When He came into the world...

I. Slide#1 Announce:
   A. Slide#2 Xmas Eve Services 7 & 9pm - all family service. Join us as we celebrate the Saviors birth
   B. No Children @ Risk today.
   C. Slide#3 New Years Eve - Join Kel & I for an hour of prayer 7-8pm, Wed night, Dec.31st.
      1. My New Years resolution...To avoid stupid!

II. Slide#4 Intro:
   A. Slide#5 When I 1st started dating Kelly I got a senior picture from her.
      1. I could look at the picture of Kelly...read what she wrote on the back...but I couldn’t laugh with it, nor have conversation w/it.
      2. It was an accurate representation of her, but a far cry from her.
      3. After being together for now for 36 yrs...Imagine me going back to the picture???
         “I love you oh photograph?”
      4. How absurd for anyone having the the very image to go back to the shadow.
   B. Slide#6 Title: When He came into the world
   C. Outline: His Mastery, His Mission, His Motto, & His Manifesto.

III. Slide#7 HIS MASTERY (1-4)
   A. Here the writer wraps up this contrast between the earthly lambs/daily sacrifices and The Heavenly Lamb/Jesus.
      1. Earthly lambs - Frequency (again & again) & Failure (never to take sin away).
         a) The sacrifices under the Old Cov brought a reminder of sin, not a remission of sin.
      2. Heavenly Lamb - Frequency (just once for all) & Fulfillment (for by one offering He has perfected forever those who are being sanctified).
   B. So, Jesus had Mastery/Superiority over this old system/old cov/shadow/copy.

IV. Slide#8 HIS MISSION (5,6)
   A. Would you like to be apart this morning of a brief conversation that took place, between Jesus & the Father, when He had elected to come into our world as a man?
   B. Slide#9 (5-7) This quote came from Ps.40:6-8 from the Septuagint (270bc, 70, Alexandria, Egypt).
      1. There was more Greek speakers than Hebrew speakers in the ancient world. This is a big deal as God stamps His ok on “translations” into other languages. (Quran/Arabic)
2. So here David, had spoken this 1000 years earlier, but Christ in heaven took it & reapplied it so as to describe His own inner thinking & dialogue w/the Father when He came into our world.

C. Slide#10 In one fell swoop the Psalmist hits the whole sacrificial system using 4 diff Gk words:

1. **Sacrifice** (thuSia/θυσία) – This primarily denotes *the act of offering*, then *that which is offered*. Peace offering, where offerer & priest sat down *in the presence of God* to enjoy a communion-meal based upon sacrifice.

2. **Offering** (prosphorA/προσφορά) – used for a *non-bloody sacrifice*, the meal offering.

3. **Burnt offerings** (oloKOWtoma/ὁλοκαύτωμα) – this depicted *the total or whole offering*, the burnt offering was the whole animal.

4. **Sacrifices** (peri/περί) – *sin offering*. This sacrifice dealt with all the dreadfulness of the human condition. With the **principle of sin** & the **practice of sin**.
   a) Jesus fulfilled **all 4 types** of sacrifices: He is our *peace-offering*; His very *life* was a sacrifice (non-bloody); He is our *burnt-offering* (total/whole); & He became our *sin-offering* for He knew how dreadful our human condition was.

D. Slide#11 God takes no delight in the routine performance of the ritual sacrifice.

1. Undoubtedly, He feels the same way about *routine worship services* today.
   a) Sacrifice w/o sincerity & ritual w/o reality = being alive w/o true Vitality.

2. Though God required & authorized animal sacrifices (to instruct His people about sinfulness, i.e. that sin leads to death, which causes a need for atonement), He didn’t *delight* in innocent animals dying, nor their death-throes. He had no pleasure in that/them. He only finds pleasure in those who offered a sacrifice with a contrite (crushed) & obedient (compliant/willing heart).
   a) So, God had no pleasure in animal sacrifices, yet when it came to His Son’s sacrifice Isaiah says, it *pleased* the LORD to bruise Him.

E. Slide#12a But a body you have prepared for me [My ears you have opened Ps.40:6]

1. **Ex.21:1-6** – Slave to master, ears pierced w/an awl.

