

EXPERIENCING THE GOD WHO IS PRESENT

#VINEYARDADVENT

Therefore the Lord himself will give you
a sign: The virgin will conceive and give
birth to a son, and will call him
Immanuel.

ISAIAH 7.14

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Immanuel = “God with us”

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John 2:23-3:3
PAGE 740



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I. WE CAN MISS OUT ON THE PRESENCE OF GOD...

A. ...because of shallow faith (v. 2:23)

B. ...because of fear (v. 3:1-2)

Ways we try to remake Jesus...

- The Inoffensive Jesus
- The Political Jesus
- The “Create Your Own Savior” Jesus
- The Fault-Finding Jesus

I. WE CAN MISS OUT ON THE PRESENCE OF GOD...

A. ...because of shallow faith (v. 2:23)

B. ...because of fear (v. 3:1-2)

C. ...because of religion (v. 3:1)

D. ...because of spiritual darkness (v. 3:2)

II. JESUS' APPROACH IS COMPLETELY REVOLUTIONARY

A. We need a totally new life (v. 3:3)

“The terrible thing, the almost impossible thing is to hand over your whole self—all your wishes and precautions—to Christ. But it is far easier than what we are trying to do instead. For what we are trying to do is remain what we call ‘ourselves’ to keep personal happiness as our great aim in life, yet at the same time to be ‘good.’

C.S. LEWIS - *MERE CHRISTIANITY*

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We're all trying to let our mind and heart go their own way—centered on money or pleasure or ambition—hoping in spite of this to behave honestly and chastely and humbly. And that is exactly what Christ warned us you could not do. As he said, ‘A thistle cannot produce figs.’ If I am a field that contains nothing but grass seed, I cannot produce wheat. Cutting the grass may keep it short: but I shall still produce grass and no wheat. If I want to produce wheat, the change must go deeper than the surface. I must be plowed up and resown.”



C.S. LEWIS - *MERE CHRISTIANITY*

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II. JESUS' APPROACH IS COMPLETELY REVOLUTIONARY

A. We need a totally new life (v. 3:3)

“Jesus Christ never taught vague idealistic gas. When he said, ‘Be perfect,’ he meant it. He meant that we must go in for the full treatment. It is hard: but the sort of compromise we are all hankering after is harder—in fact, it is impossible. It may be hard for an egg to turn into a bird: it would be a jolly sight harder for it to learn to fly while remaining an egg. We are like eggs at present. And you cannot go on indefinitely being just an ordinary decent egg. We must be hatched or go bad.”



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II. JESUS' APPROACH IS COMPLETELY REVOLUTIONARY

A. We need a totally new life (v. 3:3)

B. It's a bit of a mystery (v. 3:4)

I will sprinkle clean water on you and you will be clean. I will cleanse you of all your impurities and from all your idols. I will give you a new heart and put a new spirit in you. I will remove from you your heart of stone and give you a heart of flesh. And I will put my spirit in you and move you to follow my decrees and be careful to keep my laws.

EZEKIEL 36•25

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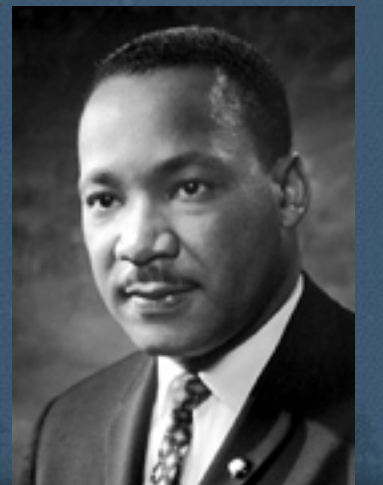
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II. JESUS' APPROACH IS COMPLETELY REVOLUTIONARY

- A. We need a totally new life (v. 3:3)
- B. It's a bit of a mystery (v. 3:4)
- C. And it changes everything

“We ain't what we ought to be. And we ain't what we want to be. We ain't what we're going to be. But thank God we ain't what we was.”

DR. MARTIN LUTHER KING JR.



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- A. We need a totally new life (v. 3:3)
- B. It's a bit of a mystery (v. 3:4)
- C. And it changes everything

III. BUT MAKE NO MISTAKE,
THIS ISN'T GOING TO BE EASY

A. We need an intervention (v. 3:14)