

**INTRO:** So, here we are... it's **CHRISTmas** time! They say that it's The Most Wonderful Time of the Year. While it may be for some... **It's definitely NOT a wonderful time for ALL!** – The stress of the Christmas and Holiday season often brings on feelings of Sadness and Depression for many people. Financial stress, Grief from missing loved ones, and Struggles in life often give us the Christmas blues!

- A survey conducted by the **National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI)** found that **64%** of individuals living with a mental illness reported that their conditions worsened around the holidays. – With that said, I'd sincerely like to ask you, How are you doing personally?

Today I want you to know that **GOD LOVES YOU** and **He cares about your mental, physical and emotional well-being**, But He especially cares about Your Relational and Spiritual well-being!

*In fact, Ever Since The Fall*, God has worked ceaselessly to provide a **REMEDY** which brings **PEACE** for the Weary, **HOPE** for the Lost, **LOVE** for the Lonely and **HEALING** for the those Hurting! – The **CURE** then for Depression and Despair, for Problems and Pain is **NOT FOUND** in a **HOLLY JOLLY CHRISTMAS**, or even in a **Cup of Cheer**. – **The Cure is ONLY FOUND in JESUS CHRIST!**

❖ In this sermon, I would like to focus on **THE CHRIST OF CHRISTMAS**\* (B/C He's the Remedy for ALL!)

**I. WHO IS THE CHRIST?** – Simply put, **"Jesus Christ"** means **"Jesus the Messiah"** or **"Jesus the Anointed One."** – **Some people find it shocking to learn that Jesus' last name is not "Christ."** – The term **"Christ"** is derived from the Greek word **Christos**, which means "anointed one" or "chosen one." – This is the Greek equivalent of the Hebrew word **Mashiach**, or "Messiah." – **"Jesus"** is the Lord's human name given to Mary by the angel Gabriel (**Luke 1:31**). **"Christ"** is His title, signifying that Jesus was sent from God to be a **King & Deliverer (Dan 9:25)**

**A. JESUS CHRIST is the Son of God, who has Forever Existed (Rev 1:8)** *"I am the **Alpha** and the **Omega**, the Beginning and the End," says the Lord, "who is and who was and who is to come, the Almighty."* The Eternal Godhead determined the necessity of the Incarnation of Christ!, so **GOD SENT the Christ** into our world to Save Us from our sins! (**John 3:16; Heb 1:1-3**)

**B. JESUS CHRIST was Promised according to the Scriptures** – The Bible records many prophecies in the OT which foretold of **God's Promises to send a Messiah, a Redeemer who is the CHRIST i.e. the anointed Son of God.** – **By some counts, more than 300 Old Testament prophecies point to Jesus Christ and were fulfilled by Him** in His life on earth. These include prophecies about His unique birth (Isa 7:14), His earthly ministry (Isa 61:1), and even the way He would suffer and die (Psalm 22). (*Trust worthiness and accuracy of the Scriptures!*)

**C. JESUS CHRIST's had a Unique Birth (Isa 7:14; 9:6, Mic 5:2).** – At **Christmastime**, we often reflect on **the significant OT prophecies surrounding the miraculous conception of Mary**, as the means by which Jesus Christ would manifest in human form. *Because it's Christmastime, I would like to read these verses..*

- “Therefore, the Lord Himself will give you a sign: Behold, **the virgin shall conceive and bear a Son and shall call His name Immanuel**” (Isa 7:14). i.e., God **WITH us** and God **LIKE us**!
- “For unto us a Child is born, **Unto us a Son is given**; And the government will be upon His shoulder. And His name will be called **Wonderful, Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace**” (Isa 9:6). **God’s Son** is the greatest gift that man could ever receive!

P/A – So then, the Incarnation of Jesus Christ was **NOT** so that we can ‘give and receive gifts,’ rather, it was to show us the Father, so that we can **BEHOLD the GLORY of GOD!** And His glory was manifested in His Son Jesus Christ! – In (John 1:14), John tells us that “**the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we have seen his glory, glory as of the only Son from the Father, full of grace and truth**” – Knowing this should prompt us all to **Shout Halleluiah to the King of Glory!** – In (2 Cor 9:15), “**Thanks be to God for His indescribable gift!**” – What a wonderful truth to behold... **Jesus Christ is THE CHRIST OF CHRISTMAS** ... not Santa Claus!

**II. WHY DID CHRIST COME? (JOHN 3:17)** – He came into our world in complete obedience to His Father because **GOD knew what we needed a SAVIOR!** – (John 3:16) tells us that **WHEN** God sent His **ONLY** Son into this sinful world... **it was an INVITATION!** – But (v.17) clearly states God’s **PURPOSE**: “**For God did not send His Son into the world to condemn the world, but that the world through Him might be saved!**” (John 3:17). The **INVITATION** was to **RECEIVE JESUS**, the Christ of Christmas... for **SALVATION** – This means that the Incarnation of Jesus Christ was then, **A MISSION from GOD...**

- To **RECONCILE US** with God through the Forgiveness of Sins (*Sin separates us from God!*)
  - “**Salvation**” **was an impossibility until God made it “Possible!”** – (Eph 2:1-3) tells us “**by nature, we were all children of wrath**”; *hopelessly separated from God, because we had **all sinned** against God! (in Adam)*
  - **But God made a way where there was “no way!”** (Eph 2:4-5) **But God, who is rich in mercy, because of His great love with which He loved us, even when we were dead in trespasses, made us alive together with Christ (by grace you have been saved)** Amen!
- To **HELP US** Know the Depth of God’s Love (*He willingly Paid the Price to bring us back to God!*)
- To **SHOW US** a **MODEL** of Holiness (*I.e., to show us what is **Righteous and Pleasing** to the Father!*)
- To **MAKE US** Partakers of the Divine Nature (*I.e., To be **Born-Again, Born from Above, or In Christ!***)
- To **PROVIDE FOR US** Power **OVER** the Devil! (*Because in and of ourselves we had **No Power** to do so!*) – (Heb 2:14) **Inasmuch then as the children have partaken of flesh and blood, He Himself likewise shared in the same, that through death He might destroy him who had the power of death.**

