

## **Christmas Day 2021**

**My talk very short talk this morning was inspired by my friend Steve Day, who was in turn inspired by Jonathan Somerville, so thanks to them both.**

**There is this really great story: someone arrives in our world from somewhere else, with strange powers, and points to a universe filled with greater possibilities than we had previously imagined. They live in ways that draw us out of the everyday and help us to find new meaning in old traditions. They awaken in us new love, then they depart, but leave us with a hope of reunion one day.**

**This story has been filmed and shown frequently on the television over the last few weeks, does anyone recognise it? It is of course the John Lewis Christmas Advert.**

**In case any of you haven't seen it, a young alien girl and an earth boy strike up an unlikely friendship while she is repairing her spaceship. They get in to amusing scrapes along the way, and then she's gone, except that now that the boy knows that she exists, she will never really be gone.**

**At first glance this advert seems to have very little to do with Christmas, in fact mirrors in many ways the original Christmas story.**

**Jesus too came from beyond our world, with power to heal, to provide, to forgive. He pointed to far vaster truths than our everyday world lets us imagine. He taught us the best way to love, and showed us the true meaning of love, ultimately dying for our salvation. He rose from death, meaning that nothing could ever be the same again; the knowledge of something beyond this life gives new meaning to everything.**

**Of course, John Lewes, like any other business, want to sell you their products; they want to capture our imaginations, our emotions and our wallets. The**

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**stories that they use to do that are effective because they tap into the great story which shapes our world – the story of God’s plan for humanity.**

**We all yearn for our lives to have meaning, and there is no greater meaning to be found than the knowledge that we are known and loved by God, and this means that we can transcend out mortality. That knowledge reframes our existence even more than meeting an alien would.**

**Whether or not John Lewes got your business this Christmas and whether or not their advert had anything to do with it, I really wat to encourage you to look afresh at the Christmas story this year. Let it give you a new perspective and allow it to reshape you. And may each and every one of you be blessed by the Christ Child, by Jesus, once and forever present with us!**