

## **THE REAL MESSAGE OF CHRISTMAS** **MATTHEW 1:18-25, 1 TIMOTHY 1:15**

Do you ever stop and think of the real message of Christmas? With all the gift giving that we do, the decorations that we put up, the events that we go to, when we as the last time you stopped and took time to think about the sobering and wonderful message of Christmas.

### **1. CHRISTMAS IS THE MESSAGE OF GOD'S LOVE.**

While there are a thousand and one things that occupy our minds during the Christmas season, the fact stands that Christmas is God's declaration to mankind that He loves us. The Bible declares in John 3:16, *That God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son...* But let's put it in a way that we could possibly grasp. Would you be willing to release everything that is in your possession, in your name, all the money you have, sell you house, and after all that was done...be willing to become to become "a little ant walking on the ground". The reality is that in a very real sense is what Jesus did. He gave up all His royalty, eternity with God to take on the form of human likeness. The love of God is so great for mankind that God took space in history to allow His only begotten Son to come in the form of human flesh through the means of a manger in Bethlehem. Why would God allow His one and only Son to come as a baby born in to a place so obscure and to a planet that was and is filled with sin? The only answer can be- God loves us. God could have spared His Son and not allowed Him to come to earth and be born in the manner in which He was, but to do so violates the nature and character of God. For centuries past, God has used this one special time of the year as the most visible demonstration of His love for mankind. God so loves us that it moved Him to act on our behalf to provide a way where by we could have a relationship with Him. When Adam and Eve sinned in the Garden of Eden, the separated themselves and all mankind from a real relationship with God because of their act of sin! Their sin was passed on through all generations. Yet, the birth of Christ was the plan of God to reverse the process of sin. All who follow after the first Adam die. But all who follow after Christ are saved. God declared that He would initiate the process of mankind's salvation. *Luke 2:11 declares, "For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Savior which is Christ the Lord."* If you ever wonder how much God loves you- all you have to do is look back at the birth of Christ, the death and resurrection of Christ. All these are reminders that God will do whatever He needs to do because He loves the entire world. Love caused God to give His Son. Love caused Jesus to leave heaven in all His glory and majesty and become robed with human flesh. God never just says He loves us- His love is always demonstrated with actions. Since God loves us to the point that He will give His Son to come in human flesh, there is no other good thing that He will withhold from us. Jesus declares, "...How much more will your Father which is in heaven give good things to them that ask him? The love of God is such that He wants for us only the very best. He wants for you the best eternity, the best paradise, the best future, the best home in heaven. **That is the message of Christmas- God gives His best in order that we can have His best.**

### **2. CHRISTMAS IS THE MESSAGE THAT WE ARE SINNERS BY NATURE (1 Tim. 1:15).**

The one forgotten message of Christmas is the fact that Jesus came into the world in physical form because man by his very nature is sinful. In Paul's letter to Timothy, Paul under the inspiration of the Spirit of God declares, "Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners; of whom I am chief. The ultimate purpose for Christmas was not pageants, plays, cantatas, gift giving, Christmas trees, lights. The ultimate purpose of Jesus entrance into the world as a baby was to take upon Himself our eternal punishment and penalty by paying for it with His blood, and in exchange give us the offer of eternal life. The true Christmas is a sobering reality that we are all sinners. Sinners are all those people who fail to live completely perfect 24/7- 365 days a year, and that includes all of mankind. The truth is every person has violated the Ten Commandments of God, at one point or the other. While the name "sinner" is not often equated with a nice term, the fact is all mankind are sinners in the sight of God. God declares that everyone of us have gone our own way, and the final result and payment for sin is eternal death in hell. The message of Christmas is that Jesus became human flesh to save us out of a life of sin and place within us a new nature that is pleasing and honoring to God. When a person lives to the sinful flesh, the final destination of his or her life can't even be described in human words because of the horrendous place they will live. Jesus uses the word "hell", "fire and brimstone" to give us just a glance of the place where all sinners will live who leave Jesus out of their lives. Paul realized that Jesus was born of a virgin, lived a perfect life and died on a cruel cross in order that he

wouldn't live eternally in hell, but in order that he could have a real relationship with God. To fail to know that Christmas is the message that we are sinners by nature, is to miss out on the full purpose of Jesus coming to earth.

