



# Fresh Oil



December 2010 (reprise 2016)

Dear Fellow Servants,

Well, the music on the radio and in the stores has been telling us that "it's the most wonderful time of the year." Ok, I can buy that, just as long as we keep to the original reason for this season, the fact that God became a man and dwelt amongst us. Look at what it says in John 1:14:

***"And the word became flesh, and dwelt among us, and we beheld His glory, glory as of the only begotten from the Father, full of grace and truth."***

That word dwelt is a very interesting word. It literally means that Jesus "pitched His tent and set up camp" with us. He *chose* to do that, according to the foreordained plan of God. This word 'dwelt' can also be translated as "tabernacled" which is not a household word but it does have significance for us as followers of Jesus Christ. If you'll recall, the Lord instructed Moses to have the children of Israel construct a tabernacle in the wilderness after they were delivered from Egypt. Later, a more permanent dwelling was erected, called the temple. God wanted to be present among His people, so the tabernacle served as a place where He met with His people.

Of course, the earthly tabernacle was only a type and a shadow of the greater, perfect, permanent tabernacle in heaven. Look at Hebrews 9:2, 11-12:

***"For there was a tabernacle prepared, the outer one... But when Christ appeared as a high priest of the good things to come, He entered through the greater and more perfect tabernacle, not made with hands, that is to say, not of this creation; and not through the blood of goats and calves, but through His own blood, He entered the holy place once for all, having obtained eternal redemption."***

That cold night in Bethlehem marked the beginning of Christ's earthly journey to bring sinners back into relationship with a holy God. His choice to live among us was the true expression of God's love, that He *wanted to be among us!* What had been restricted before (limited to the high priest on the Day of Atonement), namely the ability to approach God, now became possible through Jesus of Nazareth, the Son of God who became a man. Matthew quotes the prophet Isaiah concerning this in Matthew 1:23:

*... I have been anointed with fresh oil*

PSALM 92:10



***“Behold, the virgin shall be with child, and shall bear a son, and they shall call His name Immanuel, which translated means, GOD WITH US”***

Herein lies the true joy and wonder of Christmas, that God came to dwell among us. There is something very encouraging and very powerful about knowing that God is with us. Our trials, which seem so overwhelming, become manageable knowing that God’s presence is there to help us through. Grief, loneliness, sickness, and pain alike lose their power when we concentrate on the promise of Christ’s abiding presence.

Why not take some time to reread the Christmas story? Read both Matthew’s account and Luke’s (Matthew 1:18-25 and Luke 2:1-20, respectively). Savour the words and let God reveal that they are written for **you!** Now, have yourself a blessed little Christmas this year!

Your fellow servant,

*Pastor Brian*