

Made by Jesus

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- [0 : 0 0] Well, good morning and happy Christmas. We're going to read from John chapter 1 this morning. We're going to read the first four verses and then go from 9 to 14.
- John chapter 1, beginning at verse 1. In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was in the beginning with God, and all things were made through him, and without him was not anything made that was made.
- In him was life, and the life was the light of men. The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it.
- And then down to verse 9. The true light, which gives light to everyone, was coming into the world. He was in the world, and the world was made through him, yet the world did not know him.
- He came to his own, and his own people did not receive him. But to all who did receive him, who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God, who were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God.
- [1 : 2 0] And the Word became flesh, and dwelt among us. And we have seen his glory, glory as of the only Son, from the Father, full of grace and truth.
- This is the Word of the Lord. Well, good morning, everyone. Merry Christmas. Well, we're celebrating the birth of Jesus, and it reminded me that Sam was asking about his birth.
- I've got a photo of him as a baby when he just came out of the womb. And his story was an emergency C-section. And so Emma had done all the hard work and still knocked out on the operating table.
- And I had the privilege of holding Sam on my chest for the first time. And it's a joyous news, isn't it, when someone's born?
- It's a new beginning, the start of his story. And it's not like we can tell Sam's story on his own. He was born into family. I think all our stories is about family, and Christmas is about family, isn't it?
- [2 : 3 5] So when we come to the story of Jesus, where do we start? We picture that nativity scene, and we're talking about birth. It feels like we're at the start of the story.
- But then John, that's not where he starts. That's not the start of Jesus' story. To explain it, I'm going to get the kids up front, okay? So kids, any kids here?
- Do you want to come up on stage? This is time for you. And you're going to have to see the screen. So sit here. Make sure you can see the screen, kids.
- Well, kids, John begins the book of the story about Jesus in the beginning. And he says that God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit made the world, made everything.
- This means that Jesus, he made the world that he would be born into. So we're just going to remember that story, and we've got some pictures to help us remember.
- [3 : 4 1] In the beginning, there was nothing. Nothing. That's kind of something on the screen. Nothing. Nothing except God.

And then God said, come, light. And the light came. God filled the daytime sky with the sun and filled the nighttime sky with the moon and stars.

And God the Father, God the Son, God the Spirit made the world. Jesus made the world he would be born into. And then God said, come, sky, come.

And God filled the sky with birds of all kinds. And then God said, come, sea, come. And the sea came. And God filled the sea with fish and creatures of all kinds.

God the Father, God the Son, and God the Spirit made the world. Jesus made the world that he would be born into. And then God said, come, land, come.

[4 : 5 6] And the land came. And God filled the land with plants of all kinds. And God also filled the land with animals of all kinds. God the Father, God the Son, and God the Spirit made the world.

And that means Jesus made the world that he would be born into. But he's still not finished. Finally, God said, come, people.

God made people. God the Father, God the Son, and God the Spirit made the world. Jesus made the world that he would be born into.

Isn't that amazing? That he made the world so that he could come into it and know us. He's the one who made us. I don't know if you've got a tag on your shirt.

Mine says Connor. So thank you, Connor Shadwick. Did you make... You made my... Thanks, Connor. It must be a different Connor. These tags, they tell us who made our clothes.

[6 : 0 2] And it's like there's a tag on each of us and a tag on the whole world saying, made by Jesus. Isn't that amazing?

And he came into the world. How about we pray? Let's pray. Dear Jesus, thank you for making us and the whole world. And thank you for coming into this world so that we can know you.

Amen. All right. Thanks, kids. Do you want to go on back? So that's where John starts his story of Jesus.

That's the start of Jesus' story. He made the world that he was going to be born into. So at Christmas time, we're picking up in the middle of the story when he comes into his world.

We celebrate that the word, talking about the self-expression of God, you get to know me through my words. The word, the self-expression of God became flesh.

[7 : 0 2] That word is like meat. It meted himself. I think sometimes we can think of God as the rule maker. And he is the one who makes sure everyone follows the rules.

Or we think of God as power. There's nothing too wrong about that. It's just not complete. Because the story of Christmas is that God has revealed himself fully as a human being.

That's crazy. I know some of us are used to hearing that. But it's the biggest miracle in the Bible that God became a human being. It means we can think of God, think of Jesus at the tomb of Lazarus.

He has all authority. At his word, a dead man comes to life. But he's also flesh and blood. He's with Mary and he's weeping. He's crying with her.

That's how flesh and blood he is. We can know God in his son. He wants to be known. That's why he came into the world.

[8 : 1 8] I don't know if you've opened presents yet. But we already have. And it was a great time. What I'm about to say didn't happen for us. But doesn't it hurt when you put all this thought into giving someone a gift and they look at it and you can tell on their face.

They can't hide. Oh, thank you. They can't hide it. That they're disappointed. You're laughing because we've all been there.

The sad thing is Jesus came to this world not to give us stuff, although he does give us all we have. He came to give us himself. And John tells us God can see the look on our face.

