

This is the night when everything changes.  
I pray I might speak to you in the name of the Father, Son and Holy Ghost, Amen.  
Well,  
here we are.  
It is what we in the church industry call a "big deal."  
Christmas Eve,  
is the churches super bowl.  
It is the night that even those traditional non-church goers throw on a jersey,  
and get ready for the big game.  
All the two-a-day practices,  
training,  
and hard work finds its climax on this night.  
We are all amped up,  
and ready to play the game.  
It's the time of year when we all start "Tebowing"  
because Jesus has been born.  
This is the night when everything changes.  
It is the night when we are reminded just how much God loves us,  
because He was willing to humble himself,  
so that we might become great.  
The English author C.S. Lewis put it this way,  
"The birth of Christ is the central event in the history of the earth -- the very thing the whole story  
has been about."  
This is why,  
it is the reason for the season!  
To understand this point,  
I would like to talk about One of my favorite Christmas movies;  
the 1983 comedy Trading Places,  
with Eddie Murphy and Dan Ackroyd.  
Now I know that some of you might challenge this film being classified as a Christmas movie,  
but I am convinced it does one of the best jobs illustrating the incarnation.  
Trading Places tells the story of an upper class commodities broker played by Dan Ackroyd,  
and a homeless street hustler played by Eddie Murphy,  
whose lives cross paths when they are unknowingly made part of an elaborate bet.  
Two brothers that own a financial firm called Duke and Duke make a bet with each other,  
in which they take away all wealth and prestige from one of their employees,  
Dan Ackroyd's character,  
and give it all to Eddie Murphy's character,  
which lifts him up from his life of poverty and crime,  
and he becomes the wealthy stock-broker living the high life.  
Essentially,  
this is what Christmas is all about,  
well except the part about the scheming brothers!

But,  
Jesus,  
is like Dan Ack. character in that as a part of the Holy Trinity,  
Jesus has full power and is rich in every possible capacity.  
But when He is born of the Virgin Mary,  
He is brought low like Eddie Murphy's character in the beginning of the film,  
homeless, poor and destitute.  
And because of Christ's lowering in status by becoming a human,  
we,  
like Eddie Murphy's character are raised up,  
to the richest of the rich,  
and made royalty because of Christ's willingness to be humbled.  
Which,  
is a major difference from the movie,  
and what is all the more remarkable about this night;  
God wasn't tricked and schemed into becoming a lowly human being,  
but rather he CHOSE to do so on His own!  
**This is the night when everything changes.**  
A great catholic theologian said this,  
"The Word made flesh,  
means that God,  
in revealing himself,  
took on the form of man,  
and did not merely wear it like a disguise;  
rather he became identical with it."  
When we think about the life of Christ,  
we sometimes forget that he was a baby just like the rest of us.  
The ruler and creator of all the universe,  
pooped his pants,  
had gas,  
kept His mom up at night crying,  
and I am pretty sure he spit up on his papa.  
**This is the night when everything changes.**  
I am also sure,  
he laughed,  
made raspberries,  
and loved to snuggle his mama.  
He also got hungry,  
as well as I am sure he caught a cold.  
And the amazing thing,  
is that He chose to do this so that humanity might be redeemed!  
The same baby who was at one time hungry,  
would be the one to feed the five thousand.

The same baby that cried in his sleep,  
would be the one who wipes away our tears.  
The same baby that escaped death at the hands of the Romans,  
would be the one who defeats death on the cross!

**This is the night when everything changes.**

The same baby who had swaddling clothes put on him,  
was the one who told Lazarus to step out of his grave clothes.

St. Athanasius once said,

“From such ordinary acts as being born and eating food,  
He was recognized as being actually present in the body;  
but by the extraordinary acts which he did through the body,  
He proved Himself to be the son of God.”

Christ’s birth,

life,

death and resurrection,

redeems all of us!

The reason Christmas is such a big deal,  
is not because of presents, families and tree’s,  
no,

Christmas is a big deal because Almighty God,  
became like us,

and has given us our dignity back that was lost in the garden of Eden.

**This is the night when everything changes.**

Maybe your here tonight and feel like everything has fallen apart.

Perhaps you lost your job,

or a family member,

and you don’t see how things could get better.

Or maybe you have an illness that doesn’t seem to be improving.

There might someone here tonight who is afraid of death,

or someone who has lost their faith.

Know that you are not alone.

Christmas is the time that we remember that God took on our flesh and our humanity.

He took on our pain and our struggles.

This is the night when everything changes.

Just think,

all the evil in the world,

all the suffering that occurs,

is impacted and is changed.

One of our traditional carols, "This Little Babe" puts it perfectly:

"All hell doth at his presence quake, though he himself for cold do shake."

A baby,

destroys the sting of death.

A baby,  
takes away our fears.  
A baby,  
makes us  
Kings and Queens!  
It is a baby that makes US children of God!  
And its a baby,  
that we do all this for tonight.  
We do it,  
because its all we can give.  
God doesn't need anything from us,  
other than to make ourselves available to be Loved by Him.  
Another great theologian put it this way,  
"People think that they have grasped the point,  
but what matters is,  
not that they grasp,  
but that they let themselves BE grasped."  
If your here tonight,  
and you have never accepted Christ's invitation to be loved,  
I would encourage you to do so.  
This evening,  
let the love of the Christ child,  
engulf us,  
enrapture us,  
and renew us,  
because,  
**this is the night when everything changes.**  
Amen.