

The Rescuer Came!

read

John 1:1-18 (focus on verse 14)

think

The Wild Boars soccer team was in trouble, and unless someone showed up to rescue them, they would all die together. Do you remember the 2018 story of these dozen 11 to 16-year-old Thai soccer players? A heavy monsoon had flooded the Tham Luang Nang Non cave they had excitedly entered to explore together with their coach, blocking their escape and trapping them deep within the darkness. Their seemingly hopeless situation caught the

attention of the world for several weeks as over 10,000 people combined their efforts to rescue them out of the cave. The world breathed a collective sigh of relief when the good news broke that all 13 who were trapped and desperately hoping for rescue were brought out alive. Can you imagine the joy of that moment when the first rescuer surfaced, telling them, "We're here to get you out!"

In the midst of the cultural craziness that has clouded the reason why Christmas exists in the first place, the first few verses of the Gospel of John remind us that the coming of Jesus Christ into the world is the ultimate rescue mission. Theologians refer to this wonderful moment when God became man as "The Incarnation", a word which means "in the flesh." In John 1:14 we read that "the Word became flesh and dwelt among us." The eternal Son of God took on a complete human nature without ceasing to be divine. While God becoming man is a mystery too difficult to fully grasp and comprehend, the reason for this happening is crystal clear!

Why did Jesus come? His coming is part of God's rescue mission to save us from drowning without hope in the sin and brokenness that has left us in need of salvation from the consequences of our rebellion against God. The birth we celebrate was followed by His sinless life lived on our behalf, His death to pay the penalty for our sins, and His resurrection to make a way for those who place their faith in Him to live for eternity with Him. C.S. Lewis summarizes it this way: "The Son of God became man to enable men to become the sons of God!" Thanks be to God for the gift of His Son, the Rescuer, Jesus Christ!

apply

- Find and read *The Nicene Creed*, which was written in 325 to correct erroneous understandings about God. Notice how the majority of the creed speaks about Jesus. Focus on and talk about the significance of these words from the creed: "Who for us and for our salvation came down from heaven, and was incarnate by the Holy Spirit of the Virgin Mary, and was made man."
- *The Message* is a paraphrase of the Bible that renders the words of John 1:14 this way: "The Word became flesh and blood, and moved into the neighborhood." What surprises you most about God taking on human flesh and coming to live among us?

pray

Jesus, fully God and fully human, thank you, thank you, thank you for your willingness to come and be our salvation. Help us to understand the depth and wideness of your rescuing mercy and grace. Please silence the distractions of this season, and allow me to see and hear the good news of your coming in ways that fuel an abiding spirit of thanksgiving. Amen.

by **Walt Mueller**

Walt Mueller is the President of the Center for Parent/Youth Understanding. To access Walt's blogs, podcasts, and other resources, visit cpyu.org.

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