

## **THE TRUE MEANING OF CHRISTMAS**

### **Philippians 2:5-11**

What is the “truth” about Christmas? What is Christmas all about? The reality is, there is so much fabrication, and so much confusion, when you watch TV and listen to the world’s portrayal of Christmas, that there is little wonder why so many have little to no idea of what Christmas is all about.

We have been infiltrated with so many ideas, notions, that sadly, those false notions have to many people become “facts” regarding Christmas, and the very person of Christ is being completely missed in Christmas.

When you even say the word Christmas, the very first part of that word says what Christmas is all about...namely Christ. There are not 10-20 versions of Christmas, there is only one true and accurate version of Christmas, as given by God Himself through His Word and through His servants, writers, prophets and apostles. So what is Christmas all about?

**1. CHRISTMAS IS THE STORY OF GOD LEAVING HEAVEN TO COME TO EARTH.** When the apostle Paul is writing to the precious saints of God at Philippi, he is reminding them of the very nature of Jesus Christ, who is he and where he came from. The simple and sobering truth is this...God the Son has been for all of eternity, but the Bible makes it clear that God the Son, abandoned a sovereign position that He has from eternity past.

The Bible says that Jesus “being in the form of God”. Jesus didn’t start at Bethlehem, the truth is Jesus, before coming to earth, was beside the Father as God the Son. Yet, the holy truth of God’s Word is this...Jesus was willing to lay aside, and abandon His sovereign position in heaven to come to earth in the form of a baby. Even as a baby, Jesus was God, because His nature is God. Yet, Jesus was fully God and fully man. He was God in flesh form. Jesus saw man in need of rescue, and the Bible says, that He willingly, gladly, deliberately abandoned His position, in heaven to come to earth.

When you see Jesus in the manger, as a baby...He is fully God. When Jesus was inside His mother being formed, He was fully God. When Jesus walks as a boy, He is fully God. Why?

Because Jesus “being nature” is that of God! He cannot change His nature. Though Jesus is God the Son, He laid aside royalty to take on human flesh. Yet, in laying aside His royalty, He didn’t lay aside His nature. Jesus has eternally been God. Taking on human flesh, didn’t alter the fact that He was God clothed in a baby’s body.

While that is impossible to understand, that is the truth of Holy God. Jesus, God’s Son, took on the human body, with all the human limitations that we have, because something was radically wrong with man...SIN. The fact that Jesus came to earth, reveals the gravity of our sin problem.

While Jesus has always been God the Son, He laid aside His mighty power that He had as God, and His glory as God...and took on human flesh. Jesus completely emptied himself...to live in an earthly body. The Bible says in 2 Corinthians 8:9, “For our sakes He became poor.” Jesus left His holy position in glory to come and live in a humble village. Jesus would learn, grow in stature as a human being, yet at the same time being fully God. Being clothed as a human being, Jesus in human form, began where we all began. Yet, prior to that Jesus was in glory with God the Father, and God the Holy Spirit!

**2. CHRISTMAS IS ABOUT GOD ACCEPTING A SLAVES POSITION.** When Jesus came to earth, He didn’t leave heaven as a king to come to earth as a king. The Bible declares that Jesus took the form of a “slave”. In God the Son coming to earth, He came to earth in the form of a baby, born to a lowly couple.

He laid aside the royalty of heaven, and put on the nature of a servant. Jesus makes this statement of Himself, “I didn’t come to be ministered unto, but to minister”.

The story of Christmas is the story of Christ, not only leaving His sovereign position in heaven, but coming to earth, and taking on the nature of a servant. It wasn’t a pretend role, or one for show, but rather His nature was one who serves. Luke puts it this way, “I am in the midst of you as one who serves.” (Lk. 22:27)

Jesus role as a slave was real, deliberate, intentional. Jesus as a servant was absolute submission to the will of God the Father. Not only did Jesus accept a servant’s position, but He walked the earth, doing all the Father asked of Him to do.

