

I'm Dreaming of a Right Christmas

Pastor Kelly Sensenig

Adam was a bright-eyed 3-year-old. He had recently been told of his German heritage. After church in early December, the pastor asked him if he had a part in the Sunday School Christmas program. "Yes," he replied, his eyes filling with joy. "I am going to be a shepherd. He then paused for a moment, and said, "A German shepherd!"

Down through the years one of the most popular Christmas songs has been "I'm Dreaming of a White Christmas." However, instead of dreaming about a WHITE Christmas, we should be dreaming about a RIGHT Christmas! We need to put Christ back into Christmas. We need to get back to what Christmas is all about!

The secular world of atheism has taken Christ out of Christmas. They keep trying to take down manger scenes and more recently the wise men statues. They are even declaring war on candy canes. The atheists are now saying that the candy cane when turned upside down looks like the letter "J" and this would stand for Jesus, so we must now ban candy canes!

Why don't these atheists get a life!

There are many people today who don't want to ignore Christmas nor do they want to destroy Christmas like the atheists. But to them, Christmas is associated with Santa Clause, Rudolph the Red-nosed Reindeer, and Frosty the Snow Man. There are many distractions which take us away from the true meaning of Christmas. For many Christmas means a time of celebration, parties, and family. These things are not wrong in and of themselves. But sometimes the true meaning of Christmas is lost in the midst of all the holiday plans and holiday rush. For this reason, there is the desperate need to put Christ back in Christmas. Only when our Christmas is focused on Christ can we have a RIGHT Christmas.

I want to let everyone in on a secret. The name “Christ” is in the word Christmas for a reason. Christmas is all about Christ! In this short devotional study, I want to recreate a Right Christmas!

Alexander Smith said:

“Christmas is the day that holds all time together.”

Luke 2:8-11 explains to us what the RIGHT Christmas is:

“And there were in the same country shepherds abiding in the field, keeping watch over their flock by night. And, lo, the angel of the Lord came upon them, and the glory of the Lord shone round about them: and they were sore afraid. And the angel said unto them, Fear not: for, behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people. For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord.”

If you want a RIGHT Christmas, you must put Christ back in Christmas. “For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord.” This is the real Christmas story! This is the RIGHT Christmas! Let’s not forget the true meaning of Christmas this season in the midst of all the boxes and presents, all the family gatherings, and all of the good food that we will eat.

What is the RIGHT Christmas?

1. Jesus was born as a baby.

“For unto you is born this day in the city of David”

Isaiah 7:14 gives us the prophecy of Christ’s birth:

“Therefore the Lord himself shall give you a sign; Behold, a virgin shall conceive, and bear a son, and shall call his name Immanuel.”

Matthew 1:23 confirms this prophecy:

“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.”

Jesus Christ was miraculously conceived by the Holy Spirit in the womb of the virgin Mary. The Bible is very clear on this. There is a miraculous element in the RIGHT Christmas story. Jesus was not born as a result of Joseph's physical interaction with Mary but as a result of the Holy Spirit's miraculous interaction with Mary's womb.

Why not Joseph? It's because the Bible teaches that sin is transmitted through the human race through the man!

Romans 5:12

"Wherefore, as by one man (Adam) sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men (was transferred upon all the human race), for that all have sinned."

The conception of Jesus Christ needed to bypass Adam's blood and nature or else He would be born as a sinner like everyone else. So, God the Father made sure that His Son (Jesus) was born of a virgin, escaping the corruption of sin in the human race. This is the RIGHT Christmas.

You see, Christ could never be our Savior from the judgment that our sins would bring upon us, if He was a sinner just like us. Therefore, there had to be a miraculous (supernatural) virgin conception and birth. Christ did not bypass humanity but He bypassed sin and He came into the world as a sinless baby, lived a sinless life, so He could one day be placed on the cross as a sinless sacrifice for you and me. Hebrews 9:14 says that Jesus "offered himself without spot to God."