2. **Opened** = “dug” or “opened up”. Context seems to be better as obedience.
   a) Slide#12b Jesus was filled with one thought...God prepared Me this body. I have it for His disposal, for His service, for His glory. The body came from God, it belongs to Him, it has no object of existence but to please Him. The one value my body has is, that I can give it, a sacrifice to God. Andrew Murray, The Holiest of All, pg.332

   b) Aren’t we called to the same? Present your bodies a living sacrifice unto God.

3. But how many people, even Christians, have plugged there ears? Or, how many hear w/their ears only, & not w/their hearts?
4. Is there something you know God wants you to do, but have been unwilling? [Perhaps a kindness to perform? A confession to make? A gift to give? A commitment to fulfill? A task to perform?]
   a) If you know what it is, tell Him this morning, “I have come to do your will, O God!”

F. Slide#13 A body He has prepared for you - we are fearfully and wonderfully made and each of us has the qualities of body and soul that best correspond with God’s purpose for our lives.

1. Slide#14 When she was a little girl, Amy Carmichael earnestly prayed that God would turn her brown eyes into blue ones, for she longed for blue eyes. Later in life, she came to understand why brown eyes were important for her. In rescuing girls from Hindu slavery, Amy often had to cover herself with a scarf that revealed only her eyes. Blue eyes would have betrayed her identity in brown-eyed India.
   a) So learn to thank God for the body and personality He has given you, for no one else is exactly like you - and for God’s good reasons.
   b) Embrace this morning... This body you have prepared for me & me only. This personality you have prepared for me & me only. These gifts you have prepared for me & me only. This family you have placed me in was for me. These situations/trials you have placed me in are for me & me only.

G. So, Jesus owned His Mission to come to earth in a man-body, an earth-suit.

V. Slide#15 HIS MOTTO (7-10)

A. (7) To do your will – What is the right relationship of a person to God?
   1. It is obviously not something of mere ceremony but is rather the expression of a fully surrendered heart…Obedience takes precedence over sacrifice.
      a) 1 Sam.15:22 Behold, to obey is better than sacrifice.
      b) Micah 6:7,8 Will the LORD be pleased with thousands of rams, Ten thousand rivers of oil? Shall I give my firstborn for my transgression, The fruit of my body for the sin of my soul? He has shown you, O man, what is good; And what does the LORD require of you But to do justly, To love mercy, And to walk humbly with your God?

B. Christmas is about doing God’s will, honoring by faith & being courageous.
   1. We think of the faith of Mary, the faith of Joseph, & the faith of the wise men.
   2. Slide#16a Mary in hearing from the angel in Lk.1:38 said, Behold the maidservant of the Lord! Let it be to me according to Your word.
      a) Probably the most amazing statement of faith ever to have fallen from human lips.
         (1) She reveals what her faith stands upon…His trustworthy Word.
      b) She was open & ready for the Lord to Intrude into her life.
         (1) Intrude (without invitation or permission). He was Mary’s Blessed Intruder.
c) Our lesson from Mary: God must reserve for Himself the right to break into my life without question or explanation.

(1) That shattering phone call, that disturbing letter...may indeed be the first stage of God's interruption in my life.

(2) And since God does the initiating, He must be responsible for the consequences.

d) Mary Faith teaches us to tear down all No Trespassing signs in our lives, & replace them with Welcome signs.

3. Slide#16b Joseph - story in a poem I wrote a dozen yrs ago:

a) To be married in a year; To Mary my dear.
   So young, so pretty; Then off to the city?
   3 months showing; Her face glowing?
   My face sad; For what we could have had.
   Should I break it w/a hush; Just don’t rush.
   I thought & I thought; Then a dream I caught.
   Puzzling fears; Angel comes near.
   Redemption plan revealed; New plan is sealed.
   I took her to wife; For the rest of my life.
   A boy in my home; I’ll raise like my own!

b) His faith went we’re logic failed. Joseph took Mary to be his wife, even though that meant living with a host of unanswered questions. Joseph is an amazing example of faith/obedience. He teaches us that just because we have questions that we can’t answer, questions that God won’t answer...that’s no excuse for not doing the will of God.

(1) Joseph’s reaction in the midst of not understanding everything around him...was to run to God not run from Him.

(2) He grabbed God’s will...as fuzzy at best. And yet he believed, he ran towards God. Because of this faith Mary’s husband endured stares from a judgmental public. He bore the stigma of marrying an unwed mother. He even had to flee his own country, as a refugee.

