

To Know To Believe To Live – Module 4 Official Handout

02.13.21 Version

Developed by Msgr. Michael Clay

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GOD IS WITH US (EMMANUEL) TO BEGIN THE PROCESS OF RESTORING THE REIGN OF GOD

I. Discussion:

A. What does Christmas mean to you today?

II. What Has Been Given to Us?

A. Introduction:

1. God is love; we are images of God; sin, which tarnishes our image, is a reality.
2. Two ways to approach sin: 1) view it as a consequence of living in an imperfect world and/or 2) view it as a consequence of living in a fallen world that can't fix itself.
3. The solution to the first is to find better people/systems to build a better world; the second requires a redeemer.
4. Both require a messiah; for the first it is the nation-state, a philosophy, a system, etc.; for the second it is Jesus Christ. (adapted from Matt Malone, SJ, "Politics in a Fallen World." *America*. 224:3, p. 3).

B. Discussion:

1. If it is true that the brokenness of our world is not just the result of the imperfections of the human family, but is also the result of sin for which we bear some degree of responsibility, then what does Jesus, as Messiah, mean for us? In other words, why might Jesus as Messiah be important?

C. Four Things That the Incarnation Gives Us:

1. God has become visible and accessible in Jesus so we might know God's love more concretely.
 - a. How many kings step down from their thrones?
How many lords have abandoned their homes?
How many greats have become the least for me?
And how many gods have poured out their hearts
to romance a world that is torn all apart?
How many fathers gave up their sons for me? (*How Many Kings, Downhere*)

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2. Jesus begins the journey to the cross to die for our salvation.
3. God shows us that our body is of great importance by taking on flesh (incarnation) Himself.
4. Jesus begins the journey of reconciling humanity to God and making it possible for us to be reconciled to each other, even our enemies.
5. Discussion: Of these four options, which one speaks the most to you today?

D. Mary Did You Know? (Lyrics by Mark Lowry, Music by Buddy Greene)

Mary did you know that your baby boy would one day walk on water?
Mary did you know that your baby boy would save our sons and daughters,
did you know that your baby boy has come to make you new,
that child that you delivered would soon deliver you?
Mary did you know that your baby boy would give sight to a blind man?
Mary did you know that your baby boy would calm the storms with His hand,
did you know that your baby boy has walked where angels strode,
when you kiss your little baby you kissed the face of God?

Oh Mary did you know, oh Mary did you know
the blind will see, the deaf will hear, the dead will live again
the lame will leap, the dumb will speak the praises of the Lamb? Oh Mary.

Mary did you know that your baby boy is Lord of all creation?
Mary did you know that your baby boy would one day rule the nations,
did you know that your baby boy is heaven's perfect lamb,
the sleeping child you're holding is the Great I AM?

The GREAT I AM
the blind will see, the deaf will hear, and the dead will live again.
He's the GREAT I AM
He's moving; He's healing;
He's the GREAT
He shall be called Wonderful, and Counselor
He's the GREAT I
There's healing in His hands, Lightning in His eyes.

Truly this man is: He's the GREAT I AM. (Reproduced with permission.)

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III. Optional Post-Session Reflection (For Group Discussion at Start of Next Module):

- A. Reflect on where you are currently in knowing, believing, and living the importance of the Incarnation of Jesus in your life today AND how you might be invited to take another step forward growing in this area of faith.

IV. Prayer:

- A. O Emmanuel, God-with-us, we rejoice that you have come to share our life so that we might have eternal life with you. May our faith in your promises strengthen us to forgive as we have been forgiven, serve as we have been served, and give as we have been blessed. Sustain our joy as we seek to follow your will in all that we do. Help us grow in faith, hope, and love so that we might spread the good news of salvation with our lives. Amen.

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