

## *God-With-Us - a Close God -*

Galatians 4:4-9

*The Great Reversal*



## *Advent as...*

Reversal – Luke 1:39-56 (Mary's Magnificat)

Relinquishment – Luke 2:29-32 (Nunc Dimittis)

Redemption – Galatians 4:4-9

## *Past, Present, Future*

'I am the Alpha and the Omega', says the Lord God, who is and who was and who is to come, the Almighty.

Revelation 1:8

## *The Prime Figure*

But when the fullness of time had come, God sent his Son, born of a woman, born under the law,

(Galatians 4:4)

## *God's Initiative*

- God determines the moment of the new age to come
- Sent his son - In the fullness of time
- Not a distant God but a close God

## *Born of a Woman*

- The message of the incarnation
- Manger born – difficult circumstances
- Growing up in occupied territory
- Under the rule of Herod & Rome

## *Born under the Law*

- To a Jewish mother
- Jewish nation and law (Torah)
- A recognition of all the challenges and exigencies of life

He was vulnerable to all the conditions of human life which constantly threaten and unsettle – fear, loneliness, suffering, temptation, doubt, and ultimately godforsakenness.

Charles B. Cousar

## *The Impact of the Son*

in order to redeem those who were under the law, so that we might receive adoption as children.

(Galatians 4:5)

## *To Redeem*

- To 'buy us back' – to ransom
- Advent as a collision event with the forces of evil
- He comes to save us
- To undo the power of sin over us

## *To Adopt*

- To become children of God – a position of intimacy
- God comes down to lift us up
- Adoption – a Roman custom to bring one into the family

## *Identity*

- Finding our purpose and meaning in life
- To know who we are and who we are becoming
- In an age where there is an identity crisis we may find our identity in knowing Jesus

## *The Impact of the Spirit*

And because you are children, God has sent the Spirit of his Son into our hearts, crying, 'Abba! Father!' So you are no longer a slave but a child, and if a child then also an heir, through God.

(Galatians 4:6,7)

## *God: Our Abba*

- An intimate relationship with the Divine Family
- Not simply an intellectual observation
- The Spirit deep into our hearts

To know God as our Father in this way is not merely intellectual apprehension of a doctrine, not merely warm feelings about God, but a life-transforming conscious awareness of the reality of our intimate relationship with God our Father.

G. Walter Hansen

## *A Relationship that Gives Hope*

- We become heirs through God (v7b)
- We receive the gift of ongoing life and the shalom of God

## *Keep Going Forward*

Now, however, that you have come to know God, or rather to be known by God, how can you turn back again to the weak and beggarly elemental spirits? How can you want to be enslaved to them again? (Galatians 4:9)

## *Let's Not Slip Back*

- For the Galatians a returning to fate, destiny, astrology, paganism
- Perhaps mingled with a return to the Jewish ceremonial law

## *For Us ...*

- A returning to the things we left behind
- Our compensations – addictions, behaviours which are destructive, elemental spirits (v3,9)
- Enslavement to the world (1 John 2:16)

## *Remember*

- Go forward by remembering who we are now in Christ
- John Newton – author of Amazing Grace