"God with Us" - Rescue us from sin

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Preacher: Ron Huffman

[0:00] Good morning, and God bless you. I am delighted to have this opportunity to speak to you, but I'm also fearful of not so much standing for people and talking about Christ and this glorious Savior that we just sung about, but the fear that we might miss the power and the glory of his presence in our hearts and our lives.

So I would ask for your prayers that as we share together that we might indeed be able to delight in his presence and to see his handiwork, not only in our own personal lives, but in the lives that all that will hear the word of God and be responsive to it.
Today, I think, is an exceptional day in the life of our church in that the scripture text reveals, that we're going to read together, reveals a loving response to the longing hearts of his people.
Specifically, the longing to be what God has created us to be, what we've all strove to be, and what we've all missed our mark in trying to be.
This scripture is for everyone who feels that, who's missed the mark of the intent of the good and a righteous life.
[1:38] And I think it points us to a Savior that corrects and redefines and reshapes and remolds life for us.

May I adapt a statement that I found from Isaac Dennison, who said this, He does not create, God does not create a longing or a hope without having a fulfilling reality ready for us.
God doesn't bring us together here in this act of worship. He doesn't allow us to be inspired by music. He doesn't allow that seed within our lives that says, I want more or long more, without already having prepared that.
And this is the joy of the passage that we're going to read and study. We will get to it. That in that it is God that has orchestrated this whole thing and that he comes to this historic divine moment to consummate all that he prophesied, all that we'd hoped for, all that we'd longed for.
I hope that that would also happen here for all of us as we anticipate Christmas, as we anticipate his saving grace.
[3:09] You know, the real question is not so much, is he ready? But the question is, are you ready? We talk about and we rehearse, even in our prayer times, the things that burden us, the things that escape, that cause, distract us from the joy and the celebration of this moment.

The hardships, the difficulties, the darkness in the world, the wars that we face, can all distract us from the reality of God's love and his grace for us.
Matthew, why is the passage in Matthew 1, 18-25 so, so vitally important? I think Matthew, as we read it, will reveal the convergence, the convergence of God and humanity, which leads to the salvation of all who will embrace God's redeeming act of love.
Now, that doesn't sound new to those of you who are Christian, but I think that you would agree that having God and man coming together in one human form is hard to wrap your mind around.
And yet, that is what will be proclaimed today and what we will celebrate today and we will rehearse today in our own minds and our hearts. The past two weeks of Advent studies, we consider the genealogy that affirms the links to Christ's origins, his kingships, his efficacy and his ability to save.
[4:53] Even those who are outside the camp, even those who are outside the moral and social boundaries of established society, we're invited to come in and to celebrate and to rejoice in the God of the salvation that we celebrate today.

Acts 1, 18-25 is this convergence of God and human that we call the incarnation.
God dwelling with us, taking up residence with us. And as we believe that, as we affirm that, we must sense his dwelling with us in this moment, in this place, in our hearts.

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And it ought to excite us, it ought to thrill us to think that God would do business with us even today in the midst of this worship experience.
God's purpose, then, is to reveal both what a healthy, whole, sinless life can look like and provide the sacrifice worthy of us, the atoning of our sins.
[6:15] God accomplishes what we're not able to do. God accomplishes what we're not able to do. Let's hear the word of God and not just talk about it.

God, found in Matthew, the first chapter, the 18th verse, the 20, 18 through 25, found on page 757 in your pew Bible.
Hear the word of God. This is how the birth of Christ, the Messiah, came about. His mother Mary was pledged to be married to Joseph.
Before they came together, she was found to be pregnant through the Holy Spirit. Because Joseph, her husband, was faithful to the law.
And yet he did not want to expose her to public disgrace. He had in mind to divorce her quietly. But after he had considered this, the angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream and said, Joseph, son of David, do not be afraid to take Mary home as your wife.
[7:36] Because what was conceived in her is from the Holy Spirit. She will give birth, give birth a son.

And you are to give his name, give him the name Jesus. Because he will save his people from their sins. All this took place to fulfill what the Lord had said through the prophet.
The virgin will conceive and will give birth to a son. And they shall call his name Emmanuel, which means God with us. When Joseph woke up, he did what the angel of the Lord had commanded him.
And took Mary home as his wife. But he did not consummate their marriage until he gave birth, she gave birth to a son.
And he gave him the name Jesus. Shall we pray? Holy Spirit, be our guide as we consider the truth your word has for us today.
[8:58] May our motives for knowing these truths from your word be pure and unadulterated.

