

Welcome – The Story of Christmas those who were there when Christ Born: Joseph | Mary | Jesus

Christmas Story – Simpler than we think...more incredible than we can imagine

Event Simple – One verse - Luke 2:7 'And she gave birth to her firstborn son and wrapped him in swaddling cloths and laid him in a manger, because there was no place for them at the inn.'

Promise and Power simple event is incredible – Entire Bible...Entirety of all human history

Young Earth 6,000 or Old Earth 4.5 Billion...Everything is synched together in 33 years – Hour Glass

Bl – Simple yet incredible Truth – Christmas is a story of redemption

Have you ever experienced the pause before the reaction when something incredible happens?

Golden buzzers – Birth of Jesus...God breaks through the silence...something incredible happens

Today we're going to see 5 incredible truths about Christmas...So incredible = Make-believe / Fairytale

As incredible as Christmas may seem, you can believe it!

And you should; For at least 2 very rational reasons: Before we get to the five incredible truths...

1) **It's too counter-cultural to be fabricated**

Culture – Too rational & fact-based to accept God becoming man in the form of a baby – Pragmatism
Logic and reason were the order of the day not fantasy and mysticism – **Written as a factual account**

2) **It's too verifiable to be false** – NOTHING HAS BEEN MORE SCRUTINIZED THAN THE SCRIPTURES

Everyone was still alive – Too many involved to claim collusion or conspiracy – **Prophecies alone**
Why do I bring all this up? There are many people who look at Story of Jesus as *fable instead of fact*

If I were a betting man... – **Everyday (60 mph = 200K impact force) (Fast food) | Betting eternity**

When you get right down to it...the story of Jesus holds the key to your life | **Galatians comes in...**

4 But when the fullness of time had come, (Christmas) God sent forth his Son, born of woman,
born under the law, **5** to redeem those who were under the law, so that we might receive adoption as
sons. **6** And because you are sons, God has sent the Spirit of his Son into our hearts, crying, "Abba!

Father!" **7** So you are no longer a slave, but a son, and if a son, then an heir through God.
desire incredible story of Christmas new are afresh...we can get used to anything becomes routine

Ferrari – Michelin Star – Jetpack | Christmas is incredible every time we stop to think about it!
.. **Incredible because God had a plan** 'When the fullness of time had come' – How incredible is that?

God had been preparing for this point in history, for a long time!
o Israel had all but lost its way...Many of His people had lost hope...Now was the time...to what?

God implemented His plan to make things right – Restore broken humanity into His perfect presence
Initially – Day was here | Conditions were right | People were desperate | Prophecies were ripe...

Crush Satan's head (Gen 3:15) | Bless Nations (Gen 12) Establish Everlasting Kingdom (2 Sam 7)
Jr. High Girl getting ready for her first dance...boy is downstairs mom has given him a glass of juice...

People think God reacts this way...tantrums ...we threw it on purpose – Plan of redemption

God had a plan and the time had come at Christmas to make it happen

.. **Incredible because God sent His Son** - 'God sent forth His son' – How incredible is that?

His own flesh and blood if you will...or better...in His perfect likeness

A son in those days was considered to have all the attributes of his Father

So this is the Bible's way of saying...someone exactly like Himself!

o Fully God, and fully possessing all of God's characteristics of perfection and power

co-existent with the Father and the Spirit in perfect unity and fellowship – Immanuel = God with us!

Incredible because God became flesh

'Born of a woman'...in a stable | Born just like you and I – Makes His humanity just like you and I

Incredible that he lived like us – Idea in (4) 'born under the law'

Instead of *exempting* Himself from constraints and futility of the law – He lived it and perfected it

Instead of *excluding* Himself from the pool of sin/sadness of this world...He went all in

'The Word became flesh and dwelt among us' – (John 1:14)

Walked – Talked - Ate – Slept – Wept – and Bled as a Human Man!

o that we do not have a high priest who is unable to sympathize with out weakness, but one who is
in every respect has been tempted as we are, yet without sin. (Heb. 4:15)

Incredible that He lived like us, but did not sin like us...He lived in perfection because we can't

3. **Incredible because Jesus came to set us free** (5) to redeem those who were under the law – Incredible

• Which is all of us; Every one of us is born with a sinful nature

o All of us has an all-consuming desire to act on our sinful nature...and we all do!

Not just the things we **COMMIT**, but the things we **OMIT**

We sin...and lack the power to break free – INCREDIBLE THING ABOUT CHRISTMAS

• Jesus came to set us free – Free from the bondage/consequences of our sins

The baby in the manger is the conquering hero! The bondage is sin and He breaks the chains!

Think about the power in the eyes of the infant Christ...determination He had as He grew...

His unwavering resolve at the cross...'Forgive them Father for they know not what they do'

• During the hours of darkness – The Son was forsaken by the Father...paid the penalty for sin

• Spoke words so powerful the earth shook, graves opened, and the temple curtain was torn

'It is finished' – You are free...believe in this work I have done and YOU ARE FREE!

Sin has defined your life up until now because you were bound to it...now you are bound to me!

Anything like me...you have scars...wounds...when you look at them they remind us of who we were

When we look at his scars...His wounds...they remind us of whose we are...bought with a price!

It's incredible because he took the lashing...took the nails...took the forsaking | Joy | set us free

4. **Incredible because God comes to dwell within us** – How incredible is that?

(6) Because you are sons (present tense), God has sent the Spirit of His Son into our hearts crying,

'Abba! Father!'

When you believe in the Christ of Christmas the Holy Spirit takes up residence in your heart

• He dwells within you to lead, guide, comfort, and empower...its incredible!

• More He testifies to God on our behalf, crying 'Abba, Father'

o Aramaic term that means 'Daddy' – Uncomfortable | Fondness – Familiarity – Endearment

'I want to sit at your feet, drink from the cup in your hand, lay back against you and breathe...feel your heartbeat'

God gave us His Son at Christmas – God gave His Spirit when we believe...bring us close!

Incredible...we're sinners He's restoring us – Solidifying relationship – Expressing Love – Guiding life

God had a plan – God sent His Son – To set us free – and dwell within us – and call us His own

5. **Incredible because Jesus came to call us His own** – How incredible is that!

(5) so that we might receive adoption as sons (7) So you are no longer a slave, but a son

• We might be accepted into His family – considered one of His own...adopted

The Tans – My adoption is final

• Receive all the rights, privileges, and inheritance that goes along with it

• Welcomes us into a new family – brothers and sisters – The church

He didn't just open our cell doors to let us out of prison and then give us a bus pass –

God opens the doors to His home and embraces us as His child – gives us a room...never lets go!

o God doesn't love us from afar...He loves us up close

o He doesn't give us the leftovers...He gives us an inheritance!

In Christ we stand to receive His inheritance of life to the full and life forever

If you believe in the Christ of Christmas...Christmas is a story of redemption – **It's simply incredible!**

But it's all for naught if you don't believe – don't embrace it – don't respond to the One it's all about

The pause before the reaction when something incredible happens?

Luke 15:10 - 'There is joy before the angels of God over one sinner who repents'

• Surrender to His Lordship – Confess your sin and ask forgiveness – Live for His glory

• Love Him with all your heart, soul, mind, and strength | **ADOPTION IS FINAL**

Give an opportunity to experience Christ by expressing your belief in prayer