

**Message For December 4, 2016**

**A Story for all People**

**Isaiah 9:6-7 New King James Version (NKJV)**

**<sup>6</sup> For unto us a Child is born,  
Unto us a Son is given;  
And the government will be upon His shoulder.  
And His name will be called  
Wonderful, Counselor, Mighty God,  
Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.  
<sup>7</sup> Of the increase of *His* government and peace  
*There will be* no end,  
Upon the throne of David and over His kingdom,  
To order it and establish it with judgment and justice  
From that time forward, even forever.  
The zeal of the LORD of hosts will perform this.**

**Every year during Advent we jump into the story that we call the “Nativity Story” or the “Birth Narrative”. It’s the story that Matthew simply begins by writing:**

**2 Jesus was born in Bethlehem in Judea, during the reign of King Herod.  
Matthew 2:1 New Living Translation (NLT)**

**The Gospel writer Mark begins, not with a baby in a manger but with the “baptism and temptation” of Jesus.**

**John the Fourth Gospel writer begins his story as Jesus is introduced as God in the flesh. Jesus is introduced by His cousin, John the Baptist as Jesus is about to begin His public ministry.**

**<sup>14</sup> So the Word became human and made His home among us. He was full of unfailing love and faithfulness. And we have seen His glory, the glory of the Father’s one and only Son. John 1:14 New Living Translation (NLT)**

**The third Gospel writer, Luke gives us the most details of Jesus’ birth. It is the expanded story of the birth narrative.**

**The angel's visit to Mary...  
The trip to Bethlehem where Jesus is born...  
the Shepherds visit to the Holy Family...  
And of course the Angels singing and glorifying God**

**The story most often seen in Christmas programs and read aloud.**

**This story has been told and read for hundreds of years.**

**The Story was told by the prophet Isaiah 700 years before it even happened.**

**There would be a Savior born in an obscure little village – not yet famous.**

**As we look around us... it is a story filled with city decorations of stars and angels and snowflakes, of lighted trees and manger scenes.**

**Of presents, families, and food, and celebration. All these things are a reminder of the Story. The Story that gives us Hope.**

**Hope in the One who Loves the hopeless  
Who was born to bring healing  
Born to forgive us  
The One born ultimately to suffer and die to take our sins upon Himself.**

**But His story doesn't end there... He was also born to Rise, beating death**

**The Best of His Story... He has invited us to be part of it. He has written us in.**

**Our story is one of Hope... The first candle, the Hope candle.**

**His story now moves to the second candle, Love.  
A reminder of God's Love.  
His perfect Love.**

**The Story is where God first reveals His Love, in the flesh**

**The Story is about the baby who brings light into a dark world.**

**The story is about God showing up... to Love us.**

**The Story is about Jesus leaving heaven to pursue us with that love.**

**The Story is written to offer us a way back to the Father.**

**The news of salvation is too good to fully understand and too good to ignore.**

**This is God's Story that He has written for us, not just to read at Christmas but have our part in His Story.**

**Luke reminds us...**

**<sup>11</sup> For there is born to you this day in the city of David a Savior, who is Christ the Lord. Luke 2:11 New King James Version (NKJV)**

**Remember who you are, and to whom you belong.**

**AMEN**