And in response to your willingness to unveil these glorious mysteries, may we be inspired to surrender our wills to yours.
Regardless of what it cost us to submit. We ask these blessings because we know that your plan for our lives is not only providence, but it's the very essence of what it means to have a full and a meaningful life.
Give us eyes to see, ears to hear. And passion to live what you teach us in this intimate moment of communion with you.
For we are bound together by your Holy Spirit. And our hearts long to enjoy the embrace of your Holy Spirit. And to be safely held in your arms.
[10:14] May it be so. For we ask it in the name of our precious Lord, our Savior, Jesus Christ. Amen.

Amen. Amen. I want us to consider. There are many ways we can look at the text this morning. We can spend our time focused upon the dream itself.
Upon just telling the story verse by verse. but what I would like for us to do is to consider it in perhaps a unique way.
First, let's acknowledge that this is really about the divine origin, the beginnings of Christ, the human Christ here on this earth, this transforming moment in human history where the Savior came to live, the Savior, God, came to live among us.
And may we all affirm the greatest among them, among us, was the most humble in that he was willing to come and to humble himself to become a human being.
[11:38] I want us to find breathing space in our minds and our hearts and our souls as we study this and as we look at him. And divine breathing space to understand not just the technical details of this passage, but perhaps even more so the human aspect of it.

For God came in human form. And I want us to appreciate the questions that that arises among us. The interesting thing, and what I want to do as we dissect the passage, is to look at the very purpose. Why would God come to earth?
I mean, why would he bother? Why would he have to bother? Why not just create new human beings that would worship him, that would not fail, and that would just be submissive, unlike us?

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Well, we can speculate about that. But we do find an answer as to why he came to earth. It's a simple phrase out of verse 21.
[12:54] And it simply says, For he will save his people from their sins. Again, it's very hard to wrap our minds around this, but he's saying not just his people, the ones that sit here, most of you who sit here this morning, but he is saying the outsider as well, is he not?

As we read and remember the whole of the passages that we've read in Matthew thus far, he has, who is his people? It is those he's created. And indeed, he has created us all by his loving act.
Here in Matthew, Matthew is clarifying further the meaning of the genealogy and every aspect of Jesus' origin from the beginning to his sovereign hand.
the sovereign hand of the Father in this story that superintends each aspect of the coming of Christ, this infant child, into the world.
I want us, as God superintends our thoughts today, to attempt to move more deeply into our text and considering it this way, the cast of characters.
[14:18] that he has before us. And my hope is, is that you will want to see them not just as technical aspects of bringing Christ, the Emmanuel, God with us into the world, but I hope that you'll want to see them and personalize them as we look intimately and deeply into their lives, their roles, and in this new beginning.

And I want to admit up front, I will neglect a couple of verses that certainly the prophetic verses that we read early, that we've read and studied earlier.
I leave that to Tyler and your remembrance of what he's done there. And also, of the angels, there's a whole series of sermons I think that one could do on the role of angels in this whole Christmas story.
So, having said that, what do I want us to do? How do I want us to help define and accomplish this moment to deeply see these characters?
I recently listened to an interview with David Brooks, which is interesting about his new book, How to Know a Person.
[15:34] And I thought, this is really what I want us to employ, to use as a tool that we want to use to look deeply at this story.

He simply said in an interview, there's one skill that lies in the heart of any healthy person family, school, community, organization, or society. The ability to see someone else deeply and to make them feel seen, to accurately know another person, to let them feel valued, heard, and understood.
Now, he goes on to talk about it in this interview and illustrate this by referencing a series called The Chosen. Do you remember that? It's stories about Christ and the disciples.
But he was indeed impressed by the role that the character of Jesus played. And I think it defines this moment for us because he talked about, you know, in the midst of the crisis that Christ was born into this world, in the midst of all the Roman oppression, of all the things that were taking place around them.
He was able to, and all the difficulties of seeing people, he chooses both his enemies, Christ, and those in desperate need and his would-be disciples to see them beyond what they're talking about, such as, I immediately thought of Zacchaeus or the woman at the well or Nicodemus, all of whom in which Christ in this, his story, the narrative, I'm sure that you've read it, many of you, but he looks beyond the situation like the woman at the well and he says, look, it really is not a matter about where we worship that you want to argue about, meeting you haphazardly.
[17:40] The real issue is your heart and the fact that you're dissatisfied and the fact that you've lived with several men and you're still not at peace in your heart and your soul.

