

BIBLE LIFE MESSAGES

# Don't Miss the Real Meaning of Christmas

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John 1:1-13

**1 Somewhere high above an obese “chimney sweep” is pulled through the December skies by a team of flying reindeer. Rushing up to meet this commercial miracle, the colored lights of celebration signal through the darkness that a little world is asleep and in waiting.**

**In the 20<sup>th</sup> century, the rising of the sun will not go unnoticed, for children of the world will fall out of bed and rush downstairs. Mom and dad stumble out. In a few minutes paper and ribbon push everyone out of the room. But underneath it all something is missing. God Who took on flesh and dwelt among men has been forgotten! <sup>1</sup> <sub>2</sub>**

**What are things, which if left out, would lessen the real meaning of Christmas? Our scripture today explains. <sub>3</sub>**

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**<sup>1</sup> “While the World Sleeps”, Our Daily Bread.**

**The Gospel of John, chapter 1, verses 1 through 13, say, In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was with God in the beginning. Through him all things were made; without him nothing was made that has been made. In him was life, and that life was the light of men. The light shines in the darkness, but the darkness has not understood it. <sup>2</sup> <sub>4</sub>**

**There came a man who was sent from God; his name was John. He came as a witness to testify concerning that light, so that through him all men might believe. He himself was not the light; he came only as a witness to the light. <sup>3</sup> <sub>5</sub>**

**The true light that gives light to every man was coming into the world.**

**He was in the world, and though the world was made through him, the world did not recognize him. He**

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<sup>2</sup> John 1:1-5.

<sup>3</sup> John 1:6-8.

came to that which was his own, but his own did not receive him. Yet to all who received him, to those who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God — children born not of natural descent, nor of human decision or a husband's will, but born of God. <sup>4</sup> <sub>6</sub>

The first thing that is left out is . . .

## I. The Word Made Known in the Cradle – v1-5

The Word made known in the cradle. <sub>7</sub>

**What was the Word?** <sub>8</sub>

Verses 1 and 2, In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was with God in the beginning.

**Word**, <sup>5</sup> in the original language, was the verbal expression of a thought. <sub>9</sub> We get the English word

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<sup>4</sup> John 1:9-13.

<sup>5</sup> λόγος

“logical” from this word. <sup>10</sup> Other words in the New Testament that come from this root word are “speak”, “defend in court”, “give an account”, “reason” and “question”. <sup>11</sup>

Then, in verse 3, Through him all things were made; without him nothing was made that has been made. When God created, He spoke, and things happened! <sup>12</sup> The Word was expressed, and the heavens came into being, the land appeared, the oceans gathered, vegetation grew, rivers flowed, winds blew, fish swam, animals roamed, birds flew, flowers bloomed, and people were formed! <sup>13</sup> The Word, then, was what created everything that exists! <sup>14</sup>

Then, **this Word became flesh!** Verse 14 states, The Word became flesh and made his dwelling among us. We have seen his glory, the glory of the One and Only, who came from the Father, full of grace and truth. <sup>15</sup>

**What did He provide? <sup>16</sup>**

**Verse 4 says He provided life, abundant and free. **In him was life . . . <sup>17</sup>****

**Also in verse 4, He provided light. . . **and that life was the light of men.****

**Years ago, when our children were young, we took them to Carlsbad Caverns in southeast New Mexico. After touring the caverns and watching the bat display, we started home. Just out of the city we saw a sign which led us to “New Cave”. Apparently discovered years after the popular cavern had been excavated and constructed as a tourist attraction, it was very primitive.**

**The rangers lined us up and led us into the center area of the cave. When they sat us down on the rocks, they turned off their flashlights. As our eyes were adjusting to the darkness, a ranger explained that we**

were in total darkness. I can't remember experiencing that before.

Then, the ranger lit a match! Though several yards away, that light nearly blinded us!

From this experience, we were impressed with how important light really is! God's light provides essential guidance, direction and purpose for that life! <sup>18</sup>

Now, notice verse 5, **The light shines in the darkness, but the darkness has not understood it.** But like Adam of old who rebelled against God by eating the forbidden fruit, some of you would rather ignore the light. You would rather grope around in the darkness and do things your own way by using the "Trial & Error" Method! <sup>19</sup>

So, unless you see **the cradle** overshadowing **the commercial**, you'll miss out on the real meaning of Christmas! <sup>20</sup>

The second thing that is left out is . . .

## II. The Witness Made Known in the Cross

– v6-8

The witness made known in the cross.

Verses 6 through 8 says, **There came a man who was sent from God; his name was John. He came as a witness to testify concerning that light, so that through him all men might believe. He himself was not the light; he came only as a witness to the light.** <sup>21</sup>

John's witness was in his **message**. <sup>22</sup> When John saw Lord Jesus, he told his followers, **Look, the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world!** <sup>6</sup> <sup>23</sup> The real Christmas tree is the tree on which Lord Jesus hung and died! <sup>24</sup> Peter and the other apostles, told the Jewish supreme court, **The God of our fathers raised Jesus from the dead — whom you had killed by**

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<sup>6</sup> John 1:29.



hanging him on a tree.<sup>7</sup> <sup>25</sup> Again, Peter spoke to the Centurion, Cornelius, and his family these words, **We are witnesses of everything he did in the country of the Jews and in Jerusalem. They killed him by hanging him on a tree.**<sup>8</sup> <sup>26</sup>

John's witness was also in his **baptism**. It witnesses two things: <sup>27</sup>

It portrays the gospel message of our Lord's death, burial and resurrection. **Now, brothers, I want to remind you of the gospel I preached to you, which you received and on which you have taken your stand . . . For what I received I passed on to you as of first importance: that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures, that he was buried, that he was raised on the third day . . .**<sup>9</sup> <sup>28</sup>

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<sup>7</sup> Acts 5:30.