"Silent night, holy night
All is calm, all is bright
'Round yon virgin Mother and Child
Holy infant so tender and mild
Sleep in heavenly peace
Sleep in heavenly peace."

If you are dreaming of a white Christmas, that's okay, but let us not forget the meaning of the RIGHT Christmas. Jesus was born as a baby.

II. Jesus was born as our Savior.

“For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord.”

If Jesus came to be our Savior, this means we need to be saved from something! The Bible teaches that Christ came to save us from the righteous expression of God’s wrath and judgment which is hell. This is what makes Christmas so special!

Romans 3:23 says that like Adam in Adam:

“For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God.”

Romans 6:23 goes on to say:

“For the wages of sin *is* death; but the gift of God *is* eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.”

The word “death” in this verse is opposite of “eternal life” in Heaven. It speaks of eternal separation from God in the place of hell which is a fitting punishment for everyone who is born in this world because we have transgressed God’s righteous law and offended His holy character. I’m convinced that many people don’t understand the God of the Bible. They think He is only a God of love but not a God of righteousness, justice, and wrath that must punish sin and those who commit sin.

John 3:16 should be included in every Christmas sermon:

“For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.”

God the Father gave His Son for you and me. He was born in this world to die upon the cross, so that He might be your Savior from the expression of His righteous wrath, which is judgment in the place called hell.

Revelation 20:15 speaks of God’s justice and judgment:

“And whosoever was not found written in the book of life was cast into the lake of fire.”

You might think, "Well, God does not love me if He wants to judge me." This thinking is not true at all. John 3:16 reminds us how God could bridge the gap between His righteous display of justice and judgment of sinners (like you and me) and His character of love. If John 3:16 not love, I don't know what love is! You cannot blame God if you don't want to go to Heaven. The RIGHT message of Christmas is that God loves you! The RIGHT message of Christmas is that Jesus came into the world to be your Savior from hell.

When the California gold fever broke out, a man went there, leaving his wife in New England with his boy. As soon as he hit gold and was successful he was to send for them. It was a long time before he succeeded, but at last he got money enough to send for them. The wife's heart leaped for joy. She took her boy to New York, got on board a Pacific steamer, and sailed away to San Francisco. They had not been long at sea before the cry of "Fire! fire!" rang through the ship, and rapidly it gained on them. There was a powder magazine on board, and the captain knew the moment the fire reached the powder, every man, woman, and child would perish. They got out the life-boats, but they were too small! In a minute they were overcrowded. The last one was just pushing away, when the mother pled with them to take her and her boy. "No," they said, "we have got as many as we can hold." She entreated them so earnestly, that at last they said they would take one more. Do you think she leaped into that boat and left her boy to die? No! She seized her boy, gave him one last hug, kissed him, and dropped him over into the boat. "My boy," she said, "if you live to see your father, tell him that I died in your place."

This is but a faint picture of what Christ has done for us. He laid down his life for us. He was born to die on the cross so He could become our Savior from hell by giving us the free gift of eternal life.

Romans 6:23

"For the wages of sin *is* death; but the gift of God *is* eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord."

Second Corinthians 9:15 says:

"Thanks be unto God for his unspeakable gift."

A gift can only be free or else it would not be a true gift. Jesus offers to us the free gift of eternal life. By placing faith in Christ we receive this gift. It would be a wonderful Christmas for you this year, if you would claim this gift as your own, by placing your faith in the Lord Jesus Christ.

I bought my wife a “Christmas Poinsettia” the other day. When I brought it home for her and she opened it, I told that she has to pay me back for the flower. No, I’m just kidding! The nature of a gift is that it’s free, or else it could not be a gift. This means that Christ’s gift of eternal life in Heaven is a free gift! “The gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ” (Rom. 6:23).