Christ is able to do that. So I want us in this narrative and in this story to look deeply, to look deeply at the Father, the Son, the Holy Spirit, Joseph and Mary and to know them, to try to know them and to understand them because in understanding them, we understand ourselves.
We understand the questions that really are being asked perhaps that would lead us, our own desires, our own longings to be fulfilled through being responsive, through being loving and as they are to us.
Let's hear the story and see if this makes sense. I know I'm kind of struggling here, so you have to, you know, I'm used to preaching in African American churches, so you have to shout out or, you know, fix it.

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Fix it means that, you know, you're not doing well, you need to step it up. Or, you know, just words of encouragement. So you can just say amen anytime you want. But I don't know if it'll help, but we'll try.
[19:00] Let's consider, though. And I want you to look at God the Father, first of all. And this whole story fascinates me. You have your Bibles open, right?

Because this, each of these segments, each of these personalities are really one of the key words that appears is origins or new beginnings.
And we find, and I think Matthew rehearsed this a few weeks ago, about in chapter 1, verse 1, you find the word origins or birth.
Birth is not really the best word in either of the texts, but in 1.1 you have origins. Origins in 1.18, as he talks about, let's talk about the beginnings of Christ.
It's a new beginning. And what we see is the parallel that they paint for us as they not only do the genealogy, but as you look back at Genesis 1.1, it says, in the beginning, it was God that began to create.
[20:08] Amen? Amen? So, and here's the great thing that we need to wrap our heads around if we're going to continue in this kind of intimate relationship with the Holy Spirit at this moment, that we understand that the Ruach, that the Spirit of God breathes life into this new beginning.

The Father is there creating, organizing. And why does he do all this? Why do we get all these details? Is it really to, to simply to have a justification of who created what?
His purpose was in order that he might have fellowship. That he might have an intimate relationship with human beings.
About, with human beings that have been given a choice to love them or not love them. And who often fail to love them.
The whole of the Old Testament as we rehearse it is about what? It's about God reaching out to human beings. His created. The ones that he loves. The ones that he goes about trying to redeem, to buy back, and, and to, and to bring into his loving arms.
[21:29] the question is, the question is, considering a God like this, is, what do you consider your origins?

Do you believe that a God created you? Can, is it within your ability to comprehend and appreciate a God who created you?
And if he did, he created you for a purpose. He has a plan for your life. And for me, in the darkness of night, in the difficulties of life, it's, it's good to know that somebody's got a plan and that somebody does care about me and that somebody does love me and somebody is not just somebody, it's the very one who created me and loved me.
I, I love not only, and of course, it is somewhat in sequence as we go down through this story of 18 through 25, but you find also just an allusion to Mary.
Mary really is, Matthew and Luke have two separate agendas. Luke is trying to tell more of the story. Matthew is really, as we've heard, reaching to Jewish people, looking for that connection in Jewish heritage, focuses mainly on that.
[23:12] But I want you to see this young girl. Again, I'm not sure we need to rehearse all the, the, the backstory. We know, you've heard about the engagements and, and how in Judaism they were legally bound during that one year, typically, of engagement.

So, we don't need to, to invest much time there. we also know, we'll rehearse because it is important to the story that, Mary, this young teenager, was, was, was, was, 13 years old.
and God comes to her and says, you're the one that's going to bear a child for me. It's interesting because it's hard to wrap your, your head around this and particularly the, the ideal of, and where Matthew's going here is, is the ideal of the virgin birth.
I think it's no longer a leap of faith for us or understanding to, to appreciate artificial insemination. Most of you medical doctors here know about the process.
It's a very likely possible thing to happen. The miracle is, again, back to incarnation, isn't it? The fact that it was the Holy Spirit that planted the seed within the egg of Mary and that in the midst of this, both God and man met.
[25:00] and embodied in human form. Wow. Well, as we think about that, I want you to rehearse some of the things that Tyler and Pastor Matthew has already helped us with and to bring into balance the extremes of now understanding this young woman and who she was and there's the

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extremes of beautification in these verses and there are others that, as Baptists and as Evangelicals, we often spend a great deal of time discarding or debunking Mary and making her beyond average as a mother.

I like what, there's a term that I've adapted for this from Frederick Birchner and he says that Mary, and I say, Mary deserves, and he says, a just and loving attention.
As we talk about the convergence of God and man in this girl's womb, I think we indeed must acknowledge that she does deserve a just and loving, our just and loving attention.
Her nobility, I think, is derived not so much for the birth itself, which is profound, I think, and obviously a miracle.
But to me, as I look deeply into the struggles of who she was and why God would ask her to do such a thing, I see beyond having grappled with that, her obedience and then her willing to be a mother.
[27:16] and to love and to nurture not only an infant child, but a teenager and a young adult to be the mother till he died on the cross of God, our Lord, and our Savior.

