

# Christmas Is...

## *December 11, 2016*

**Luke 1:5-7** In the time of Herod king of Judea there was a priest named Zechariah, who belonged to the priestly division of Abijah; his wife Elizabeth was also a descendant of Aaron. Both of them were righteous in the sight of God, observing all the Lord's commands and decrees blamelessly. But they were childless because Elizabeth was not able to conceive, and they were both very old.

**Luke 1:76** And you, my child, will be called a prophet of the Most High; for you will go on before the Lord to prepare the way for him,

## I. Five Things Christmas Is

### 1. *Christmas Is God Coming To Us.*

**Luke 1:67-68** His father Zechariah was filled with the Holy Spirit and prophesied: "Praise be to the Lord, the God of Israel, because he has come to his people and redeemed them.

**Matthew 1:22-23** All this took place to fulfill what the Lord had said through the prophet: "The virgin will conceive and give birth to a son, and they will call him Immanuel" (which means "God with us").

A. God sent His Son because of His love for us.

**John 3:16-17** 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. For God did not send his Son into the world to condemn the world, but to save the world through him.

B. Jesus has promised to always be with us.

**Matthew 28:20** And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age."

### 2. *Christmas Is God Keeping His Promises.*

**Luke 1:69-73** He has raised up a horn of salvation for us in the house of his servant David (as he said through his holy prophets of long ago), salvation from our enemies and from the hand of all who hate us— to show mercy to our ancestors and to remember his holy covenant, the oath he swore to our father Abraham:

A. God promised to send a Messiah.

**1 Peter 1:10-12** Concerning this salvation, the prophets, who spoke of the grace that was to come to you, searched intently and with the greatest care, trying to find out the time and circumstances to which the Spirit of Christ in them was pointing when he predicted the sufferings of the Messiah and the glories that would follow. It was revealed to them that they were not serving themselves but you, when they spoke of the things that have now been told you by those who have preached the gospel to you by the Holy Spirit sent from heaven. Even angels long to look into these things.

B. In Christ, all God's promises are "Yes" and "Amen."

**2 Corinthians 1:20** For no matter how many promises God has made, they are "Yes" in Christ. And so through him the "Amen" is spoken by us to the glory of God.

### *3. Christmas Is God Rescuing Us.*

**Luke 1:74-75** to rescue us from the hand of our enemies, and to enable us to serve him without fear in holiness and righteousness before him all our days.

A. God is rescuing us from our enemies.

**Psalm 37:5-7** Commit your way to the Lord; trust in him and he will do this: He will make your righteous reward shine like the dawn, your vindication like the noonday sun. Be still before the Lord and wait patiently for him; do not fret when people succeed in their ways, when they carry out their wicked schemes.

**1 Peter 5:8** Be alert and of sober mind. Your enemy the devil prowls around like a roaring lion looking for someone to devour.

B. God is rescuing us from ourselves.

**2 Timothy 1:7 (ESV)** for God gave us a spirit not of fear but of power and love and self-control.

*A prison cell, in which one waits, hopes, does various unessential things, and is completely dependent on the fact that the door of freedom has to be opened from the outside is not a bad picture of Advent.—Dietrich Bonhoeffer*

### *4. Christmas Is God Bringing Salvation.*

**Luke 1:76-77** And you, my child, will be called a prophet of the Most High; for you will go on before the Lord to prepare the way for him, to give his people the knowledge of salvation through the forgiveness of their sins,

A. Salvation is available.

**2 Peter 3:9** The Lord is not slow in keeping his promise, as some understand slowness. Instead he is patient with you, not wanting anyone to perish, but everyone to come to repentance.

B. Sins can be forgiven.

**1 John 2:2** My dear children, I write this to you so that you will not sin. But if anybody does sin, we have an advocate with the Father—Jesus Christ, the Righteous One. He is the atoning sacrifice for our sins, and not only for ours but also for the sins of the whole world.

## *5. Christmas Is God Shining Light In Darkness.*

**Luke 1:78-79** because of the tender mercy of our God, by which the rising sun will come to us from heaven to shine on those living in darkness and in the shadow of death, to guide our feet into the path of peace.”

A. Light brings hope.

**Isaiah 60:1-2** “Arise, shine, for your light has come, and the glory of the Lord rises upon you. See, darkness covers the earth and thick darkness is over the peoples, but the Lord rises upon you and his glory appears over you.

B. Light brings healing.

**Malachi 4:2** But for you who fear my name, the sun of righteousness shall rise with healing in its wings.

C. Light brings life.

**2 Peter 1:19** We also have the prophetic message as something completely reliable, and you will do well to pay attention to it, as to a light shining in a dark place, until the day dawns and the morning star rises in your hearts.

**2 Corinthians 3:17-18** Now the Lord is the Spirit, and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is freedom. And we all, who with unveiled faces contemplate the Lord’s glory, are being transformed into his image with ever-increasing glory, which comes from the Lord, who is the Spirit.