

IN EXCELSIS DEO

ADVENT 2024

Thursday, December 19

Read: 1 Samuel 3:11-18

I think I must've read this scripture ten times in an attempt to find that illuminating, warm, soul-cleansing feeling that often accompanies reading the Bible. Reading this passage, I never felt any of that. Instead, it was a sobering reminder of the grim reality of the toll of sin (something I often tend to avoid reading or even thinking about). However, about the ninth time I read it, I found something new: immense gratitude.

At first, this passage from 1 Samuel made me extremely uncomfortable. It wasn't about divine forgiveness, clean slates, being born again, or the glories of the resurrection which are the cornerstone of Jesus' Gospel and the foundation of Christianity. This passage is about God deeming a sin so severe that it can never "be atoned by sacrifice or offering."

No atonement possible for sin... that is possibly the most terrifying concept that I could imagine. Yet, that is the daily reality for the most people in our world, about 70% of the population.

I cannot imagine living without knowing Jesus, without grace, without forgiveness. I can only feel immense gratitude that I was raised in a Christian family, wherein forgiveness and grace were taught to me from the very beginning. I cannot remember a time in my life where I did not know the good news!

As Christmas approaches, I am reminded that it is not an ordinary day. It is not a day about presents, food, or fun. It is the day God gave humanity its greatest treasure. This is the day in which God loved the world so much, that "He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish but have everlasting life." This is the day that divine forgiveness came into our world to save us all. Isn't that something worth sharing?

Ask yourself, when was the last time you shared this good news with a friend, a neighbor, a coworker? There is no better time to share this great news with those around you! Go, tell it on the mountain over the hills, and everywhere that Jesus Christ is born!

-Kyle Melton