

The Purpose of Christmas

Part # 3:

A TIME FOR RECONCILIATION

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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.

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:

The first purpose of Christmas is to **celebrate**.

Luke 2:9-10 *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 second purpose of Christmas is **salvation**.

Luke 2:11 *The Savior—yes, the Messiah, the Lord—has been born today in Bethlehem, the city of David!*

The third purpose of Christmas is found in this statement:

Luke 2:14 *"Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men."*

The third purpose of Christmas is **reconciliation**.

Central Point . . .

What is reconciliation? Reconciliation is...

...when a **broken** relationship is **restored**.

...**peace** on earth, good will toward men.

Isaiah 9:6 *"A child has been born to us;
God has given a son to us.
He will be responsible for leading the people.
His name will be Wonderful Counselor, Powerful God,
Father Who Lives Forever, Prince of Peace.*

Three Kinds of Peace

1. Peace with **God**; **spiritual** peace.

Romans 5:1 *By faith we have been made acceptable to God. And now, because of our Lord Jesus Christ, we live in peace with God.*

If we're trying to live our lives **without** God, then we're at **war** with God. We need a **peace** treaty.

How do we make peace with God?

...not by promising to be **good**.

...not by being **perfect**.

...not by never **sinning**.

We make peace by **faith** – faith in God's grace.

Ephesians 2:8 *You were saved by faith in God, who treats us much better than we deserve! This is God's gift to you, and not anything you have done on your own.*

2. Peace **of** God; **emotional** peace.

The peace of God happens in our **hearts** when we've made peace with God.

Philippians 4:6 *Do not worry about anything, but pray and ask God for everything you need, always giving thanks.⁷ And God's peace, which is so great we cannot understand it, will keep your hearts and minds in Christ Jesus.*

3. Peace with **others**; **relational** peace.

2 Corinthians 5:18-19 *God has done it all! He sent Christ to make peace between himself and us, and he has given us the work of making peace between himself and others.¹⁹ What we mean is that God was in Christ, offering peace and forgiveness to the people of this world. And he has given us the work of sharing his message about peace.*

God has given us both a **ministry** and a **message**.

Our message of **reconciliation** helps people find peace with God and peace with each other.

Matthew 5:9 *"You're blessed when you can show people how to cooperate instead of compete or fight. That's when you discover who you really are, and your place in God's family."*

Focal Point . . .

Steps Toward Reconciliation

Romans 12:17-21 “Never pay back evil with more evil. Do things in such a way that everyone can see you are honorable.¹⁸ Do all that you can to live in peace with everyone.¹⁹ Dear friends, never take revenge. Leave that to the righteous anger of God. For the Scriptures say,

“I will take revenge;
I will pay them back,”
says the LORD.

²⁰ Instead,

“If your enemies are hungry, feed them.
If they are thirsty, give them something to drink.
In doing this, you will heap
burning coals of shame on their heads.”

²¹ Don't let evil conquer you, but conquer evil by doing good.

Ask God every day to...

...bless those whom we are having difficulty,
regardless of who is at fault.

...give us the grace to **forgive**.

...give us the courage to seek **forgiveness**.

...give us the wisdom to know what we **need** to do.

Turning Point . . .

The greatest need in our nation and in our world is reconciliation. It's the message of Christmas: Peace on earth, good will toward men.

Acts 10:34-35 "It's God's own truth, nothing could be plainer: God plays no favorites! It makes no difference who you are or where you're from—if you want God and are ready to do as he says, the door is open.

Our challenge:

Believers – simply ask, “Father God – Where are the areas of my life in need of reconciliation?”

Seekers – the first step to experiencing true reconciliation is to have Jesus Christ fill you with His love and His forgiveness. 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*