

The Christ of Christmas

IT hardly seems possible, but another year is about to pass by, and as it does the attention of everyone turns to the festive activities. The main attraction, of course, is Christmas. As we enter the stores, we see just about everything a person could possibly need for Christmas. The music of Christmas fills the air. Those holiday plans that have been in the making will soon be realized. Boys and girls, and yes, men and women are beginning to get excited! The closer Christmas comes, the more the excitement mounts! Christmas Day is fast approaching and we are frantically engaged in last minute details - last minute shopping, gifts to wrap, baking to be done, tree to be put up - will we ever be ready for Christmas? But somehow we make it and that eventful morning dawns. The children are up early and tearing open their gifts as Mom and Dad watch and take pictures. The day is filled with fun and games, visiting friends and relatives, Christmas dinner, etc. But just a moment! Didn't we forget something? Could it be, that in spite of our carefully made plans, something obvious was overlooked?

Each year countless numbers of people go through the Christmas season without knowing, or giving so much as a thought, to the reason why we celebrate Christmas. The true meaning of Christmas has been lost or relegated to all of the commercialism and parties surrounding Christmas. We are long overdue in returning to the place where we know why we have Christmas.

Christmas, in its true perspective, is that time of year when the world celebrates (or at least it should) the birth of Jesus Christ. The birth of Christ nearly two thousand years ago happened just the way the Bible said it would. The Old Testament Scriptures are replete with the prophecy of the coming Messiah, the signs surrounding His birth, the location and condition. The New Testament Scriptures record the fulfillment of this prophecy. Hear then, what a few of the Scriptures say.

The Old Testament prophet Isaiah wrote: "Therefore the Lord himself shall give you a sign; Behold, a virgin shall conceive, and bear a son, and shall call his name Immanuel." (Isa. 7:14) Over seven hundred years later, Matthew wrote in the New Testament, "And she shall bring forth a son, and thou shalt call his name JESUS: for he shall save his people from their sins. Now all this was done, that it might be fulfilled which was spoken of the Lord by the prophet, saying, Behold, a virgin shall be with child, and shall bring forth a son, and they shall call his name Emmanuel, which being interpreted is, God with us. Then Joseph being raised from sleep did as the angel of the Lord had bidden him, and took unto him his wife: And knew her not till she had brought forth her firstborn son: and he called his name JESUS." (Mt. 1:21-25)

In taking on the form of a man, the Son of God did so in order that He might "...seek and to save that which was lost." (Luke 19:10) It was not His purpose "to condemn the world; but that the world through him might be saved." (Jn. 3:16-17) And so we read, "...but now once in the end of the world hath he appeared to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself." (Heb. 9:26b) Having fulfilled His one and only purpose for coming to earth, the Son of God now sits at the right hand of God the Father (Heb. 10:12) where He is our great High Priest (Heb. 4:14-15).

My friend, **will this Christmas be just another holiday for you, or will it be one of remembering Christ's birthday?** As you give gifts to others, **will you receive the gift of eternal life that Jesus Christ so freely offers to all who will believe?** He came for you (Luke 19:10), He died for your sins (1 Peter 2:24) by shedding His precious blood (Heb. 9:14), He is resurrected and lives for you (Acts 2:23-24; Ro. 6:9; 1 Cor. 15:4), He loves you (Ro. 5:8), He wants to save you (Jn. 6:37).

Christmas is the Christian celebration of the birth of Jesus Christ, the eternal Son of God who Himself is God (Jn. 1:1). **Receive Christ as your personal Saviour and make this Christmas the celebration of your spiritual birthday.**

“But these are written, that ye might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing ye might have life through his name.” (Jn. 20:31)

- *Richard A. Ciarrocca* ©2006