God is to Mary shares in this process the struggle that you and I often have. You know, I want to preach Luke, but we can't.
You look back at 114 and the angel explains this thing to her and he says, what? You want me to be the mother of God?
Now, it's hard for me to wrap around. I have not only two daughters, but I have three granddaughters and one that's 14. And I can imagine her coming to me and saying, oh, by the way, I'm pregnant.
And God did it. You know, that would be tough. And I say that not just to be humorous, but to say, to be human, that we sometimes so glorify these passages of scriptures that we distance ourselves from the fact that this was a young girl struggling with what it means to be the mother of God.
[28:43] And the daunting responsibility of having to nurture and strengthen and care for that child until God the Father takes him to be in active duty in full-time ministry the whole time.

the key to this whole struggle is one thing. It is a common thread that applies to both Joseph and Mary, and if you go back to Zechariah and Elizabeth and to others in these stories.
It again comes to us from scripture, Luke 138. It says, she turns to the angel and she says, behold, I am a servant of the Lord.
Let it be to me according to your word. Now I want you to, if you are considering becoming a Christian, I want you to know that you don't have to have your act together, that you don't have to have all the theological principles and details even of this event or moment in perfect justification to provide you salvation, but it is a struggle.
It is one that ultimately you come to the point of saying, having weighed in the balances what this is all about, you have to say like Mary and like Joseph, look, I believe that I need something, I believe and believe the Holy Spirit is convicting me of it and I'm going to follow you wherever you take me.
[30:21] well, let's be quick because I don't want to lose you. I want us to consider Joseph for just a moment and reflect on him.

For when Joseph discovered Mary was pregnant, he reacted in the framework of the religion in which, the Jewish religion, his teachings, his culture and I think that they were very emotionally and spiritually bound by this engagement period.
I think that he loved her and retribution wasn't an option for Mary and his heart and his mind.
He was wrestling with this before the angel came to reveal what he was, his intent. and I want you to see it wasn't an easy decision.
Basically, he was trying to, according to Deuteronomy 24.1, to put her away privately, divorce her privately, so that she would not be embarrassed.
[31:33] She would be embarrassed, but humiliated. But the important thing, I think, of the rehearsal of that story is the sight, the insight, into the character of Joseph.

Joseph was just going to be the stepdad, but he was in and committed, even with Mary. He was a man that was just wanting to do the right thing, live a right life.
He was a righteous person, but he was also merciful and he was always also loving. He was also submissive to the Lord God.
So what does he do? Obedience, right? He says in these final, he doesn't say it, he gets up and does it.

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He says, all right, I'm going to take Mary to be my wife, I'm going to keep her, bring her into my home, and we're going to face the community and the world around us and all the questions that arise as a result of that.
[32:46] What a wonderful testimony, isn't it, to the community. Oh, it's God that is active in the world and the Messiah is coming through her and through the baby that's in her and we're sharing this road together.

But they struggle together. He too becomes the parent that molds and chafes the carpenter's son who saves the world.
Obedience was the key, wasn't it? As I said before, as with Zechariah and with Mary. Mary. There's one other aspect of this that I want you to see.
That in the midst of this whole struggle that Joseph has, what happens? As with Mary, the angel comes, gives instruction, and of course with Mary, Elizabeth, the older cousin that is pregnant, also by an act of God, affirms, encourages her, strengthens her in this journey.
All of them say yes and are obedient, but the important thing is that the God that was a God of origins, the God that started in 1-1 and verse 18, is the same God that guides them, that in his hand, his hand reaches out to them, helps them to understand, and leads them to the kingdom.
[34:33] Jeremiah put it this way, you will seek me and you'll find me when you search for me with all of your heart. A part of this whole process of the redemption process, of the roles that they play, the reasons for success, always comes when we are responsive to the work of the Holy Spirit in our lives.

Well, let me go quickly to Jesus. Because while we could look at the whole of the New Testament, we've covered the Old Testament through Tyler and Matthew, I want to rehearse for you what Matthew has not done for us.
Matthew does not attempt to explain how Jesus Christ could be both man and God. He simply doesn't do it.
But what he does do is that he affirms it. And he simply says that of him, of Christ, in verse 16, that he was born of Mary.
And in verse 20, he says, and he was conceived of the Holy Spirit. That should be enough, shouldn't it? But it's hard, again, for us to wrap our heads around it.
[36:05] We explain it in many different ways as we ask these questions. you know, the second century had Christians and those who studied scripture, they came up with a doctrine that was called Daucesanism.