(3) Joseph’s faith was tough & brave & selfless & sacrificial.

4. Slide#16c Wise men - their faith took them on a long, difficult, tiring, arduous journey. But they kept on.

a) Their faith set out to worship Him (Mt.2:2) & succeeded in doing so (2:11).

(1) “What can we give God, that gives Him greater satisfaction than that a thousand times a day all His creatures should thus pause to withdraw and worship Him from the heart.”

b) Our lesson from the Wise Men: Worship is seeing what God is worth and giving him what He's worth.

(1) Worship does not satisfy our hunger for God; it whets our appetite.
5. The Christmas story is all about **faith & courage & obedience** to the Father.

   a) **Success** is never final, **failure** is never fatal, its **courage** that counts.

C. Christmas is a feast day for **the stout of heart**.

1. Slide#17a This Christmas, besides, egg nog & presents, trees & wreathes, decorations & lights...we need **Christmas style Courage**...a **courage** that rises up in the midst of the **brokenness** around us.

2. Slide#17b This Christmas we need **Feliz Navidad Faith**...a **faith** that does the will of God...**Regardless!**

3. This Christmas we need to be strong & courageous, to proclaim & live out our faith, and to make **real sacrifices** in obedience to Him.

   a) An all-wise God will one day mend all that’s **broken** and restore all that’s **fallen**. But for the moment He allows the **wreckage** to remain, and expects us to have the **courage** to obey His Word and answer His call.

D. Slide#18 On Dec.24,1989 a Romanian church was celebrating **Christmas Eve** by candlelight. During the service **Communist soldiers** came to **arrest the pastor**. As the soldiers approached the church, members started lining up outside. First 10 people deep, then 20, then 30. Church members encircled the building. Soldiers couldn’t break through the human shield. It was a symbolic moment - one of the **triggers** that brought down the **Romanian dictatorship**. And it was inspired, by the **courage** we find in the **Christmas story**.

E. So, Jesus lived out His **Motto** to **come** and **do** the Fathers will.

VI. Slide#19 **HIS MANIFESTO** (11-18) [manifesto = **public declaration of your policy & aim**]

A. (12) Not sitting on edge of seat wringing His hands, **but** relaxed… knowing **the** end...**knowing our** end.

B. (14) **Catch** the impact of this verse.

   1. We have our **standing/position** in vs.10 (**we have been** sanctified/set apart) and our **state/condition** in vs.14 (**we are being** sanctified).

   2. The sacrifice is so efficacious(effective) that it **guarantees** the **final perfection** of all those who were **being** made holy.

      a) This involves not only the **regeneration** of the **spirit** & the **salvation** of the **soul**, but also the **resurrection** of the **body** of each true believer.

      b) **We may not understand** all of this but we can **revel in its reality**. **Ray Stedman**

C. Ever notice that some **leaves** are able to remain on the tree even through the harsh winds of **winter**?
1. Slide#20a **Springtime** hits & you can watch leaves continued to **fall**, but it’s not because of the wind but because **the sap** has begun to flow. It starts to push the deadness out from within...**ALL** the deadness of the previous year.

2. When God writes **His will** on **our hearts**, **new life within** purges the **deadness** from our lives. **A renewed hearts** pump fresh blood through us. The life of Christ in us, Slide#20b same life that said, **“Here I am…I have come to do your will, O God”** - Animates us!
   
   a) It’s the work of the Holy Spirit in your life, that pushes out the deadness, not you in the flesh no matter how hard you try. **For by one offering He has perfected forever those who are being sanctified.** It’s **He - He - He** [not Ho, Ho, Ho!]

D. Slide#21a (17) Remember no more – Clara Barton, organizer of the Amer. Red Cross was known not to harbor resentment. She was asked by a friend regarding an incident that had happened earlier to Clara, “**Don’t you remember the wrong that was done you?**” Clara answered calmly, Slide#21b “**No, I distinctly remember forgetting that.**”

1. Can you visualize your **every past sin** and **failure totally forgotten** by God?
2. How does this affect your feelings about **God**? About **yourselves**? About your **future**? About your **past**?

E. **So**, Jesus declared His **Manifesto** as His **one offering would equal**...**believers forgiven, sins remembered no more, & saints perfected forever**.

F. **Lord, we celebrate...The King is born to us today. The King is born our souls to save.**