**3. CHRISTMAS IS ABOUT GOD BECOMING FLESH AND ASSOCIATING WITH SINFUL MAN.** The message of Christmas is that God became fully 100% man through and through, while at the same time, being in nature God. Jesus was not half God and half man, neither was he God sometimes and then man at other times. In a human body, Jesus was fully man, and fully God.

Jesus, God the Son, not only left His sovereign position, but the Bible is clear in the fact that He associated with sinful man. Before coming to earth, God the Son was Spirit, with no earthly body, but in coming to earth, He put on an body, just like all mankind, to live among sinful man, to walk where sinful man walked.

Jesus didn't walk around 5 inches off the ground, or with a halo around his head, but rather He "lived" exactly where we live. He was so ordinary looking that he wouldn't stand out in a crowd. Jesus was completely human, meaning, He completely knows what it is to live life on earth in a human body, with all the problems that we face each and every day. Jesus did in a day's time what each of us have to do. He had to eat, drink, work, face problems, handle problems, get tired, sleep. He was completely human. He even learned an occupation, and worked with his hands as a carpenter. Yet, before coming to earth, there was no "need" inside Jesus at all as God the Son. As God the Son, He never knew hunger, thirst, tiredness. Yet, in becoming a man, Jesus laid aside all His power, to know the totality of being a man.

**4. CHRISTMAS IS ABOUT GOD BECOMING FLESH AND REVEALING A SELFLESS NATURE.** Of all that have walked on the earth, there is none as unselfish as that of Jesus. First, He left power, and glory in heaven to come to earth. Then he became a servant. Yet, that was not all that Jesus did.

The Bible says that "He humbled himself and became obedient to death, even the death on a cross." He not only leaves heaven, but faces execution, not for himself, but for the whole of mankind. Why? Because there is no rescue from sin apart from death! When Jesus walks to the cross, He will bear the infinite amount of sins and He will feel the complete and total wrath of God, which is beyond the comprehension of man. He can do it because an infinite person can handle infinite punishment.

In truth, Christmas is a reminder that we are sinners, and Jesus didn't just come to earth, He came to earth, to face the lowest form of execution...the death on a cross. Why? Because He loves us! He wants us! But He knows to have us, our sins must be paid by a perfect sacrifice...and He alone is that sacrifice!

While many find it difficult to believe that God in heaven loves them, the very actions of Jesus, coming to earth, leaving all His power, and glory in heaven, is revealing enough in itself. Why would Jesus leave? What is there for Him to gain? The answer...an individual, personal relationship with us, that is both real and genuine.

Jesus left heaven, came to earth, born of Virgin Mary, lived a sinless life for 33 years, and then went to the cross...because He wanted to pay for your sins...and He did pay for them! Jesus said, no man takes my life, I lay it down. (Jn. 10:18)

The only issue is this, will you accept the gift of His death for you at the cross? He stooped all the way down "to die" in our place. That is the love of Jesus.

**5. CHRISTMAS IS ABOUT CHRIST THE KING.** While there was no evidence on this earth, while Jesus was here that He had a throne. God makes it clear that Jesus ascended back to the Father.

Thirty-three years after His birth, Jesus left this earth, and ascended back to the right hand of the Father. Since Jesus was fully God, and fully man, and obeyed the Father completely, the Bible makes it clear that He was given a name above every name...the name LORD.

It was at the cross, that Christ accomplished the plan of God, and went back to the Father. There will come a time of those that are living in heaven, those on the earth, and those under the earth...namely hell, will acknowledge before Holy God that Jesus Christ is Lord. Regardless of location every person will acknowledge Jesus as Lord. To those who acknowledge Jesus as Lord in this life time...the result is salvation, eternal life, life with God, heaven, paradise. But if you wait after death...you will acknowledge Jesus is Lord, to your own doom. His gift of life can be yours today through a simple prayer: "*Lord Jesus, I admit that I am a sinner, and today I choose to place my faith in your death, burial and resurrection for my sins. I choose to accept you today as my Lord and Savior.*" Amen