

BEAUTIFUL CHRISTMAS

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We live in a not so beautiful world. Yes, there are majestic mountains, magnificent beaches, awesome structures, wondrous artworks, but together with this beauty is disunity that leads to divisions, differences that leads to wars, sickness that leads to death, and desires that lead to corruption. When you consider these things, the world may not be as beautiful as we would like to think. Wherever we go, no matter how green our environment may be, no matter how tall buildings are, no matter how robust the world's economy is - at the end of the day, we will desire to be in a better place. Just by observing what people usually say during funerals, you will observe that most people see it this way. Where do people think the one who passed away went? "To a better place," is what we often hear, and this is true for those who have believed in Jesus, because there is nothing better than to be in His presence.

Now, think about this. Why would Jesus, the One who is best, perfect, and complete, the Most Beautiful, would come to the world we live in? What benefit would He get? Yet He did so humbly, in a form like us, human. For love, He suffered, was humiliated, He died for the sins that we can never repay. Such wondrous love does He, who has all, have for all of us who are nothing. And so, in His coming, in His presence, in His sacrifice, He made things beautiful. What

was once a hopeless world now hopes on to the One who is born on the first Christmas. What was once a symbol of a humiliating death, is now seen as a symbol of who it is who paid for all our sins. What was once seen as the end of life, is now seen as the start of the best yet. The future, which was once bleak, now shines bright in Jesus Christ - the Most Beautiful Gift ever given, and the one who made all things beautiful.

This is not something new to us. We know this beautiful truth and we are reminded of it all year long. We gaze upon His beauty every day as we spend time with Him and His Word. We see this beauty lived out in and through the church. And we are reminded of it on Christmas Day. Yes, there is beauty, there is hope in Christ Jesus. And we emphasize this especially as we remember all that we've been through in 2021. Many families experienced failing businesses and loss of jobs. Many families experienced sickness, and some even lost loved ones. It wasn't an easy year. Some would even consider it the hardest and the darkest yet. But just as there was light out of nothingness by the command of our Lord, just as there was hope out of darkness when He came to earth, so it is wherever we are today - there is hope, there is beauty. It may not seem like it, but just as the wise king said, "He has made everything beautiful in its time. *Also, he has put eternity into man's heart, yet so that he cannot find*

out what God has done from the beginning to the end."

Now, together with this reminder, we also remember those who are yet to see the beauty of our Lord - those whose eyes are blinded by the troubles and pursuits of this world, and the lies and the deceit of the devil. We also remember the commission given to us by Jesus. And so, during these festivities, as we celebrate the birth of Jesus, as people's hearts gets more receptive to the gospel, let us not forget what Jesus would have us do - to make His Name known to let that neighbor, officemate, family, friend, classmate, stranger know that whatever their situation may be, wherever they be in their journey in life, there is hope in Jesus - there is beauty in a life lived for Jesus. And, just so at the time when we received Jesus in our hearts, He has made everything beautiful.

Let us give a person that which makes not only this year's Christmas beautiful, but even the next and the days between the most beautiful one. A beautiful Christmas, church! ✨

