:1-18

In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. ² He was with God in the beginning. ³ Through him all things were made; without him nothing was made that has been made. ⁴ In him was life, and that life was the light of all mankind. ⁵ The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it.

⁶ There was a man sent from God whose name was John. ⁷ He came as a witness to testify concerning that light, so that through him all might believe. ⁸ He himself was not the light; he came only as a witness to the light.

⁹ The true light that gives light to everyone was coming into the world. ¹⁰ He was in the world, and though the world was made through him, the world did not recognize him. ¹¹ He came to that which was his own, but his own did not receive him. ¹² Yet to all who did receive him, to those who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God—¹³ children born not of natural descent, nor of human decision or a husband's will, but born of God.

¹⁴ The Word became flesh and made his dwelling among us. We have seen his glory, the glory of the one and only Son, who came from the Father, full of grace and truth.

¹⁵ (John testified concerning him. He cried out, saying, "This is the one I spoke about when I said, 'He who comes after me has surpassed me because he was before me.'") ¹⁶ Out of his fullness we have all received grace in place of grace already given. ¹⁷ For the law was given through Moses; grace and truth came through Jesus Christ. ¹⁸ No one has ever seen God, but the one and only Son, who is himself God and ^f is in closest relationship with the Father, has made him known.

They are coming, They are here, They will leave. Christmas company. Marked on the calendar are not only the arriving flights, but also the departure dates. Because that is how visitors work. They visit, for a while. And then the visit is over and they go home. Depending on who the visitor is will change how you feel about that goodbye. If it's family from across town, "See you in a few days." If it's family from across the country, maybe it is a little more of a heartfelt long goodbye. Lots of different emotions, for lots of different people, lots of different goodbyes during the Christmas season.

Do you like goodbyes? Do you think of them like the Shakespeare quote: "Parting is such sweet sorrow that I will say goodnight till it be morrow." It's sad but we know we will see them

again soon. I know it depends on the person, it depends on the amount of time that we get to spend with them. I don't really miss Santa too much because he always claims he did "the pop in visit" while I am sleeping so I never really say good bye to him. But I do miss family I do miss good friends. I do miss spending time with the people that I want to be around more in my life. And when I have to say goodbye to them for long amounts of time, it hurts.

There is a temptation to think of the Christmas visit, like a pop in visit from God. If we look at the whole existence of time, there was only this short little window 2,000 years ago where people got to eat, and hang out with Jesus, and get healed by him, and ask him questions seeing him in the flesh. If we never really got a chance to get to know him very well, we don't miss him too much.

Christmas can seem like one of those time a year that Jesus really stops by and says HI. We welcome him into our house as company. We set up the manger, maybe hang the advent calendar. We keep talking about Jesus coming. Every year Christmas is coming! Christmas is coming! Jesus birthday is coming! But it's like Jesus is just another guest at the party and we didn't get a chance to talk to him too much before. Christmas was over.

Christmas Eve is four days away. I should really my shopping. Christmas Day is the day after that. Boxing day is the day after that. But we aren't Canadian so who cares. But next week Christmas will be over.

We will say goodbye to Christmas company. We will choke down or throw out the stale Christmas cookies. We will eat the last of the Christmas leftovers..... And thats it. Goodbye until next year.

Except Jesus isn't saying goodbye. He is here to stay. The light shines in the darkness and the darkness has not overcome it. The Christmas message that we share today. That our Savior from sin has been born. Was not a flash in the pan. It was not a temporary fix. It wasn't a quick pop in visit. It is a permanent solution to a problem that you and I have. We were stuck in the dark.

That's true. As much as we like to think we know what is going on in this world. We know how to pay our bills and get a good credit score. We know how to follow the news that we care about.

We know once in a while what advice we want to tell our children. We know what values we want to pass on to the next generation. There are things that we might kind of know. Or there might be things that we are even experts in. But we are completely in the dark without Jesus on how to erase all our sins. We are completely in the dark without Jesus, about what happens to our soul after we die. We are completely in the dark, without Jesus, about who is really in control of this evil evil world.

But with him there is light. And that light shines to all mankind. That light shines in the darkness and the darkness has not and will never overcome it. The message of Jesus' love for you will never go away. He is staying. His love for you will never go away. His compassion for you will never go away. His forgiveness for you will never go away. Even though he ascended into heaven he is staying here with you in your heart.

Some people don't understand that. But here is the light. Jesus is the light. John the Baptist told the world to get ready for Jesus. And this is what Jesus did. He made us children of God. Through faith in God we become children of God. Children who know that our Father in heaven is going to take care of us and give us everything that we need. Once you have light and you see what Jesus has done for you. Jesus has forgiven all of your sins, fully and freely because he loves you and he cares for you.

You have the promises from God that all who believe in him will have everlasting life. You know that God is in control of all powers and authorities and he works everything out for the good of those who love him. You know that God has not made empty promises but he has proven to this world time and time again how much he loves us. And that love, that promise became flesh and lived among us, and his name was Jesus. He is the light of the world that reveals to us the love and plan that God has given to us. And he isn't going away. This light is always going to be shining brightly. It is going to be shining here at GVELC as long as we exist as a congregation. It is going to be shining from God's word until Jesus comes back to take you and me and all believers to be with him forever in heaven. This message, this peace, this light, this Jesus, this Christmas visitor will never leave us. He is staying here. Thank God. Amen.