

EPC Sermon - He is Here

December 28, 2025

Responsive reading (From Psalm 148)

Leader: Praise the LORD! Praise the LORD from the heavens; praise him in the heights! Praise him, all his angels; praise him, all his host!

People: Praise him, sun and moon; praise him, all you shining stars! Praise him, you highest heavens, and you waters above the heavens!

Leader: Let them praise the name of the LORD, for he commanded and they were created. He established them forever and ever; he fixed their bounds, which cannot be passed.

People: Praise the LORD from the earth, Kings of the earth and all peoples, princes and all rulers of the earth! Young men and women alike, old and young together!

All: Let them praise the name of the LORD, for his name alone is exalted; his glory is above earth and heaven. Praise the LORD!

Isaiah 63:7-9

7 I will recount the steadfast love of the LORD, the praises of the LORD, according to all that the LORD has granted us, and the great goodness to the house of Israel that he has granted them according to his compassion, according to the abundance of his steadfast love.

8 For he said, "Surely they are my people, children who will not deal falsely." And he became their Savior.

9 In all their affliction he was afflicted, and the angel of his presence saved them; in his love and in his pity he redeemed them; he lifted them up and carried them all the days of old.

Hebrews 2:10-18

10 For it was fitting that he, for whom and by whom all things exist, in bringing many sons to glory, should make the founder of their salvation perfect through suffering.

11 For he who sanctifies and those who are sanctified all have one source. That is why he is not ashamed to call them brothers,

EPC Sermon - He is Here

December 28, 2025

12 saying, "I will tell of your name to my brothers; in the midst of the congregation
I will sing your praise."

13 And again, "I will put my trust in him." And again, "Behold, I and the children
God has given me."

14 Since therefore the children share in flesh and blood, he himself likewise partook
of the same things, that through death he might destroy the one who has the
power of death, that is, the devil,

15 and deliver all those who through fear of death were subject to lifelong slavery.

16 For surely it is not angels that he helps, but he helps the offspring of Abraham.

17 Therefore he had to be made like his brothers in every respect, so that he might
become a merciful and faithful high priest in the service of God, to make
propitiation for the sins of the people.

18 For because he himself has suffered when tempted, he is able to help those who
are being tempted.

Titus 2:11-14

11 For the grace of God has appeared, bringing salvation for all people,

12 training us to renounce ungodliness and worldly passions, and to live self-
controlled, upright, and godly lives in the present age,

13 waiting for our blessed hope, the appearing of the glory of our great God and
Savior Jesus Christ,

14 who gave himself for us to redeem us from all lawlessness and to purify for
himself a people for his own possession who are zealous for good works.

Titus 3:4-7

4 But when the goodness and loving kindness of God our Savior appeared,

5 he saved us, not because of works done by us in righteousness, but according to his
own mercy, by the washing of regeneration and renewal of the Holy Spirit,

6 whom he poured out on us richly through Jesus Christ our Savior,

7 so that being justified by his grace we might become heirs according to the hope of
eternal life.

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Opening

This Christmas Season / Advent Season we celebrated the birth of Jesus. We talked about different aspects of the Christian Life – Hope, Peace, Joy, Love as they relate to the Advent Season. The birth of Jesus is the pivotal event in history where God himself came to live among us. Jesus came to accomplish for us what no person could do on their own. Repair the relationship between God and humankind (creation).

A 50,000 foot look at the Old testament story reveals:

Beginning with a perfect relationship between God and man (Garden of Eden)

The relationship is broken by man.

God intervenes to restore the relationship

Man doesn't only makes things worse.

Repeat

Till finally God sends His Son (Jesus) to repair the relationship (save)

In my studies for this sermon the following stood out from the scriptures read today.

Isaiah 63:7-9

7 I will recount the steadfast love of the LORD, the praises of the LORD, according to all that the LORD has granted us, and the great goodness to the house of Israel that he has granted them according to his compassion, according to the abundance of his steadfast love.

8 For he said, "Surely they are my people, children who will not deal falsely." And he became their Savior.

9 In all their affliction he was afflicted, and the angel of his presence saved them; in his love and in his pity he redeemed them; he lifted them up and carried them all the days of old.

