

A very Merry Christmas to one and all!

Outside my window in Basye the light of the day is beginning to fade as the evening begins to approach. I am sending this before sundown and the start of the twelve-day Christmas Season because I will be on the go by the time the sun sets. The weather is in the lower 40s which is a lot better than the 70s of three years ago. Fortunately, Bryce Resort has been able to make snow and is almost totally open for skiing so there is a White Christmas there.

But Christmas is not about the weather, the snow or even about how we feel. It is about how God feels about us. There was a billboard advertisement campaign a few years ago. It featured the voice of God from the heavens saying "Don't make me come down there!" like a parent scolding a child. It was cute and made you think. But from a theological ("God talk") perspective it was totally wrong. God had come down. First through the law and prophets and finally in these last days (2,000 years ago) through the Son (Hebrews) the message each time was about God's love. In Jesus God is not condemning but hugging the whole creation to himself. He has come down, is with us and will come again with love and mercy. This is what we celebrate in this season

The Christmas message of incarnation, Emanuel - "God with us." So even if this year does not fit our Christmas ideal it is ideal to God because he gets to love us and live with us. I especially appreciate those whom God has sent to be his presence in my life. The light shining in the darkness takes on a great meaning this and every year. I hope you will appreciate and make time for those whom God has sent into your life. Join me in seeking out the Christ child in the faces of all those we will encounter but have not yet known.

Well, the daylight for this day will soon come to an end. I want to wish you a very Merry Christmas! The twelve-day celebration of Christmas begins! Let us rejoice and celebrate!

I pray your families are well and your hearts are filled with love. I pray for this good creation that our Savior loved and came down to live in, and die for. May all our holiday journeys be safe and our homecomings joyful. It has been a difficult year for many in our world and much fear and anxiety remains. Sounds like a description of the world on that first Christmas when God choose to be born among an occupied and fearful people unsure of their future. Jesus brought hope to that time and he is bringing HOPE among us.

I hope you will join me as we celebrate God wrapping his arms around the world by being wrapped in swaddling cloths and being laid in a Bethlehem manger. Emanuel = God with us.

Merry Christmas 2018 AD! The Lord has come down. He is among us. Look into the eyes of any baby. Look around with eyes, hearts and minds wide open; and rejoice!

Bill Nabers