

December 23rd, 2010

Dear Friends

This season of giving has been overwhelmingly moving...we have been blessed with the gift of a holiday in the sunny Antipodes. What a privilege! Such unmerited favour! I confess that the good Lord has presented this rogue with an exciting career far beyond anything I could have scripted, save for the generous God who conspires to bless.



The detail of the Christmas pageant will be enacted in dozens of schools and churches this year. Mary, Joseph, Baby, Inn Keeper, Donkey, Shepherds, Magi, Gifts Angels and vicious soldiers, all essential characters in a detailed but profound story. The miracle of the virgin birth is about the ultimate gift of the God who generously infused life into a barren land.

Walter Bruggeman enriches the connection between Creation and Christmas stories: "The divine act of creative ordering is an act of sovereignty on the largest scale....the outcome is a place of fruitfulness, abundance, productivity and extravagance – summed up with the word 'blessing'....It is YHWH's will that the world should be fruitful and invested with "the power of fertility". YHWH has authorised in the world the inscrutable force of generosity,.... this capacity....is no human monopoly; it is assured that every genus of creation can 'bring forth' according to his kind.the sign and embodiment of the generosity of creation is the birth of a baby..."

He goes on: "Israel's testimony offers three themes that follow from the exuberant reception and celebration of blessing. First, creation requires those given dominion, that they practice wisdom...the critical, reflective, discerning reception of God's generosity....Secondly there is an ethical dimension...righteousness... the world is not created for self advantage. Third, public worship is a context within which the generosity of creation can be received and enhanced. The power of blessing is alive and loose within the world..."

In this context we celebrate the birth of the Christ child who increased in wisdom and stature and in favour with God and man. The lad, who in the Synagogue, immersed himself in his father's enterprise of- wisdom, righteousness and worship.

Thank you for your continued service and commitment to being an ambassador for the most generous God. The one who embodies grace and truth, the one in whom the power of blessing, is incarnate.

May the coming Sabbath, Christmas be a day of profound happiness.

Best regards

Victor