

## ***Adult Bible Discovery- November 29, 2020:***

Today is the first Sunday in the season of Advent. Advent is perhaps the most confusing season in the church year...Is it an appetizer to Christmas, introduction to the coming event and forward to the birth of baby Jesus? Is it a few more weeks of end times? Is this John the Baptist coming and the coming of Christ? Or is it the conclusion of Ascension- Jesus' return? Some of all of the above works its way into Advent. However, Advent's ultimate aim is to remind us that He whose birth we are soon to celebrate, the One we shall shortly witness lying humble in a manger, is coming again on the clouds, in full glory with His angels attending Him to judge the living and the dead. And we on our part are to be prepared and to be "prepare-ers" for that most wonderful event!

As we prepare for the coming of the Messiah once again, we also remember that Christ has come. He became Immanuel, that is God with us! For the weeks of Advent, we will be using devotions from Lutheran Hour Ministries and their resource entitled *God With Us*. If you are interested in more devotions and studies like this, click on this link: <https://www.lhm.org/advent/> Please also consider giving a donation to LHM to help them bring Christ to the nations and the nations to the Church.

Christmas is a time for reflecting. We think of holidays past and the one that's upon us. As you read the messages of *God with Us*, consider the many ways that God is present in your life—through His Word, your loved ones, the fellowship of believers, Holy Communion, and more. His love for us is personal. He proved that in a Bethlehem manger—God's only Son born for all mankind, so that through the Christ Child we might know life with Him forevermore.

### ***ACCOMPLISHED AMONG US***

*Inasmuch as many have undertaken to compile a narrative of the things that have been accomplished among us, just as those who from the beginning were eyewitnesses and ministers of the word have delivered them to us, it seemed good to me also, having followed all things closely for some time past, to write an orderly account for you, most excellent Theophilus, that you may have certainty concerning the things you have been taught. (Luke 1:1-4)*

I'm writing this during the pandemic, and I am as prickly as a porcupine. We are under orders to stay home—and so there are three people and a dog sharing the same small space. The air is filled with whining (not all of it from the dog). We are cranky and snarly with one another—in a pastor's household! Where is God in this mess?

Maybe Luke was thinking something like that when he wrote his introduction for Theophilus. Luke says that he is writing a narrative "of the things that have been accomplished among us." He doesn't say "what we did" or even "how God used us." He puts the whole thing in the passive.

Who is doing the accomplishing? Clearly, it's God. What are we doing, then? Mostly getting in the way, I suspect. And what is getting accomplished anyway, in spite of us? The coming of God into our world. The birth of God as a human baby, Jesus Christ. The beginning of God's saving acts, as He rescues us from our broken, sin-stained, deathly situation. This Advent, let's watch what God is doing in the midst of us.

***Lord, thank You for loving and saving me, in spite of me. Amen.***

### ***Reflect & Discuss***

- 1. How does your mood affect the way you relate to God?*
- 2. Why do you think God chose to save us completely on His own, without our help?*
- 3. Does that comfort you? Why or why not?*