### **3. CHRISTMAS IS THE MESSAGE THAT GOD WANTS TO PAY OUR SIN DEBT AND FORGIVE US.**

From the beginning of time, God established a plan for man to deal with his sins. In the Old Testament era, God called the people to take lambs, and other animals and sacrifice them on the altar which was covering for the sins of the people. And as Jesus grew in wisdom and stature and came to the point of his public ministry, John the Baptist described Jesus in these terms, "Behold the Lamb of God that takes away the sins of the world." (See Jn. 1:29)

Why did John refer to Jesus as "the Lamb of God"? Because John knew the purpose of the life of Jesus. Christmas is a reminder to you and me that God not only has provided a way to pay for our sins but He provided a way of His own initiative and of His own desire because He wants to pay for our sin debts. The reading of the opening chapters of Matthew reveal the full purpose of Jesus come to earth. Matthew 1:21, gives the reason for Jesus coming to earth- Jesus came to "save his people from their sins". To view any part of Christmas without realizing that God wants to pay for the sins of mankind is to miss the full meaning of Christmas. The story of Christmas is not that God has to pay for the sin debt of mankind but rather- God wants to pay for the sin debt. Irregardless of all our sins, the desire of God is that He wants to forgive us of the totality of our sins- no matter how flawed or marred our lives are.

### **4. CHRISTMAS IS THE MESSAGE THAT GOD WANTS MANKIND TO HAVE A REAL AND PERSONAL RELATIONSHIP WITH HIM.**

Why would God take space in all of eternity to allow His only begotten Son to become flesh, live in an earthly body just as you and I do? There can only be one answer- it is the fact that God wants us and He wants us to have a relationship that can only be described as "real", "personal", "intimate". Without the coming of Jesus we wouldn't know how God thinks, or responds. But Jesus declared when you see me, you have seen the Father. (See Mt. 11:27) Jesus loved having intimate friends that were close and personal to him. Jesus three closest friends were Peter, James, and John. Another deep friend of Jesus was Lazarus in whom he summoned back from the dead, out of love for his family. Without Jesus coming in the flesh, there is no way we can understand or know the Father in an intimate way- yet Jesus coming to earth through a manger in Bethlehem, becoming flesh, gives us a sobering indicator of how much God thinks of all of mankind.

### **5. CHRISTMAS IS THE MESSAGE THAT THERE ARE ETERNAL CONSEQUENCES TO ALL WHO REJECT HIM.**

God would not take space in eternity to send his Son into the world to "save his people from their sins" if there wasn't something that he was saving them from. The one thing that is as stake for all mankind is there soul. Not only is Christmas the message of God's love in sending His Son into the world- but it is also a sobering reminder that there is only one way to be saved from sin- and that is turning to Jesus. Paul in writing to the Romans declared that "whoever calls on the name of the Lord shall be saved". (See Romans 10:13) Jesus declared, "*What does it profit a man if he gains the whole world but lose his own soul.* (See Mt. 16:30)

To view Christ only as a baby is to view Christmas incomplete. The entrance of Jesus into the world was to save the souls of mankind from a fate that can only be described as "hell", "torment". Just as there were those around the scenes of Jesus birth who accepted Him, there were also those around His birth who rejected Him. Herod desired to kill the baby which exposes the reality of his wicked soul. The fact is all mankind has a soul and all mankind has another place to live other than planet earth. To all who accept the message of the gospel and turn to Jesus- their eternity is heaven, but to all who reject the message of the gospel (the good news of Jesus coming to earth to save us from our sins) their eternity is described by God as "hell", "the lake of fire". God declares in the last book of the Bible- *Revelation 20:15*, "*And whoever was not found written in the book of life was cast into the lake of fire.*" The first coming of Jesus was as a baby for the purpose of taking the way the sins of the world, but the next time He comes, it will not be to take away the sins of the world- it will be to judge every man. All who have not placed their trust in the Lord Jesus Christ will be lost and doomed for all eternity in a real, eternal hell.