

Welcome the Seasons

Lessons and Carols

John 1:1-4, 14

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How do you feel when someone says to you, "I'd like a word with you?" I suppose a lot depends on the tone of voice that the person uses, but still it makes you wonder why that person wants to talk to you. You make a time to meet for the following day and for 24 hours you sweat it out, thinking what on earth is he going to say.

Is it good news or bad?

I wonder if I've done something wrong?

Will I be asked for a favor that is going to be a challenge?

Maybe it's about a gift or an invitation.

Then You have to wait for the "word" to come.

Today, in our reading from the Gospel of John, God says to you and me "I want to have a Word with you." But you don't have to wait for it to come to you. It already has.

What Word does God speak to us? The Word that God has for us is not found in the dictionary; it is a unique Word, and it is life changing.

What's the Word from God? Jesus. The Gospel writer calls Jesus "The Word." Listen to the words from the Gospel of John:

¹ *In the beginning the Word already existed.*

*The Word was with God,
and the Word was God.*

² *He existed in the beginning with God.*

³ *God created everything through him,
and nothing was created except through him.*

⁴ *The Word gave life to everything that was created,
and his life brought light to everyone.*

¹⁴ *So the Word became human and made his home among us. He was full of unfailing love and faithfulness. And we have seen his glory, the glory of the Father's one and only Son.*

Let me read that again, only this time replacing the

word "Word" with Jesus. Since Jesus and "The Word" are one and the same.

¹ *In the beginning Jesus already existed.*

*Jesus was with God,
and Jesus was God.*

² *He existed in the beginning with God.*

³ *God created everything through him,
and nothing was created except through him.*

⁴ *Jesus gave life to everything that was created,
and his life brought light to everyone.*

¹⁴ *So Jesus became human and made his home among us. He was full of unfailing love and faithfulness. And we have seen his glory, the glory of the Father's one and only Son.*

This summarizes what Christmas is all about. It tells us that the Word, Jesus, has chosen to become human and live among us. He has established his home in you!

Let's grasp the immensity of that for a moment. The Creator and all-powerful God has chosen to plunge into the arena of our lives! God became a human being! As John himself said:

¹ *In the beginning Jesus already existed. Jesus was with God, and Jesus was God.*

² *He existed in the beginning with God.*

³ *God created everything through him,
and nothing was created except through him.*

¹⁴ *...and he made his home among us.*

We just celebrated the birth of Jesus, in Bethlehem. We enjoy the story about Mary and Joseph, their trip to Bethlehem, the birth in a stable, the visit of the shepherds and wisemen; we enjoy seeing the children present the nativity play and delight in their very simple understanding of the events of Christmas.

However, too often we don't go any further than the simple story. The deeper celebration, the true joy of Christmas is the celebration of God becoming one of us. And God comes into our lives in the thick of everything. The good times and the hard times!

Jesus is God within us so that in the midst of our agonies in this life we are not alone.

- In Jesus, God is with us when we are depressed and hurting and sick.

- In Jesus, God is with us when we are hit with bad news.

- In Jesus, God is with us when we feel guilty and ashamed.

- In Jesus, God is with us when we are worried about someone we love.
- In Jesus, God is with us when we are caught up in a chain of events that we are powerless to prevent.

The good news of Christmas is that we realize that God hasn't been separate from all of our troubles and pain but has come right here into the middle of all of it.

Jesus truly is Immanuel – God is with us.

Jesus has come and lived in our world; he has become part of our life of confused priorities, of aching bodies, of heartbreak and loneliness. Christmas tells us God is not aloof and separate from our world. God is in the world with us and is always within us through a hug, as well as holds us tight even though we are far from perfect, even when we feel unattractive and unlovable. God's love for us never changes. And God knows what it means to feel the way we do.

God does have a special Word for you. This Word is Jesus, who came to let us know just how much we are loved. Unconditionally and forever! It was for this reason that we have Christmas and continue to celebrate it to this day.

Here is something for you to ponder:

Jesus, the Word, says to you "You are loved, forgiven, never alone, never without hope."

How does believing that love change you?