

**Theme: The Infinite in the Finite**

**Opening:** Read the Gradual for this past Sunday.

Rejoice, greatly, O daughter of Zion!  
Shout, daughter of Jerusalem!  
See, your King comes to you.  
Righteousness and having salvation.  
Blessed is He who comes in the name of the Lord.  
From the house of the Lord we bless you.

**Law/Gospel Focus**

God’s original plan was that humanity would live eternally with our Creator. Through the fall of Adam, all people are born bound to sin and death on account of their sins. Christ came from eternity into a finite world, submitting Himself to God’s Law. Through His sinless life, death on the cross, and resurrection from the dead. He substitutes His life for our lives. He gives us new life, life as God had originally intended-eternal life.

**Introduction:**

Looking through your mail, you find an envelope that announces, “You are a winner!” There is one condition to receive your prize-you have to look at property someone is selling. You decide to go to collect your “fabulous prize.” It turns out to be a fancy key chain. You’re disappointed, but technically you are a winner.

1. What was the last big promise you were given? \_\_\_\_\_
2. What were your initial reactions to that promise? \_\_\_\_\_
3. Have you ever heard a promise that you hoped would be kept, but it ended up being broken? Explain. \_\_\_\_\_
4. What do you think of now when that person offers you a promise? \_\_\_\_\_

Thankfully, God has always kept His promises. Through His Son’s death and resurrection, forgiveness is offered to all, even those who break promises. Today we will study the greatest promise ever given and the implications of that promise, which was fulfilled in the person and work of Christ.

Please read Isaiah 7:10-17 on page 3

1. In the Old Testament reading, how did Ahaz disobey the Lord? \_\_\_\_\_  
How did the Lord Respond? \_\_\_\_\_
2. Some theologians and Bible translators have translated Isaiah 7:14 as “the young woman will be with child and will give birth to a son.” What are the ramifications of substituting “young woman “for “virgin”? \_\_\_\_\_

Please read Romans 1:1-7 on page 3

3. What does Paul say is the evidence for Jesus being fully man, while at the same time being fully God? \_\_\_\_\_

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4. Paul was a Jew since birth and he knew the Old Testament Scriptures well. What does his statement “the Gospel promised beforehand through His prophets in the Holy Scriptures” say concerning the Old Testament? \_\_\_\_\_

Please read Matthew 1:18-25 on page 4

5. In Matthew 1:18-25 compare Joseph’s reaction to Mary’s pregnancy before and after the angel of the Lord’s appearance. \_\_\_\_\_  
What do you think about Joseph’s character? \_\_\_\_\_.
6. How does the New Testament reading connect with Isaiah’s prophecy? \_\_\_\_\_

Connect:

1. What does it mean to test the Lord (refer to Isaiah)? \_\_\_\_\_  
Is there anything wrong with testing the Lord? \_\_\_\_\_  
What do you think about asking our Lord for a sign? \_\_\_\_\_.
2. In Romans 1:4, what does Paul use to defend Jesus’ divinity? \_\_\_\_\_  
What hints might he give to you for evangelism and the defense of your faith? \_\_\_\_\_.

**During This Week:**

In your devotions this week recite the Gradual (that we opened with) in preparation for the celebration of Christ’s coming for the redemption of all people. Remember to keep Christ’s work and the consequences of His work central during the Christmas Holiday.

**Closing Speak responsively the Introit:**

L: You heavens above, rain down righteousness; let the clouds shower it down.

**P: Let the earth open wide, let salvation spring up.**

L: The heavens declare the glory of God:

**P: the skies proclaim the work of His hands**

L: In the heavens He has pitched a tent for the sun.

**P: which is like a bridegroom coming forth from his pavilion, like a champion rejoicing to run his course.**

L: It rises at one end of the heavens and makes its circuit to the other;

**P: nothing is hidden from its heat.**

**All: Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit; as it was in the beginning, is now and will be forever. Amen.**

L: You heavens above, rain down righteousness; let the clouds shower it down.

**P: Let the earth open wide, let salvation spring up.**

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**Isaiah 7:10-17 ESV**

The Sign of Immanuel

10 Again the Lord spoke to Ahaz: 11 “Ask a sign of the Lord your God; let it be deep as Sheol or high as heaven.” 12 But Ahaz said, “I will not ask, and I will not put the Lord to the test.” 13 And he[b] said, “Hear then, O house of David! Is it too little for you to weary men, that you weary my God also? 14 Therefore the Lord himself will give you a sign. Behold, the virgin shall conceive and bear a son, and shall call his name Immanuel. 15 He shall eat curds and honey when he knows how to refuse the evil and choose the good. 16 For before the boy knows how to refuse the evil and choose the good, the land whose two kings you dread will be deserted. 17 The Lord will bring upon you and upon your people and upon your father's house such days as have not come since the day that Ephraim departed from Judah—the king of Assyria!”

**Romans 1:1-7 ESV**

Greeting

1 Paul, a servant[a] of Christ Jesus, called to be an apostle, set apart for the gospel of God, 2 which he promised beforehand through his prophets in the holy Scriptures, 3 concerning his Son, who was descended from David[b] according to the flesh 4 and was declared to be the Son of God in power according to the Spirit of holiness by his resurrection from the dead, Jesus Christ our Lord, 5 through whom we have received grace and apostleship to bring about the obedience of faith for the sake of his name among all the nations, 6 including you who are called to belong to Jesus Christ,

7 To all those in Rome who are loved by God and called to be saints:  
Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

**Matthew 1:18-25 ESV**

The Birth of Jesus Christ

18 Now the birth of Jesus Christ[a] took place in this way. When his mother Mary had been betrothed[b] to Joseph, before they came together she was found to be with child from the Holy Spirit. 19 And her husband Joseph, being a just man and unwilling to put her to shame, resolved to divorce her quietly. 20 But as he considered these things, behold, an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream, saying, “Joseph, son of David, do not fear to take Mary as your wife, for that which is conceived in her is from the Holy Spirit. 21 She will bear a son, and you shall call his name Jesus, for he will save his people from their sins.” 22 All this took place to fulfill what the Lord had spoken by the prophet:

23 “Behold, the virgin shall conceive and bear a son,  
and they shall call his name Immanuel”

(which means, God with us). 24 When Joseph woke from sleep, he did as the angel of the Lord commanded him: he took his wife, 25 but knew her not until she had given birth to a son. And he called his name Jesus.