



Holy in a Manger – Intro
Sermon Discussion Questions – December 4th

Scripture Passages:

John 3:16–17 (NLT) ¹⁶“For this is how God loved the world: He gave his one and only Son, so that everyone who believes in him will not perish but have eternal life. ¹⁷God sent his Son into the world not to judge the world, but to save the world through him.

John 10:10 (NIV84) ¹⁰The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy; I have come that they may have life, and have it to the full.

Psalms 99:9 (NIV84) ⁹Exalt the Lord our God and worship at his holy mountain, for the Lord our God is holy.

Luke 1:26–35 (NIV84) ²⁶In the sixth month, God sent the angel Gabriel to Nazareth, a town in Galilee, ²⁷to a virgin pledged to be married to a man named Joseph, a descendant of David. The virgin’s name was Mary. ²⁸The angel went to her and said, “Greetings, you who are highly favored! The Lord is with you.”

²⁹Mary was greatly troubled at his words and wondered what kind of greeting this might be. ³⁰But the angel said to her, “Do not be afraid, Mary, you have found favor with God. ³¹You will be with child and give birth to a son, and you are to give him the name Jesus. ³²He will be great and will be called the Son of the Most High. The Lord God will give him the throne of his father David, ³³and he will reign over the house of Jacob forever; his kingdom will never end.”

³⁴ “How will this be,” Mary asked the angel, “since I am a virgin?” ³⁵ The angel answered, “The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you. So the holy one to be born will be called the Son of God.

Zechariah 9:9 (NIV84) ⁹Rejoice greatly, O Daughter of Zion! Shout, Daughter of Jerusalem! See, your king comes to you, righteous and having salvation, gentle and riding on a donkey, on a colt, the foal of a donkey.

Isaiah 7:14 (NIV84) ¹⁴ Therefore the Lord himself will give you a sign: The virgin will be with child and will give birth to a son, and will call him Immanuel.

Isaiah 9:6 (NIV84) ⁶For to us a child is born, to us a son is given, and the government will be on his shoulders. And he will be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.

1 Peter 1:15–16 (NIV84) ¹⁵ But just as he who called you is holy, so be holy in all you do; ¹⁶ for it is written: “Be holy, because I am holy.”

Warm Up:

This week’s message opened up with some fun Christmas movie references.

If you had to choose one Christmas movie to describe your life, which one would you choose and why?

Discussion:

- 1.** Pastor Tom spent a good part of his message describing the word mean. What are some of the images that come to your mind first when you think about the word mean? What do you think it might look like to live a “mean” life as Pastor Tom described?
- 2.** Read John 3:16-17. Excerpt from Tom’s message: *As a result of the events described in these two verses, the entire world now has another deal on the table. We all get to choose. We can do mean or do something else.* How might you describe the “something else” that Pastor Tom is referencing here? How has the truth of John 3:16-17 personally impacted your life? If you cannot think of a way it has, what might be one way you hope this verse could affect you?
- 3.** Read John 10:10. Have you ever seen someone you might describe as living an abundant life? If so, what was that like? If not, what might it look like for someone to live the abundant life?
- 4.** Read Psalm 99:9. In his message, Pastor Tom offered this definition for Holy – To be set apart for a specific purpose. What might it mean for us to be holy? What might God be setting us apart for?
- 5.** Excerpt from Pastor Tom’s message: *If life without Jesus is mean, life with Jesus is holy.*

What are some characteristics that distinguish a life with Jesus from a life without him? How can you see holiness in the things you just described?

6. Read Luke 1:26-35.
What is happening in these verses? What can we learn about holiness from this passage? What relationship do you see between holiness and the Christmas story?
7. Toward the end of his message, Pastor Tom talked about God calling us to go from average to holy over this Christmas season. Look at 1 Peter 1:15-16.
What might it look like to go from average to holy? What are some practical ways you might see evidence of holiness in someone's life? If you still need some time to understand what holiness is, take some time to define holiness as a group using scripture and this message.
8. Pastor Tom wrapped up his message, defining consecration and sanctification:
Consecration—being dedicated to God and His service
Sanctification—being set apart from sin and being made holy
Pastor Tom described consecration as our part and sanctification as God's part.
What are some ways that you have consecrated yourself? Or what might it look like for you to dedicate yourself to God? How have you seen God working to sanctify you?

Next Steps:

"We must never allow anything to interfere with the consecration of our spiritual power. Consecration is our part; sanctification is God's part. We must make a deliberate determination to be interested only in what God is interested. The way to make that determination, when faced with a perplexing problem, is to ask yourself, "Is this the kind of thing in which Jesus Christ is interested, or is it something in which the spirit that is diametrically opposed to Jesus is interested?" – Oswald Chambers

As you read through this quote and reflect on being set a part for God and set apart from sin, what about these descriptions and this quote do you find most exciting or encouraging and why?

What is one way that you can intentionally dedicate yourself to God during this Christmas season? Take some time to pray for God to help you experience a holy life with Jesus.