

## *Christmas – God with us*

Matthew 1:18-25

### *Some first words of explanation*

“Bah! Humbug!” was Ebenezer Scrooge’s attitude to Christmas as described in Charles Dickens famous book, ***A Christmas Carol***. If you remember the story, it’s about a mean spirited old man who had three ghostly visitors one Christmas eve. Those ghosts took Scrooge on a journey of his life: past, present and future. As a result his life was transformed from being mean and miserable to becoming joyful, kind and generous.

Christian faith is all about lives that are being transformed by God through his son Jesus Christ. In this Bible passage there are two names or titles given to Jesus at the time of his birth. His name, Jesus, simply means Saviour (v 21). Jesus perfectly lived up to his name throughout his public ministry as lives were transformed, but supremely by his death on the cross – paying the price for the sin of the world. The salvation he offers to us has the power to transform us as we receive him as Saviour and Lord.

The other title given to Jesus is ‘Emmanuel’ – ‘God is with us’ (v 23). That means that we have a Saviour who promises to be with us in all the ups and downs of life, in the good days and in the bad days and in the difficult seasons of our lives.

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### *Questions to consider*

In what aspects of my life do I need Jesus to be my Saviour and Emmanuel to be present with me?

Do I need the transforming power and grace of God to change me more into the likeness of Christ, perhaps, like Scrooge, to become more loving, kind and generous towards others?

### *Suggested prayer*

*(for the person to pray or to adapt so that you are praying for them)*

Lord I thank you that through the death and resurrection of Jesus my life can be changed. As I commit myself each day into your hands may you transform me more and more into the likeness of Jesus Christ. May this transformation make a difference in all my relationships with people in my family, in work, in the community and in my church. Amen.



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