

The Purpose of Christmas

Part # 1:

A TIME FOR CELEBRATION

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The birth of Jesus Christ is the most significant event in the history of humankind. It split history into BC and AD. Every time we write a check, celebrate a birthday, fill out an application or use a date, we're using the birth of Jesus Christ as the basis for measuring time.

Christmas was God's idea.

He planned **when** it would happen. Galatians 4:4

⁴ But when the time had fully come, God sent his Son, born of a woman, born under law,

He planned **how** it would happen. Isaiah 7:13-14

¹³ And he said, Hear ye now, O house of David: Is it a small thing for you to weary men, that ye will weary my God also? ¹⁴ Therefore the Lord himself will give you a sign: behold, a virgin shall conceive, and bear a son, and shall call his name Immanuel.

He planned **where** it would happen. Micah 5:2

² But thou, Beth-lehem Ephrathah, which art little to be among the thousands of Judah, out of thee shall one come forth unto me that is to be ruler in Israel; whose goings forth are from of old, from everlasting.

He planned **why** it would happen. Galatians 4:5

⁵ God sent him to buy freedom for us who were slaves to the law, so that he could adopt us as his very own children.

Since it was His idea, we should find out what He had in **mind**.

On the night Jesus was born, God sent an angel to announce His arrival. In that birth announcement, we find God's three **purposes** of Christmas:

Luke 2:8-10 That night, some shepherds were in the fields nearby watching their sheep.⁹ Then an angel of the Lord stood before them. The glory of the Lord was shining around them, and they became very frightened.¹⁰ The angel said to them, "Do not be afraid. I am bringing you good news that will be a great joy to all the people.

The first purpose of Christmas is to celebrate.

Central Point...

Three Reasons to Celebrate

1. God **loves** us.

John 3:16 "For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life."

Three aspects of God's love lies at the **center** of Christmas:

- the **source** – human love is **biased** and **selfish**, seeking **something** in return. God's love is **pure**, **selfless**, **holy** and **never ending**.
- the **scope** – "God **so** loved the world"
- the **sacrifice** – God gave His **best** to rescue us from our **worst**.

God's love isn't based on what we **do**; it's based on **who** He is.

2. God is **with** us.

Psalm 139:7-10 Where can I go to get away from your Spirit?

Where can I run from you?

⁸ If I go up to the heavens, you are there.

If I lie down in the grave, you are there.

⁹ If I rise with the sun in the east

and settle in the west beyond the sea,

¹⁰ even there you would guide me.

With your right hand you would hold me.

3. God is **for** us.

Romans 8:31-35 So, what do you think? With God on our side like this, how can we lose? If God didn't hesitate to put everything on the line for us, embracing our condition and exposing himself to the worst by sending his own Son, is there anything else he wouldn't gladly and freely do for us? And who would dare tangle with God by messing with one of God's chosen? Who would dare even to point a finger? The One who died for us—who was raised to life for us!—is in the presence of God at this very moment sticking up for us. Do you think anyone is going to be able to drive a wedge between us and Christ's love for us? There is no way! Not trouble, not hard times, not hatred, not hunger, not homelessness, not bullying threats, not backstabbing, not even the worst sins listed in Scripture...

Focal Point . . .

Purposeful Celebration

A purposeful celebration of Jesus' birth involves...

...a **commemoration** of the past.

Titus 2:11 *God's readiness to give and forgive is now public. Salvation's available for everyone! We're being shown how to turn our backs on a godless, indulgent life, and how to take on a God-filled, God-honoring life.*

...a **consecration** on the present.

Titus 2:12 *"This new life is starting right now..."*.

...a **contemplation** of the future.

Titus 2:13 *"...and is whetting our appetites for the glorious day when our great God and Savior, Jesus Christ appears."*

...a **concentration** on our purpose.

Titus 2:14-15 *He offered himself as a sacrifice to free us from a dark, rebellious life into this good, pure life, making us a people he can be proud of, energetic in goodness.¹³ Tell them all this. Build up their courage, and discipline them if they get out of line. You're in charge. Don't let anyone put you down.*

Turning Point . . .

Believers are fond of **dwelling** upon God's pardon, but neglect upon their purpose as **pardoned** people.

We can genuinely celebrate Christmas when we **discover** the joy of concentrating on God's purpose for our lives.

Our challenge:

Believers – simply ask, *"Father God – How am I honoring the gift of Your Son by celebrating?"*

Seekers – we can only purposely celebrate Jesus' by responding to the gift that God intended Him to be. To invite Christ into your heart, simply pray,

*Father God, I come before you today, asking you to save me.
I invite your Son Jesus Christ into my heart to be my Lord and Savior.
Please forgive me of sin in my life; cleanse my heart and my spirit.
Father, I want to celebrate Christmas this year by accepting your gift of salvation. And with your help, guide me toward being the person you created me to be.
In Jesus' name -- Amen*