

“God Is...”

Pastor Randy Richter

December 6, 2009

1. Think back on the Christmas programs you have attended. Share some stories. What was the funniest thing you have ever seen happen in a Christmas program? What characters stand out to you?
2. It was the prophets who first pointed the way to the Christmas story. Of course they told it in bits and pieces, often not even knowing exactly what it was they were saying. Today, we are going to look at a few of those prophecies.

Read Isaiah 7:14

3. How did you choose the names of your children? How does this differ from the way Biblical names were chosen? Why was it so significant for people in Isaiah's time to hear that God would be “with them?”
4. Pastor Randy said that those hearing this often thought of themselves as being on the “point system.” Why is the point system inadequate for any deep relationship?

Read Micah 5:2,4 and Psalm 22:1

5. At the time, many people struggled with the feeling that God was far away. In the Micah passage, this one who would come is described as a shepherd. What were some helpful qualities for the job of a shepherd? What was the most important quality? How would these characteristics be welcome to the original hearers?
6. Read John 11:45-53. The message from Caiaphas who had no idea what he was saying, was that God wants everyone in his family. How was this a shocking message at that time? What are some of the interactions that Jesus had with people that would prove that to be true?

7. In what ways do you see that when Jesus saw a Rembrandt covered with mud, he saw the value, not the mud?
8. What are some symptoms in our life when we forget that God is for us?
9. What are some symptoms in our life when we forget that God is near us?
10. What are some symptoms in our life when we forget that God wants everyone in his family?
11. What are some ways we can intentionally remember these things this Christmas season?
12. How can we communicate these truths to people for whom the concepts of a God who is for them, near them, and wants them to be a part of his family are completely foreign?
13. How is it true that we now have the role of the prophet? Have you ever thought of yourself this way before?