



# Emmanuel - God With Us!

**“Behold, a virgin shall be with child, and shall bring forth a son, and they shall call his name Emmanuel, which being interpreted is, God with us” (Matthew 1:23).**

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**“And she shall bring forth a son, and thou shalt call His name JESUS: for he shall save his people from their sins” (Matthew 1:21).**

Evangelist Billy Graham used a pertinent illustration of man's futile attempt to save an ant from a journey to destruction to paint a picture of the necessity of Jesus coming as a man to save the world from sin and hell. He illustrated that if the man spoke to the ant, the ant would not understand. If he placed his finger on the path to prevent the ant, the ant would simply climb over it. The only way to effectively rescue the ant is to become an ant and communicate in a language the ant understands. And that is exactly what Jesus did - “Emmanuel... God with us.”

As we celebrate His birth this season, let us take time to ponder whether God's purpose in sending Jesus is being fulfilled in our individual lives:

- 1) Is this “Emmanuel” truly “with us” this moment and every moment of life (Matthew 1:23)?
- 2) Have you allowed Him to accomplish God's purpose in your life **“for He shall save His people from their sins”** (Matthew 1:21)?
- 3) Are you daily responding to His Great Commission of going into all the world and preaching the gospel to every creature (Matthew 28:19,20; Mark 16:15)? “As my Father hath sent me, even so send I you” (John 20:21).

In times like these, it is easy to repeat the mistake of Mary and Joseph in Luke 2:41-50 **“But they supposing Him to have been in the company, went a day's journey...”** (vs. 44). We learn from this story that:

- 1) They lost their focus on Jesus as they were carried away in the routines of celebrations. The next routine after the feast was to return home. They packed their load and went hoping that Jesus had followed suit. Today, many have lost contact / touch with Jesus be-



cause of concentration on their jobs, careers, studies, ambition, family, household chores, plans and religion. Activities without Christ lead to frustrations “For Israel hath forgotten his Maker, and buildeth temples; and Judah hath multiplied fenced cities: but I will send a fire upon his cities, and it shall devour the palaces thereof” (Hosea 8:14). “I am the vine, ye are the branches: He that abideth in me, and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit: for without me ye can do nothing” (John 15:5).

- 2) It is easier to lose Jesus in the midst of celebrations than to get Him back. After a day's journey Joseph and Mary found that Jesus was not with them. It took them another three days to locate Him.
- 3) Many are travelling in their journeys of life on the **assumption** that Jesus is with them, when in reality they are going on their own. They start journeys into marriage, career, business, religion, new year, etc on the basis of suppositions. They wrongly suppose that their desires, counsels and circumstances are evidences of divine guidance.
- 4) Man misses out of God's next move, when they go without Him. Joseph and Mary lost out of Christ's activities in the temple. As Christ did not stop working simply because Joseph and Mary had gone, so also God does not suspend His programme simply because we have abandoned Him – we merely lose out of being a part of it.

5) They expected Jesus to adjust to their plans rather than they adjusting to His (Christ's) programme. The "normal" thing everybody does after feasts was to return home but Christ had a different mission – **"...wist ye not that I must be about my Father's business?"** (Luke 2:49). They expected Christ not only to know the 'correct' routines but also to adjust to their plans, scarcely ever bothering about finding out Jesus' programmes / priorities or making room for them. This is the problem with some Christians. Everyone is firing off in different directions and expecting God to adjust to them rather than finding out God's priorities / plans and submitting to them. Everyone is establishing standards / routes for themselves and in so doing have missed the narrow road to salvation and eternal life (Matthew 7:13,14). "Brethren, my heart's desire and prayer to God for Israel is, that they might be saved. For I bear them record that they have a zeal of God, but not according to knowledge. **For they being ignorant of God's righteousness, and going about to establish their own righteousness, have not submitted themselves unto the righteousness of God**" (Romans 10:1).

The lives of Abraham, Joseph, David, Solomon, Sampson, Paul and the disciples of Christ illustrate the many benefits of "Emmanuel, God with us" as well as of the dangers of living without God! Reproduced below is a story by Evangelist Reinhardt Bonnke that illustrates what it means to have **"Emmanuel, God with us"**.

"This is how my parable begins. Let me call him John. John had a double storey house, five plus five rooms. One day there was a gentle knock on the front door. When John opened it was the Lord Jesus. "Please come in", John pleaded, "I will give you the best room in my house – it is upstairs. Well, Jesus is a gentleman and said **" t h a n k            y o u "** . The next morning someone hammered against the front door. When John opened it who was there? The devil. "No" shouted John, "I don't

want you here" But the devil said "I'm already in" – and a big fight started. Satan poured filthy temptation on him, it was horrible. By the evening John somehow got the victory and threw the devil out. Then he said "wait a minute". I gave Jesus the best room in the house, why didn't he come to my rescue?" Jesus said to John "Look, you gave me one of the ten rooms..." John was on his knees and said "I can see my mistake. Sorry, Lord. Let's make 50/50." Jesus is a gentleman and accepted. The next day was a repeat of the day before. Somehow the devil got in and out and John was totally exhausted. "Why didn't Jesus come to my rescue today? I need to go and ask." The Lord said **"My son, why don't you give me all ten rooms and then, instead of me staying with you, you stay with me?"** John broke down. He pulled the key of the front-door from his pocket and handed it to Jesus. Now, he had given it all. The next morning, it was still dark, when someone was knocking at the front door so hard that the whole building shook. John jumped frightened and shaken out of bed crying "O, it's the devil again", when suddenly he heard footsteps – but this time inside the house. Jesus was marching in majesty and power towards the front door. He had the key. It now was His duty to answer the door. John was wondering what would happen and stood right behind Jesus when the Lord opened the door wide. Who was it? The devil of course. But when the devil saw Jesus standing in the door he bowed low, very low indeed, and said "Sorry Sir, I knocked on the wrong door!" Some have given nine rooms to Jesus and on the door of room number ten they have written "Strictly Private". It is there where they have their secret sins and live their double lives. But Jesus cannot be cheated. C'mon. Let's sing it together from the bottom of our hearts "Unto Jesus I surrender, unto Him I freely give....I surrender ALL, unto thee my God and Saviour, I surrender all. "With all my love".