

“The Hero Arrives” – Part 1

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As I think about this Advent season, I am reprimanded by my neglect individually and perhaps corporately. Although the Hero has arrived, we continue to ignore His presence. We enter Advent with little thought and preparation. We do not anticipate or expect His appearance. I do not believe celebrating Christmas as it currently exists undermines the truth it contains, but I do believe that we must not forget who and what this is all about. Although the words on paper read harshly, my intent is not to chasten, but to remind. It is to speak as a Shepherd and not as the Butcher. Today, my intent is to be touched by God.

When we consider the season of Advent, our own actions and attitudes toward Christmas appear vulgar, if not blasphemous. We have so commercialized the story of God that only a hard right turn will put us back on course. In life, it seems that greed and not God controls us. It is self-serving action and not sacrifices on any level that marks us and characterizes our lives. We are heirs of the promise and joint-heirs with Christ, yet we live puny lives simply because we do not know and live in the story.

We have so ignored the whole that we can barely discern the parts. God is calling to us from the distant shore. He invites us to open our eyes and to stop the clutter that blocks our vision. Let's stop the incessant noise that drowns out the striking sound of His glory. Friend, you and I are living in the miracle called Christmas. We are living in the story, His story. He wants us to see His person and His purpose, and He is convinced that if we but hear the whisper of His voice and but touch the hem of His garment, we will never be the same. I would like us to consider two verses. The one is familiar and the other perhaps not so much.

¹⁶ “For God so loved the world, that **He gave His only begotten Son**, that whoever believes in Him shall not perish, but have eternal life. ¹⁷ For **God did not send the Son into the world to judge the world, but that the world might be saved through Him**” (John 3:16, 17).

In reading these verses we see that God sent His Son, His only begotten Son. This entire idea of Christmas is the sending of God's only begotten Son into the world. This babe in the manger is none other than God's only begotten Son. Again, think of how we have trivialized this truth. My attention is not focused on the secular media or the unbelieving world. I would expect them to ignore this truth. My attention is on us as to how our actions and attitudes have betrayed the depth of this truth. It is wrong that we do not commemorate His arrival. Regrettably, most of our Christmas celebration is about us. It is not with the same amount of energy or attention that we prepare for His arrival. All of our financial expenditures, all of our stress, all of our anxiety, all our focus is on our parties and gifts. This mindset is flawed. It is not that these “things” cannot exist, but such “things” as these must not block us and blind us from the true meaning of Advent.

My fellow believer, it can be different. Today, may the Holy Spirit awaken us to the significance of His arrival. The story is all about the person and purpose of God. What are we

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doing in recognition of this? What valuable insight might we offer to those younger than us in order to guide them into this most blessed time? What do we need to change in order to honor the hero's arrival? What preparation are we making in anticipation of His arrival? As believers we have the unique privilege to pause each year and reflect on the storyline of God, to consider the villain and the hero and to give God glory for His power, justice, and grace. May we not squander this tremendous opportunity and trivialize the hero's arrival.