And I didn't pronounce that correctly, did I guys? But anyway, it was a sectarian doctrine. And that Christ did not really actually become real.
That he didn't really have a natural body on earth and that apparently was some type of a phantom.
The doctrine reached its zenith in the next generation with agnostics.
And some forms of it, I think, are even evident in our society, in our lives today. But the idea was that it even denies the fact that Christ died.
So it was easier to say, all right, he's all God. Most of us would fall into perhaps the opposite extreme in our society today.
[37:18] I think in our skeptical world, we have detractors about Christ and it's not his humanity, but his divinity.

Most of us can wrap our minds and hearts around the good and the wise and religious man or a prophet that struggled with his, and yet we struggle with his deity.
It's not being like God, but it's being God himself that we struggle with and that we have a difficult time with. There's a quote I want to share with you, Helmut Thickel, that simply said, certainly there are great and profound teachings in the world, but one must have the capacity to understand them and one must, in a situation which affords the reason adequate for breathing space so you can begin to process it.
The greatness of the gospel, the greatness of the gospel that we have presented to us today, is in the fact that it is available to all, not only to the spiritual mature or great, such as Kant, but also to the weak.
Pascal was the sublimest intellectual of the world thought, confined, but so can a little girl who prays at night before she goes to bed.

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[38:44] Christ dealt with this in his own day. In Matthew 16, you remember the story of his followers and his asking the question, you see, so is he all God or is he all man?

What's going on in your mind? So what? What if he's God and man or whatever? The question, I think, that comes to us is the one that Christ asked his disciples.
As they were traveling about, as it became popular, he turns to the disciples and he says, he simply asked the question, whom do you say?
Whom do they say that I am? Who are the people that are following me around? What are they saying about me? What do they believe? And he goes off and they respond by saying, well, some of you believe that you're John the Baptist.
Some others, Elijah and others, Jeremiah and some of the prophets. So what he's in essence saying is what many people believe today. Well, in Islam, right?
[40:00] That Christ was a good man, that he did a lot of wonderful things, that his teachings were good. We can embrace that. We can wrap our heads around that. But that's really not where he wants us to go.

Nor does he just simply want us to think of him as a God that never got here, that never died, that was all phantom, all fake, and therefore there's no pain or suffering, there was no death associated with that.
Nor does he want us to think of him as simply a good man. It's all or nothing. So he turns to his disciples after this discourse, and he says, but who do you say that I am?
You see, the most pressing question of this whole sermon this morning for all of you who are listening, it doesn't matter what everyone else says. The theologians, those that argue and debate, the nuances of this scripture, the question as God comes to dwell with us and in your midst this morning is who do you say that I am?
We have an answer for you. At least Peter had a good answer that was acceptable to Jesus. And he says, you're the Messiah, the Son of God.
[41:26] But even that is important, but even more important is what the Father says back to the disciple. He simply says this, Simon, son of Jonah, you're blessed.

You are blessed. Because you get this story. You get the story of the nativity scene. You get the story of what it means for God to come and to dwell in our midst, to love us, to care for us, to be with us, and to provide for us a way of salvation.
Simon, you get it. You're blessed because flesh and blood did not reveal it to you. But my Father in heaven. Now, I wish I were eloquent enough and profound enough to convince you mentally and emotionally of the fact that God is Jesus.
And that Jesus in his human form came and bled and died in order that he might provide for you the salvation that you cannot earn, that you cannot accomplish in and of and on your own.
But I find at least comfort in knowing that in my inadequacies, the power of the Holy Spirit that overshadowed the world as it was created, that overshadowed Mary and created God, man, with us, the one that now overshadows us and offers you the opportunity to come and to embrace this Messiah, the Savior.
[43:13] The other participant, I hope, in this whole narrative is you. For he did say in verse 21, my purpose for being here is you.