<sup>8</sup> Acts 10:39.

<sup>9</sup> I Corinthians 14:1-4.

**It portrays what's happening in your heart; your death to your old life, the burial of the old corpse and the resurrection of your life into a brand-new life!** <sup>10</sup> <sub>29</sub>

**It is within this response to the cross of baptism that you can ceremonially come in contact with the blood of Christ!** <sub>30</sub>

**So, unless you see **the cross** overshadowing **the cradle**, you'll miss out on the real meaning of Christmas!** <sub>31</sub>

**The final thing that can be left out is . . .**

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<sup>10</sup> Romans 6:1-5 - Or don't you know that all of us who were baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into his death? We were therefore buried with him through baptism into death in order that, just as Christ was raised from the dead through the glory of the Father, we too may live a new life. If we have been united with him like this in his death, we will certainly also be united with him in his resurrection.

### III. The Welcome Made Known in Conversion

– v9-13

The welcome made known in conversion. <sup>32</sup>

Since God chose to invade human history in the way He did, everyone of us is forced to make a choice. <sup>33</sup>

Here is the choice; **surrender to the Lord's authority** over you or **do nothing!** <sup>34</sup>

If you decide **to make a commitment to the Lord**, you will find direction to an otherwise purposeless life. Light in the darkness. Direction to your life! verses 12 and 13, **Yet to all who received him, to those who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God — children born not of natural descent, nor of human decision or a husband's will, but born of God.** <sup>35</sup>

If you decide **to do nothing**, you automatically choose to remain in darkness with it's results; lack of

direction and eventual eternal death. Verses 9 through 11, **The true light that gives light to every man was coming into the world.**

He was in the world, and though the world was made through him, the world did not recognize him. He came to that which was his own, but his own did not receive him.<sup>36</sup>

Now, notice verse 13, . . . children born not of natural descent, nor of human decision or a husband's will, but born of God. **Birth means total conversion!**<sup>37</sup>

You are to become a new creature. Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; the old has gone, the new has come!<sup>11</sup> <sup>38</sup> Becoming a new creature means forsaking your old lifestyle. For we know that our old self was crucified with him so that the body of sin might be done away with, that we should no longer be slaves to sin.<sup>39</sup>

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<sup>11</sup> II Corinthians 5:17.

## **Faith implies total commitment!** <sup>40</sup>

**Faith is more than just believing stuff. The demons believe the facts and they shudder!** <sup>12</sup> <sub>41</sub>

**Two demon possessed men approached Jesus. They asked Him, “What do you want with us, Son of God?” They shouted, “Have you come here to torture us before the appointed time?” Jesus showed mercy to them by sending the demons into a herd of pigs.** <sup>13</sup>

**Demons believe the factual stuff; but it doesn't save them!** <sub>42</sub>

**Faith involves the total surrender of your life to the control and direction of God.** <sup>43</sup> **It involves trusting God to work out everything in your life for your good and His glory!** <sup>14</sup> <sub>44</sub>

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<sup>12</sup> James 2:18-19 - Show me your faith without deeds, and I will show you my faith by what I do. You believe that there is one God. Good! Even the demons believe that — and shudder.

<sup>13</sup> Matthew 8:28-32.

<sup>14</sup> Romans 8:28 - And we know that in all things God works for the good of those who love him, who have been called according to his purpose.

So, unless you see **conversion** to the Lord overshadowing **the cross**, you will miss out on the real meaning of Christmas!

A Christian fisherman heard a loud splash one night as he lay in his boat. He knew that the man in the yacht near by had been drinking heavily, so without hesitation he jumped into the cold water and with great effort succeeded in pulling the half-drowned victim back on board. He performed CPR and put him in his bed. Having done everything to make him comfortable, he swam back to his own boat.

The next morning he returned to the yacht to see how he was doing. "It's none of your business!" said the man defensively. The fisherman reminded him that he had risked his life to save him. But, instead of showing gratitude, the man openly cursed him.

As the Christian rowed away, he looked up into heaven and prayed, "When I think of how men treated

**You, dear Lord, I'm filled with sorrow. Now I can begin to understand just a little how You must feel.”<sup>15</sup><sub>45</sub>**

**God left heaven to become a man. That man died on a cross so you could have eternal life with Him. When you turn your back on Him, how do you think He feels?**

**Surrender your life to this loving God and you'll experience the real meaning of Christmas!**

<http://biblelifemessages.org/>

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<sup>15</sup> The King's Business Magazine quoted in "A Rescuer Rejected", Our Daily Bread.