

God with us 1 – In the Silence

God with Us Bumper

Welcome to Redemption Church in Plano Tx! We are so glad to have you with us. Welcome!

And welcome to everyone watching and listening online.

We are excited about the Christmas season. We are starting a brand new series that will focus on the message of the Christmas season.

GOD WITH US

The message of this season is that God is with us. God has come to be near us. We are not alone, because God is here.

Matthew 1:23 (NIV2011) “The virgin will conceive and give birth to a son, and they will call him Immanuel” (which means “God with us”).

This scripture actually is a quotation of the Prophet Isaiah who lived 700 years before Jesus was born.

Isaiah 7:14 (NIV2011) Therefore the Lord himself will give you a sign: The virgin will conceive and give birth to a son, and will call him Immanuel.

God sent word through the Prophet Isaiah that was a promise.

GOD WITH US - PROMISE

The child would be called Immanuel and that word meant “God with Us.” Jesus was God come to earth to be with us... walk amongst us, heal us, speak to us, save us...

God sent a promise that He is with us. But let’s get real...

There are times when it is easy to believe that God is with us. It is sometimes easier to believe than others..

There are days where it seems like God wakes you up in the morning and calls you by name.. “Hey Chris! Good morning!” And you just wake up feeling a closeness with God. It is easy to believe He is with you when you feel that.

There are times where you just receive wonderful blessings. You get a raise, your wife isn't mad at you, your kids sleep through the night, and the Dallas Cowboys actually won a game... When these things happen it is just easier to believe that God is with us.

But then there are times when it is more difficult to believe God is with you.

Problems often make us question "God are you there?"

GOD WITH US? - Problem

You start to question if God is with you...

There are days you wake up and you don't feel God. Instead you feel tired and your back hurts.

There are days when bad things happen. You don't get the raise, you get laid off and have to find a new job. There are days when you have the argument with your spouse, and you spend the night worried in the Emergency Room because there is something wrong with your child and you don't know what to do.

There are days when you can't even think about sports, movies, social media or video games, because everything seems to be falling apart.

There are times you feel alone, hurting, scared, and you wonder... God are you there?

It is difficult to remember the promise when you are surrounded by problems. It takes faith to hold on to the promise in times of problem.

We concentrate on the big God filled moments of the Christmas story. We remember moments where angels showed up and sang. We sing about moments where shepherds worshipped and wise men followed a star.

But before Angels came to announce the births of John the Baptist & Jesus there was no sense that God was with the people; quite the reverse actually. There was a sense that they had been abandoned by God.

Before the angels spoke there were 400 years of silence from God.

400 years of silence

For 400 years God didn't say anything.

For 400 years God not show up or send a prophet.

For 400 years there were no records of miraculous healing.

For 400 years the people of God were under persecution and tyrannical governments.

400 years... generation after generation, generation after generation heard nothing from God.

Have you ever experienced silence from God?

Mary & Joseph grew up having only heard old stories about how God used to speak and work miracles.

Maybe you are here today and you wonder if those old stories are true. Maybe you had a grandmother who used to tell you great things that God had done in your life, but you at this moment may feel like you have never experienced any of those things.

Maybe today, you feel like God is no longer speaking.

Maybe you feel like it has been so long since you felt and heard from God, it makes you wonder if God is still with you.

Silence is difficult... but out of nowhere an Angel showed up and spoke. God's voice was heard again.

You have the promise... you have the problem... but what you really long to experience is for the promise to be performed.

God with us - Performed

This is what the Christmas story is all about. The birth of Jesus is the promise performed.

Isaiah said the child would be God with us... and here Jesus is. This is what we celebrate. Jesus is God. Jesus is God with us.

I said earlier that it is difficult to remember the promise when you are surrounded by problems. Now hear this...

It is easy to remember the promise when you are seeing it performed.

- When you see the angel standing in front of you...
- When you get the job...
- When avoid the car wreck...
- When your kid gets the scholarship

But for the next few moments I want to talk to about the space between the promise & the performance.

The space between

The space between the promise & the performance is something I have never been a fan of. I am often guilty of wanting to fast forward past the problems, the waiting, the silence and go immediately to the promise performed.

There 3 things we need to learn about the space in between.

1. The promise is still from God.

STOP SECOND GUESING THE PROMISE.

2. No problem can stop His promise.

The problem is just what the space in between is made of.

3. The promise is performed in Jesus.

The ultimate fulfillment of God's promise is not winning the lottery, buying a house, or anything you open on December 25th. Jesus is the ultimate promise performed.

Musician

For 400 years God was silent, but the birth of Jesus is proof that God was still with them.

God is with us in the silence

Are you in that space in between today? Are experiencing silence? I want you to know that God is still with you. Even in the silence God is present.

700 years before Jesus was born a promise was given.

400 years before Jesus was born God went silent.

But on the day Jesus was born it became clear to everyone that God was with us.

God was always present.

Promise Problem Performed Present

He was present when the promise was given.

He was present in the middle of the problem... silent but present.

He was present as the promise was performed.

I don't know whether you are in the promise, the problem, or the performance, but I can tell you that God is present.

If we truly believe God is present then we should take some time to talk to Him.

We do 3 things every time we gather at Redemption Church. We worship God, receive God's word, and we talk to God.

Over the next few minutes we will sing a worship song and I challenge you to spend some time talking to God.

I want to invite you to take a step from your chair and spend some time talking to the God who is with you.

If you would like someone to pray with you, come into the first 2 feet of this stage and one of our staff will come pray with you.