

Glory

in the Highest

Day One

READ John 1:1-18.

The Apostle John, the beloved, is considered to have been Jesus' closest friend - the one who knew Him better than most. READ verses 1-4 and 18 again. What stands out to you in John's description of Jesus?

THINK about the impact of John's words for the original readers.

How surprising would it have been to realize that Jesus, the person who lived and walked among them, was "with God and WAS God? How difficult would it be to accept such a great mystery as this?

Day Two

READ Luke 2:1-20, and keep in mind John's words from John 1:1-4.

How surprising is it that both passages describe the same person ~ the same God? REFLECT on what this personally means to you ~ that God has revealed Himself to us as Immanuel; God with us.

Day Three

READ Isaiah 55:8-9 and Psalm 46:10.

During the Christmas season, our minds have set the stage.

We know the story. We know the amazing surprise which was revealed in the birth of Christ. But what if God desires to surprise us with more? Are our hearts and eyes open to being surprised by God?

In *The Knowledge of the Holy* A.W. Tozer writes:

"Left to ourselves we tend immediately to reduce God to manageable terms. We want to get Him where we can use Him, or at least know where He is when we need Him. We want a God we can in some measure control..."

In other words...no surprises.

Can you relate to that *manageable* view of God? If so, how?

Does this view limit God or your own ability to know Him more fully?

Why? How readily do you accept the mystery that is God?

Do you struggle to accept that God is more than, and beyond everything we can conceive or imagine?

We must humbly accept our own limitations in order to embrace the mystery and paradox of an infinite God who chooses to reveal Himself and relate intimately to us. No matter what our image of God may be, it's inadequate, incomplete and rudimentary. He is unmanageable, uncontrollable, all powerful... full of mystery and surprise.

PRAY: Father, quiet my soul and remind me of Your greatness.

Remove any preconceived ideas which blind me from seeing You as You truly are. Open my eyes and my heart.

Prepare me to be amazed and surprised by You.

Day Four

READ Revelation 1:9-18

Does thinking about mystery and surprise as it relates to God give you a sense of excitement, joy and hope? Fear or concern? Why?

ASK YOURSELF the following questions:

Am I prepared to be surprised by God? Am I willing to be surprised?

Do I trust God enough to accept His mystery and surprise?

What was John's response to seeing the glorified Christ?

What did the Lord say to John?

*"The greatness of God rouses fear within us,
but His goodness encourages us not to be afraid of Him.
To fear and not to be afraid – that is the paradox of faith."*

Tozer

READ Psalm 100:4-5.

Day Five

READ Matthew 2:18-25.

What was surprising to Joseph? What has God done to surprise you? This Christmas we reflect on the surprise of the Incarnation, but also look forward to the mystery and surprise God desires to reveal to us today and tomorrow.

Maybe our Christmas surprise is:

+ realizing that God is incomprehensible, even with what He's revealed about Himself thus far. He is far more.

+ although we long to know Him more, He is never fully known.

+ though He Himself is MYSTERY and PARADOX, He is good.

Read Psalm 100.