



## Wednesday Prayer

Christmas – Showing up, in body and spirit

***And the Word became flesh and lived among us, and we have seen his glory, the glory as of a father's only son, full of grace and truth. John 1:14***

***Since, therefore, the children share flesh and blood, he himself likewise shared the same things, so that through death he might destroy the one who has the power of death, that is, the devil, and free those who all their lives were held in slavery by the fear of death. Hebrews 2:14-15***

After centuries of prophecies and promises, God came to us in a way that no one expected. God showed up just like us, in flesh and blood. God even trusted Mary and Joseph enough to show up as a baby, a vulnerable infant who needed to be fed and clothed, taken to Egypt, back to Galilee, raised in a carpentry shop with all the ups and downs of life that humans face. God showed up in Jesus to experience the world as a human, to talk to those who others wouldn't talk to, to suffer attacks from those who didn't like the way his caring for people upset the long-standing traditions of the culture, and to die as a sacrifice for our sins.

In her book, "The Reed of God", Carol Houselander wrote "Made in the image of God, we also make the image of God's love our own...Each of us and our work is one more manifestation that "the word was made flesh and dwelt among us, and we beheld His glory." Showing up, in body and spirit, is a big deal. We can communicate commitment, caring, a willingness to share in another's experience just by showing up. We show that we're willing to be vulnerable along with those who are vulnerable.

Children and youth who end up being exploited are often kids who don't feel the presence of a caring adult in their lives. They may not have an adult who is willing to show up, to care for them, to listen to their struggles and questions, so they crave attention and someone to connect with. They connect with an adult who is present, often one who is harmful to them. As disciples, we're called to show up for young people in our community, to be present in their lives, listen to their hurts and pain, and to be God's word made flesh. We're called to show up by praying for them, educating others about exploitation, and advocating for them. We might be rejected, or get frustrated when they don't respond to us as we thought they might. Or we might be a game-changer in their lives and help them heal and move into a healthy life. Showing up, being present as God's word in flesh and blood, is the first step.

**Ever-present and loving God, you entered our lives and human experience as the Christ child to free us from our sins. Empower us to always find ways to show up, make your word flesh and dwell among your people, especially to those who are affected by human trafficking. Help us to show your love and care. Amen.**

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