Hebrews 2:10-18

EPC Sermon - He is Here

December 28, 2025

- 10 For it was fitting that he, for whom and by whom all things exist, in bringing many sons to glory, should make the founder of their salvation perfect through suffering.
- 11 For he who sanctifies and those who are sanctified all have one source. That is why he is not ashamed to **call them brothers**, (**other translations – brothers and sisters**)
- 12 saying, “I will tell of your name to my **brothers**; in the midst of the congregation I will sing your praise.”
- 13 And again, “I will put my trust in him.” And again, “Behold, I and the children God has given me.”
- 14 **Since therefore the children share in flesh and blood, he himself likewise partook of the same things**, that through death he might destroy the one who has the power of death, that is, the devil, (**Jesus Christ was human**)
- 15 and deliver all those who through fear of death were subject to lifelong slavery.
- 16 For surely it is not angels that he helps, but **he helps the offspring of Abraham**.
- 17 Therefore he had to be made like his **brothers** in every respect, so that he might become a merciful and faithful high priest in the service of God, to make propitiation for the sins of the people.
- 18 For **because he himself has suffered when tempted, he is able to help those who are being tempted**.

Titus 2:11-14

- 11 For the **grace of God** has appeared, bringing **salvation for all** people,
- 12 **training us** to renounce ungodliness and worldly passions, and **to live** self-controlled, upright, and godly lives **in the present age**,
- 13 waiting for our blessed hope, the appearing of the glory of our great God and Savior Jesus Christ,
- 14 who gave himself for **us to redeem us** from all lawlessness and **to purify** for himself a people for his own possession who are zealous for good works.

Titus 3:4-7

- 4 But when the goodness and loving kindness of God **our Savior appeared**,

EPC Sermon - He is Here

December 28, 2025

5 *he saved us, not because of works done by us in righteousness, but according to his own mercy, by the washing of regeneration and renewal of the Holy Spirit,*
6 *whom he poured out on us richly through Jesus Christ our Savior,*
7 *so that being justified by his grace we might become heirs according to the hope of eternal life.*

To summarize the points

Through the abundance steadfast love of the LCRD, He sent a savior, who by his presence saved and redeemed us. He calls us brothers and sisters. Because Jesus was flesh and blood, human, and experienced life like we do. He came to help us. Because Jesus knows how it was like to be human, he is able to help us.

It is by the grace of God that we are saved. He trains us to live in the present age. Jesus Christ redeems us and purifies us to serve. Jesus, our Savior, saved us, not because of anything we did or accomplished, but according to his own mercy (Grace), by regeneration (rebirth) and renewal. The Holy Spirit is given to us, by Jesus Christ our Savior. Being justified by grace we can have hope of eternal life.

Upon further reflection the following sequence / progression became apparent.

- 1. God loved us.*
- 2. God sent a savior, Jesus Christ*
John 3: 16-17 "For God so loved the world, that he gave his only Son, that whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life. For God did not send his Son into the world to condemn the world, but in order that the world might be saved through him.
- 3. We are saved by Grace (God's action) not by our accomplishments (works).*
- 4. Salvation is a two-step spiritual event; Rebirth / Redemption and Renewal.*
- 5. Renewal / Purification is on-going (training) process.*
- 6. We are meant to serve.*
- 7. We will experience the results of Saving Grace – Hope, Peace, Joy, Love*
- 8. And Jesus left the Holy Spirit (Helper) to assist us in the entire process.*

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December 28, 2025

Using the Advent Candles as a visual for the Christian Life. Remember Christ (as the Holy Spirit) is with us every step of the way!

- 1. Responding to God's Love we ask Jesus to be a part of our life. To be our savior. The light of God's Love begins to burn within us. (light Christ candle)*
- 2. As we experience a rebirth and renewal our Hope for the future and a relationship with God is rekindled. The light within us grows brighter! (light Hope candle)*
- 3. As we are further renewed (faith grows) we experience peace in our hearts not felt before. The light within us grows brighter! (light Peace candle)*
- 4. As we serve God and others, as we worship, as our relationship with God grows, we experience Joy. The light within us grows brighter! (light Joy candle)*
- 5. As we experience the Love of God, we are able to show that Love to the world. The light within us grows brighter! (light Love candle)*