

“In the Beginning”

John 1:1-14

In the beginning there was nothing, but there was everything. God was in the beginning, and with God was Jesus Christ, who was there before anything else was created. Before there was the universe, before there were the stars, before there was the earth, sun, moon, and sky, there was Jesus Christ.

It is in this beginning that we have the essence of creation, or the things that make up what the world is composed of. It has been the quest of theologians, scientists, and scholars to understand what there was before there was anything, and I believe that in the beginning, there was Jesus Christ.

On this Christmas Day, we have the special treat of having Sunday worship together with our traditional Sunday service. It is on this day that we have the special treat of studying and appreciating the Christmas story here in the church. It is a blessing to be here on this morning, where we can celebrate Christmas day with our church family, in addition to our own families in our homes.

Last night we discussed the coming of Christ into the world, the physical and spiritual moments that were present on that night two thousand years ago. We discussed how important it is that we take time to spiritually allow Christ to take hold in our lives, for that time is now to allow Christ into our lives.

Today, we discuss who Christ is. We all have different images of Christ in our hearts and minds, and we all might wonder who Christ truly was in while he was on this earth. Theologians and historians have been searching for what is known as the historical Jesus, the person of Jesus, for quite some time.

While I think those endeavors have value in our understanding of Christ and I am interested in who the person of Christ was, I also believe that it is important to understand who Christ was spiritually. Christ is unique among all of humankind for not only was he fully human, he was also fully divine. He was God on earth, the physical manifestation of God. He is the second part of the Trinity, which is composed of also God the Father and the Holy Spirit. It is in this divine aspect that we have Jesus Christ the Savior of all humankind.

I think in order to understand who this new child of Jesus Christ is on this Christmas day, we should look at the comparison between the images of Jesus Christ presented to us in the scriptures. We have the four Gospels, Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John. Each of these four gospels present their own unique yet similar image of Jesus Christ. In our birth narratives, I believe we have three narratives present. Matthew, Luke, and John presented images of Jesus Christ early on. The one Gospel that does not have a birth narrative is Mark, because Mark dives right into the ministry of Jesus, which is still an accurate depiction of Jesus Christ.

Of the three birth narratives present in the scriptures, two, Matthew and Luke, take a look at the physical aspect of Jesus's birth. These two Gospels show how Christ came into the world physically, through his birth through Mary and all of the present angels, shepherds, and wise men coming from the east to visit this new child, the King of Kings that reigns now and forever. This is very characteristic of these two Gospels, for these Gospels focus on what Jesus did while on this earth, showing that through his actions he was indeed the Son of God and had the divine aspects of life with him in his ministry.

The third birth narrative, which often gets dismissed, is our narrative that comes from the Gospel of John. In the Gospel of John we don't have the story of the shepherds, the angels, or the wise men. Instead, we have a creation narrative of Jesus Christ. It is in this creation narrative that

we have who Jesus Christ is, where the spiritual aspect of the Jesus Christ comes from. While the other gospels focus on the physical aspects of Christ, how he came into the world and what he did, John focuses on who Jesus is, on who Jesus was in the beginning and who Jesus was in his ministry and who Jesus is now and forever. We have a glimpse into the eternal components of Jesus Christ, the components of Jesus Christ that we experience to this very day as Christians in our day and age, even here in Cheyenne, Wyoming.

John spends the whole of its Gospel telling us who Jesus Christ is for you, for me, for the world. That is why we have this birth and creation narrative at the very beginning of this Gospel. John does not focus on the physical aspects of Christ, but on the divine and spiritual aspects of who he is. This is a great example of how the gospels work together in giving us a complete image of Jesus Christ so that we can grow spiritually in our faith and ultimately understand eternal life as presented to us in the life of Jesus Christ.

I believe that when looking at the narrative of John, we find who Christ is because we need to know the spiritual aspect of Christ. We can learn that from a spiritual aspect the child that is Christ this morning is was in the beginning. He was with God, and the Word of God, the logos, is in the very essence or composition of the Christ child.

We have a child that is not of this world, yet very much in this world. We have a child that is meant for this world, and is meant for the next world. We have a child that contains the beginning, and contains the end. It is in this child that we are given the ability to become children of God and grow into the people God calls us to be, so that we might live and bring others into eternal life. That is the message of the narrative found in the beginning of John, and throughout the rest of the Gospel of John as well.

The question that I present to us today in this birth narrative and creation narrative found in John, is what do we do with it? We typically know of the physical aspects of the birth of Christ, again, the angels, shepherds, the wise men, Mary and Joseph, but have we pondered the spiritual part of the birth of Christ?

I believe the spiritual aspects of Christ point us to the defining event of the life of Christ, the resurrection that is found at the end of Christ's time on this earth. Yes, it is the beginning of Christ's life today, but his life pointed towards the resurrection, and towards life eternal. The gospel of John is very clear that Christ was aiming towards the goal of giving us life eternal and forgiving us of our sins.

Jesus came into the world so that we might have life abundantly. Jesus came into the world not to condemn the world, but to give us life now and forever. Jesus came into the world to be the person that we could turn to in our hardship, so that we can move forward in life and live the life that God intends for us to live.

Today on Christmas day, we have the opportunity to allow this person, to allow this divine person that Jesus Christ, into our hearts and lives. God was in the beginning, and in the beginning was Jesus Christ, and in the beginning was the Word of God in Jesus Christ, giving us the direction to a new life. We don't have to be condemned by the world we live in, we don't have to be condemned to a life where there is no hope. In Jesus Christ from the beginning we are given the hope that we can stand on, now and forever.

Today on this Christmas day, take time to appreciate the wonder that is found in Jesus Christ, the wonder that is found in the person that is Jesus Christ and the wonder that is God in Jesus Christ. We have been given so much opportunity in Jesus Christ and today is a great day to

celebrate that beginning. In the beginning we were given hope, in Jesus Christ we were given hope, and today, we are given hope in Jesus Christ.

Jesus Christ came into the world on this day, for us. He came into the world for you and for me, for all people that would live. As we go our separate ways after this service to celebrate Christmas day, may celebrate in such a way that gives honor and glory to Jesus Christ and to God the Father and the Holy Spirit. On this day was the beginning, a beginning that we can all share in and live in, now and forever. Amen.