

Expect a Miracle

Therefore the Lord himself will give you a sign: The virgin will be with child and will give birth to a son, and will call him Immanuel.

Isaiah 7:14

What does God look like?

Wonderful counselor, mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace. Of the increase of his government and peace there will be no end. Isaiah 9:6-7

He (Jesus) had no beauty or majesty to attract us to him, nothing in his appearance that we should desire him. 3 He was despised and rejected by men, a man of sorrows, and familiar with suffering. Like one from whom men hide their faces he was despised, and we esteemed him not. Isaiah 53:2-3

What is your mental picture of God when you pray?

- Is it a critical, condemning judge or a merciful, loving parent?
- A God who favors some over others or a God who loves all creation and all people who make up this incredible planet?
- Do you picture a savior who is concerned only with saving people for life after death, or one who is actively engaged in restoring and renewing devastated places and devastated lives?
- Do you believe that God always rewards obedience with material wealth and physical health or that God remains present with us in poverty, pain, and suffering?

What does God look like? God looks like _____!

- ❖ God came to work miracles in our broken world!
- ❖ Christmas is the celebration of a miracle!

The dictionary defines miracles as “a visible interruption of the laws of nature, understood only by divine intervention and often accompanied by a miracle worker.”

- ❖ A miracle is a unique event in the world that God does through people like you and me.

Whoever believes in me, as the Scriptures has said, streams of living water will flow from within him. John 7:38

God births miracles through ordinary people.

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Where do we find Jesus in the pecking order of life?

Nazareth! Can anything good come from there? John 1:46

I can believe in a God who looks like Jesus! I can follow a God who looks like Jesus! And I know that a God who looks like Jesus can use even me!

Mary was a common ordinary person!

“My soul glorifies the Lord and my spirit rejoices in God my Savior, for he has been mindful of the humble state of his servant. Luke 1:46-48

Humble means “low in situation, poor, and depressed.”

God loves to take the ordinary and use them in extraordinary ways!

You will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be my witness. Acts 1:8

Jesus comes to ordinary people today to use us for God’s purpose. But there are two caveats that come with miracles.

- ❖ We must be willing to be used and miracles come at a cost.

God asked Mary and Joseph to live a life of sacrifices!

At Christmas, we celebrate the birth of the Messiah who was born not only to die sacrificially for us but also to show us how to live sacrificially.

The message of Christmas is about a sacrificial gift.

I want to know Christ and the power of his resurrection and the fellowship of sharing in his sufferings. Philippians 3:10

Jesus, who calls us to follow in the way of the cross, challenges every tradition and value that we hold to be true.

Why? Because Christmas is about a miracle.

And every miracle of God is conceived in the heart of a believer, grows in conviction and clarity, and then is delivered through a committed action.

As the angel Gabriel said to Mary, “You will be with child and give birth” Luke 1:31.

God plants the seeds of miracles in the hearts of available people who are willing to act on God’s vision.

Every spirit-filled Christian has the potential for a God movement within them. The miracle is conceived and delivered through ordinary people who are willing to dream God’s dream and then act on God’s vision.

- ❖ How do you picture God? Does your image have more in common with Santa Claus or with Jesus?
- ❖ What about your family’s Christmas traditions. How many of them focus on your own comfort and pleasure?
- ❖ Are there some new traditions you could start that would focus more on Christ presence than on presents?
- ❖ What ideas do you have that could be seeds for a miracle that could transform other people’s lives?
- ❖ Are you ready for God to birth a Christmas miracle through you?

God is ready – he is simply waiting for us to be willing to live and give like Jesus.