

Acceptance: The Blessing of Christmas

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Acceptance

The choice is between the “accessible God” and the “free God.” The accessible God is on your side, looking out for you so that He might bless you circumstantially. The free God is up to much more than “blessing” our lives and those around us.

Biblically, the Free God is pursuing his transgenerational purpose:

1. To restore His authority over creation by establishing His Kingdom on earth.
2. To redeem the creation through the resurrection and judgment which come at the end of this age.
3. To reconcile people to Himself through the Gospel.

Salvation is God’s work to draw us up into His larger purpose.

Our Christmas series is called “The Blessing of Christmas” after Tiny Tim’s last words in Dickens’ “A Christmas Carol.” This classic story of transformation illustrates the blessing of Christmas.

Key question: What are the blessings of Christmas given by the Free God?

Two Premises:

- God answers prayers in accordance with His transgenerational purpose.
- God intervenes in our lives to deal with the real issue.

The Blessing of Christmas is Jesus coming into the world to save us (see above).

Let's talk about shame and the acceptance of God:

Brene Brown's definition: "Shame is the intensely painful feeling or experience of believing that we are flawed and therefore unworthy of love and belonging." (see "Daring Greatly")

Four things about shame:

1. We all have shame.
2. We are all afraid to talk about shame.
3. The less we talk about it, the more power it has over us.
4. We do two things with our unowned shame: project it or flaunt it.

What to do about shame?

1. Recognize the things that trigger your shame
2. Practice critical self-awareness
3. Reach out
4. Speak shame
5. Invite Jesus into your shame

Shame and the acceptance of God:

Heb. 12.2: Jesus experienced and overcame shame.

Rom. 5.1-5: God gives hope through the Holy Spirit in place of shame.