We can't hide it. The whole world rejected him. All of us are disappointed. We don't want him. We want him at a distance.

We don't want him too close. The world put him on a cross. And he came into the world knowing that would happen. Why did he do it?

[9 : 27] Well, he came to make us family, is what we hear in the opening of John's Gospel. Jesus became what we were so that we could become what he is.

A son of God. Children of the Father. Born into a new family. And he did it by going to that cross so that we could become family.

Sam wanted Christmas lights this year, so we took the plunge. And really, I wanted to do it. It was an excuse to buy Christmas lights.

And there was something unexpected that happened. I loved looking at it, and we love enjoying them together. But as I walked into my front door, I used to struggle to find the key in the da.

I couldn't see. And one of the unexpected things about the Christmas lights is I could see. Oh, great. There's my key. Off I go. Now, this is a pretty poor illustration.

[10 : 39] But Jesus came into the world as light so that we can enter the family home easily. Sorry for the poor illustration. But Jesus has come so that we can come into God's family home easily.

We can see God. We can see what he's like. And we can just walk right in. Verse 12 says, To all who received Jesus, who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God.

Like, family is the best thing about Christmas, isn't it? Like, I think we're pretty agreed on that. I saw this awful post on Lake Macquarie Local's Facebook page yesterday.

I don't know if anyone saw this. But the person... Anyway, I don't know why they decided this was a good idea to post this. If anyone is alone with no one to spend Christmas with, please let me know.

I need to borrow some chairs. I know we're laughing because it's shocking. I laugh too. It's black humour, isn't it?

[11 : 55] Very. Because there are people today, they can't wait till Christmas is over. Because it just reminds them that they've got no family.

The good news of Jesus is where, if you accept him, you're born of God. Even those who are alone today can know they're in the family of God.

Wow. And there's a family reunion coming. That's why Jesus came. So that's the middle of Jesus' story.

What's the end? What's the end of Jesus' story? What's his goal in all this? I've just been amazed thinking about this Christmas. I've been reflecting on the fact that the Son of God didn't just become a man for a time to achieve some goal.

He's going to stay a man forever. He says he's going to come back into his world. It's his world.

[13 : 06] It's his home. He's so committed to fixing this world. He's a man. He's entered it. He's part of it permanently. He's got skin in the game.

He's going to come and fix this world. We're going to be able to see him. We're going to be able to look him in the eye.

We're going to be able to look God in the eye. We're going to be able to hug him. He wants to remake his home with his family. And he's going to be human forever.

It's mind-blowing. That's the goal. That's the end we get to look forward to. I think Jesus' story should let us pause and consider our own story.

I think it makes us re-look at our beginning. God sent Jesus to give us a totally new beginning.

[14 : 09] To become a Christian isn't fundamentally something you do. You've got to be born. You've got to be born of God.

God, it's a totally fresh start. And the only thing you can do is ask God to do that for you.

He invites us into a new beginning into his family. Ask him. It's open to all of us. So it makes us consider our beginning.

I think it also changes our middle. How are we spending our time? I don't know if you've seen the Coca-Cola ad. You've got the world full of Santas.

And one of the Santas gets the last Coke from the vending machine and hands it over to the other Santa. It's a nice message. Wouldn't the world be nicer if people were kinder to each other?

[15 : 08] I want to live in a kinder world. It's a nice message. But Christmas, it is calling us. The Christmas spirit is much deeper than just kindness.

If God came to be rejected and still love us, and it's a riches to rag story. He became poor for us.

The Christmas spirit is calling us to spend the middle of our lives pouring ourselves out for people, even if they don't like us.

It's a radical Christmas spirit that Jesus calls us to, to serve people in love, to spend and be spent for them.

And I think the Jesus story changes the end of our story. I keep getting asked the question, and Sam alluded, opened with this.

[16 : 07] Are you ready? Are you ready for Christmas? Like my barber asked me that. I said no. My neighbour asked me that yesterday.

No. If you asked me that before this service started, are you ready? No. We're going to Port Macquarie later today.

Are we ready? No. Jesus came to, he's going to come back.

He came in lowliness and weakness. He's going to come back in power and majesty to remake his home and remake his family. Am I ready for that? Yes.

It's about the only thing I can say yes to. Not because of anything I do. If it was because of what I do, I'd have to say no again. That is because Jesus has given me the right to know myself as a child of God.

[17 : 09] I'm ready. Whenever that happens, I'm ready. So I just want to finish by leaving you with my barber's question. Are you ready? Are you ready?

Well, thanks for listening. I hope you have a really lovely Christmas. I think we're going to sing again. That's all right. That's all right. But maybe I'm ready. I think we're waiting for that, that's all right.

Yeah. That's good. You'll be increases. It's not good. What's it's remaining? I'll be trying to address to you. Okay. There you go. Thank you. Thank you, man. And I'm ready. We'll have this right now.

And I'll open it up. This is Rewn.