

Sermon Notes: The Paradox of God's Power

1. Make straight the path: He is coming. But wait! He's not who/what we expected. Kill him.
2. Who was this man, Jesus of Nazareth? Who was the God he embodied and revealed?
3. The incarnation shows us that God "always comes down" (Kelly Fryer). The "King of Kings" will lie in a cradle and then hang from a cross. What a scandal! It challenges all our preconceptions of God—especially when it comes to God's power (see 1 Cor 1:23-25).
4. If God's power does not match **our** conceptions of power (i.e., having control, exhibiting power **over** others), then what does Christ reveal God's power to be? What kind of power does God have?
5. God's power comes when God r_____s it, when God g_____s it up! Otherwise, God would be beholden to the need for power. God would be a tyrant who compensates for His insecurity by asserting control.
6. Isaiah invites us to imagine the "reign" of God accordingly: a harmonious existence where wolf and lamb live together, one led by a child. Let us hope for the arrival of this God and His kingdom in Christ.
7. Beyond hope, let us imitate the God we expect by living as He does, by imitating (Eph 5:1) His absolute self-giving through generosity and care for others.