To provide salvation for you. 2 Corinthians 5, the 5th chapter, 17th verse says, Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he's a new creation.
He's a new beginning. He or she has a new origin. And the old has passed away and the new has come. As Joseph and Mary and even Jesus find their beginnings in God the Father and the Holy Spirit, so through our own response to the overshadowing Holy Spirit, we reframe our mundane, empty lives and we create, and he creates something that is holy and sacred and set apart for eternity.
Can I compare notes for a moment? The one last step and perhaps I've taken too long to get here. But I want you to think with me of the new beginning that Christ offers you.
It's interesting that he moves from this origin story now and you find in the third chapter of John another origin story. As Christ expands, and here's what Christ does always.
[44:46] He takes us beyond the boundaries of our own thought, our own ability to comprehend, and he takes us one step further. So here's a guy in chapter three, Nicodemus, that is a great student.

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And yet he comes with questions and Christ provides the answer. Let me just read it to you quickly. Now there was a man of the Pharisees named Nicodemus, a ruler of the Jews.
This man came to Jesus by night and said to him, Rabbi, we know that you are a teacher come from God, for no one can do the signs that you do unless God is with him.
Do you hear that? All right, you're a human being, you're a great man, you're another prophet, you're all those good things. But Christ is saying, no, I'm more. Every phase throughout this story, Jesus answers him, truly, truly, I say to you that unless you're born again, you cannot see the kingdom of God.
He moves the story. He reframes your questions and he drives it home. You really are not so concerned about, Christ is always concerned about you.
[45:59] He's always concerned about getting to the heart of the matter of the fact that what I want, God wants from you is your love for him. And he wants to love you and he wants to give his life to you.

And that's why he asked these probing questions. And Nicodemus said to him, how can a man be born again when he is old? Can he enter the second time into the mother's womb and be born?
Jesus answered, truly, truly, I say to you that unless you're born of water and born of the Spirit, he cannot enter the kingdom of God. That which is born of the flesh is flesh and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit.
Do not marvel that I said to you, you must be born again. The wind blows where it wishes and you hear the sound, but you do not know where it comes from or where it goes.
So it is with everyone who is born of the Spirit. And Nicodemus said to him, another question that comes with their service.
[46:58] Well, how can I be born again? How can I have this new creation? Jesus answers him and he says, are you a teacher of Israel and yet you do not understand the things, these things?

Truly, truly, I say to you, we speak of that which we know and we bear witness to what we have seen, but you do not receive our testimony.
If I have told you earthly things, how will you believe? How will you believe if I tell you heavenly things? No one has ascended to heaven except he who descended from heaven, the Son of Man.
You see how that comes together, how he's telling us the story of the nativity here? And as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, so must the Son of Man be lifted up that whoever believes in him will have eternal life.
God's purpose statement for you. For God so loved the world, you want to say it with me?
[48:05] That he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believes in him should not perish but have everlasting life. It's interesting that this word born again, again, it has two in the Greek languages, has two choices.

One is palin, which means a repetition of an act to redo what was done earlier. Do you want to redo your life? Do you want to redo and rehearse the same things that led you to this moment?
The old habits, the things that have caused such failure. Well, the second of the Greek terms, the one used here, is anothen.
And it says, which is also depicts a repeated action, the same, a repeated action, but listen to this. But it requires the original source to repeat it. It means from above, from a higher place, things that come from the heaven of God.
God created the heavens and the earth. God created you, and he recreates you in his Holy Spirit, in his holy, eternal being.
[49:33] Can't you say praise God for that? God created you, and he recreates you in the divine moment. God created you, and he recreates you in the divine moment. This is the purpose. It's not just rehearsing this morning, the fact that some baby was born in Bethlehem.

It's about the fact that God himself stepped into our lives, stepped into our worlds, and he provided an opportunity for us to be born again. That he, the author, the creator of this world, has taken his hand, has taken every measure in order to give you life.
It's awesome. Well, preachers who don't preach a long time often preach too much. Let me just, let me conclude with a quote I found by, it was interesting.
It kind of connects the Christmas mood with the teaching that we have. Jorgen Moulton said this, The ultimate reason for our hope is not to be found in all that we want or wish for and wait for.
The ultimate reason that we are wanted and wished for and wanted for, what is it that awaits us?

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[51:03] Does anything wait for us at all, or are we alone? Whenever we have our hope on trust in the divine mystery, we feel deep down in our hearts that there is someone who is wanting you.

Do you feel wanted this morning? There's someone who's hoping for you. There is someone who believes in you.
God is our last hope because we are God's first hope, first love. God so loved the world.
God so loved you that he gave his only begotten son that if you will believe in him, he will give you a new creation.
Father, help us to embrace this truth. Help us to love you.
[52:12] Help us to respond to you in this intimate moment of transaction between your Holy Spirit and us. For it's in Christ's name I pray.

Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen.
Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen.
Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen.

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