

12/11/2016

## It Began With a Tree

By Greg Laurie (<https://www.harvest.org/devotions-and-blogs/daily-devotions/2016-12-05>)

*And out of the ground the LORD God made every tree grow that is pleasant to the sight and good for food. The tree of life was also in the midst of the garden, and the tree of the knowledge of good and evil.—Genesis 2:9*

The Christmas story begins with a tree, but not the kind of Christmas tree with brightly colored lights or ornaments. The Christmas story begins with a tree called the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, in the Garden of Eden.

God had given Adam and Eve only one restriction in that literal paradise: stay away from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. But before long, that's just where we find them. Of course, we know the rest of the story. They listened to the serpent and ate the forbidden fruit. And once that happened, they lost their sweet fellowship with God.

A few verses later, we come to the first Christmas verse in the Bible, where God said to the serpent, "And I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your seed and her Seed; He shall bruise your head, and you shall bruise His heel."

Here the battle lines were drawn. The devil knew this Messiah would come—and that He would come from the Jewish people. So he tried to stop that from taking place.

Really, as we look at the Christmas story, we realize that it doesn't begin in Matthew or Luke. It begins in the Old Testament. Before there was a world, before there were planets, before there was light and darkness, before there was matter, before there was anything but the Godhead, there was Jesus—coequal, coeternal, and coexistent with the Father and Holy Spirit. He was with God. He was God.

Jesus Christ became human without ceasing to be God. He did not become identical to us, but He became identified with us. The real message of Christmas is that God came to this earth. The real message of Christmas is Immanuel, God is with us.

## News and Notes

**Shower of Love-** We would like the congregation to shower the Manweiler family with love by giving gifts of diapers and wipes (you can never have too many), meal (new parents are often tired) and money (for those extra baby needs). Please have all gifts to Nancy or Shannon by Dec 18.

**Soup Kitchen-** Our next soup kitchen will be this Tuesday, December 20 at 5pm. We will be serving a ham dinner. Volunteers are needed to make food, serve, and clean up. A signup sheet is on the bulletin board.

**Picture Time-** It is once again time to update the pictures on our member board and directory. Please see Shane or Amy to have your family picture taken.

### Birthdays

Shayla Goracke	12/15	Sharon Griffiths	12/17
Amy Reinold	12/21	Ruger Sanderson	12/21

If you birthday has been inadvertently left off this list please let Shannon know.

### Those Serving

#### 12/11/2016

Opening Prayer	Gary	Table: West	Chris
Song Leader	Shane	Center	Gary
Scripture Reader	Tim	East	Shane
Closing Prayer	Nate	Preacher:	Doug Hamilton
Devotion:	Prayer	Song Leader:	Chris

#### 12/18/2016

Opening Prayer	Jeremy	Table: West	Gary
Song Leader	James	Center	Chris
Scripture Reader	Pablo	East	Jay
Closing Prayer	Shane	Preacher:	Tom
Devotion:	Shane	Song Leader:	Jay
<b>December:</b>	Lord's Supper:	Sharon Sidewalks:	Chris