**CLOSING THOUGHT:** The Divine Answer to the Question, **‘Why Did He Come,’** is found all throughout scripture. **John makes this clear in (1 John 4:9), “In this the love of God was manifested toward us, that God has sent His only begotten Son into the world, that we might LIVE through Him”** So, the Gift wasn’t just an adorable baby Jesus at CHRISTMASTIME but is rather Found in Jesus’ offering of Himself for the will of the father. **God gave us JESUS** to demonstrate **His love** for a lost and sinning world... **Jesus gave Himself** so that we may **have LIFE, and that more abundantly!**

**III. WHAT CHRIST MEANS TO US (Gal 4:4-5a)** – **Have you ever chosen a gift and carefully wrapped it for a loved one, only for them to toss it aside and never open it?** – **How do you think God feels when so many still REJECT His FREE GIFT?** – (Phil 2:6-8) tells us that **God “Gift Wrapped” Jesus in HUMANITY!** – We’re also told in the Christmas story (Luke 2:13), that **Jesus was “Wrapped in Swaddling Clothes”** (aka graves clothes) **Wow!**

**A. So many in our world Fail to Understand the Precious Gift we have in Jesus Christ!**

- **Satan & Society** has somehow distracted many from accepting the greatest gift.
- **For those who love festivities, Satan has ‘tricked them’** into believing that all you need is a CUP of CHEER and you’ll have a HOLLY JOLLY CHRISTMAS!
- While things like gift-giving, cookie-baking (and eating!), and spending time with loved ones can be great and memorable during Christmas, so many celebrate the holiday and never experience the Love, Joy, Peace and Hope that JESUS, the CHRIST OF CHRISTMAS brings, because they **never receive the FREE GIFT!**
- **Opening Presents: ADULTS:** Slow approach **VS. KIDS:** Super-fast, Eagerness, Excitement
- Just as we unwrap presents, we need to **"UNWRAP"** who Jesus really is beyond his human appearance and **EXAMINE WHAT HE DID FOR US!**

**B. JESUS SET US FREE** from the Rules and Regulations of the LAW that were against us! (Gal 4:4), *But when the fullness of the time had come, God sent forth His Son, born of a woman, born under the law, <sup>5</sup>to redeem those who were under the law* (If you don’t receive Him, you’re law bound!)

- In (Col 2:13-15) Paul expounds on this thought further saying, **“And YOU,... HE HAS MADE ALIVE together with Him, having forgiven you all trespasses, <sup>14</sup>having wiped out the handwriting of requirements that was against us, which was contrary to us. And He has taken it out of the way, having nailed it to the cross. <sup>15</sup>Having disarmed principalities and powers, He made a public spectacle of them, triumphing over them in it.** – Halleluiah!
- (Gal 4:5b) reveals **yet another benefit, that we might receive the adoption as sons!** – A relationship with of **Intimacy and Security,** of **being totally known** and **totally accepted** by the Father, **in Christ!** – *Behold what manner of love the Father has bestowed on us, that we should be called children of God! (1 John 3:1)* – What a wonderful Revelation!

**C. Accepting JESUS CHRIST brings so many other gifts. To name a few...** Peace with God, Eternal life, Forgiveness of sins, Assurance of God's love, New identity, Access to God's wisdom, becoming part of a caring community, and we gain Clarity and Focus, etc....

- When I think of the benefits found in **the Christ of Christmas**, can the things of this world even compare? **Not At All!**
- If you are a Believer in Jesus Christ, **then SEEK to make Christ the FOCAL POINT of Christmas this season, but especially all year Long!**

**CLOSING THOUGHTS: I want to ASK YOU... What has Christmas become for you?** Are you struggling this Christmas season? – Perhaps it's because you've **FORGOTTEN the CHRIST OF CHRISTmas.** *(Please come forward and we will pray for you after service)*

❖ If you are **having a hard time this Christmas Season**, feeling **lonely and without remedy.** Maybe you feel **mentally, physically**, or even **emotionally drained**...Know that **GOD SEES YOU; HE UNDERSTANDS YOU and HE LOVES YOU!** *Here is an encouraging poem I found...*

*Lift up your head, discouraged child,  
And gaze at God's dear Son.  
You're saved and cleansed,  
condemned no more,  
Because of what He's done!*

*His Spirit's taken residence...  
within your very heart!  
You are His child, adopted now...  
You have the choicest part!*

*He prays for you with groanings deep.  
He works on your behalf.  
And nothing that this life will bring  
Can keep you from His path.*

*No height, nor depth, nor evil work  
Can change His mind above.  
You're joined to Him in life and death  
By cords of perfect love!*

*Oh, praise the Father, praise the Son,  
And praise the Spirit too;  
And praise Him for the matchless work...  
The sure, unchanging, lasting work...  
That He has done for you!*

– Author Unknown

❖ For those here who are **UNSURE about their salvation RIGHT NOW... KNOW THAT this Christmas message is for you!** – You see... **The birth of Jesus Christ ONLY serves as Information about your need for Salvation!** *(Which you need!)*

❖ This Christmas, look beyond the gifts and gatherings. **Embrace the True Gift** – a relationship with the living God through Jesus Christ.

***"Thanks be to God for His indescribable gift!"*** – (2 Cor 9:15)