I’m told that your average or standard man, at this point in the Christmas season, has purchased zero gifts. He has not yet gotten around to purchasing an acceptable gift for his wife. He did give her something last year, but he could tell by her reaction to it that she had not been dreaming of getting an auto emergency kit, even though it was the deluxe model with booster cables and an air compressor!

During the Christmas season we give gifts to one another. But this tradition follows in line with how God gave us the greatest gift of all, which is eternal life, everlasting life in Heaven through Jesus Christ!

- Have you ever realized your need to possess the free gift of everlasting life through Jesus Christ?
- Have you ever expressed faith in Jesus Christ, what He did for you on the cross, so that you can have eternal life?

Jesus was born to ultimately die on the cross and be your Savior! He wants to be your Savior today. However, you must personally accept the free gift that He offers to you!

Luke 2:11

“For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord.”

The order of these words (“a savior, which is Christ the Lord”) is very significant. The word Savior must be linked to “Christ the Lord.” If Jesus was

not the Christ, if Jesus was not the Lord, He could not be our Savior. But since Jesus Christ was both the Christ and the Lord He can be our Savior from everlasting hell and judgment. The title "Christ" speaks of Jesus being the "anointed" One (the Messiah) who was sent into this world in order to be our Savior. The term "Lord" speaks of the sovereign and omnipotent God of the universe. When Jesus was born in this world He was the true God. He was deity – God of very God!

Matthew 1:23

"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."

O come, O come, Emmanuel! We sing this at the Christmas season but very few understand that the baby born in Bethlehem was God incarnate. He was God of very God in human form.

Malcolm Muggeridge once said:

"What a terrific moment in history that was ... when men first saw their God in the likeness of the weakest, mildest and most defenseless of all living creatures!"

During WW2 a boy looked frequently at a picture of his daddy on the table. He had left when the boy was a young infant. After several years the boy had forgotten him as a person but he would often look at the picture and say, "If only my daddy could step out of that picture and be real!"

Christmas means that in a sad day of sin, when man had almost forgotten God, Jesus Christ stepped into this world in the form of God's Son and became a real living person, who would one day die upon the cross, paying the necessary penalty that God required for your sins and my sins. We need to remember that Jesus died for each one of us personally. He took our place and our judgment upon Himself so He can be our Savior. As a result of placing our faith in Christ, we can go to Heaven instead of hell. This is the REAL Christmas.

Matthew 1:21 is another Christmas verse that promises how Christ came to be our Savior: "And she shall bring forth a son, and thou shalt call his name Jesus: for he shall save his people from their sins."

"Hear the story from God's Word
That kings and priests and prophets heard.
There would be a sacrifice
And blood would flow to pay sin's price.
Precious lamb of glory.
Love's most wondrous story.
Hear of God's redemption of man
Worship the lamb of glory."

Now what are you going to do with Jesus Christ the Lord? You know who He is and what He came to do? Will you express faith in Christ to be your Savior? He can be your Savior because He came to die on the cross in your place, taking your sin and judgment upon Himself.

I received an email on my computer at the Christmas season from some book company that was selling books about Christ. The email read – last chance for Christ! For some of you, this may be your last chance, your last Christmas, your last opportunity to be saved. Tomorrow may not come for you. Or this next year will result in your departure from this life. So this may be your last Christmas.

Proverbs 27:1 says:

"Boast not thyself of to morrow; for thou knowest not what a day may bring forth."

Don't forget about the brevity of life. All of your boasting, plans, and dreams about tomorrow may never come. You may take our last breath today. Are you prepared to die? Heaven is a prepared place for prepared people! You don't go to Heaven by default but by placing your own personal faith in Christ to be your personal Savior. You must take a step of faith and personally rely on Jesus Christ to be your Savior.

Acts 16:31

“And they said, Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved, and thy house.”

You must believe that Jesus Christ died upon the cross to save you and rose from the dead to give you the free gift of eternal life. Believing on Christ is a personal commitment of one’s faith to Christ. It’s saying, “Yes, I will receive God’s free gift of eternal life.”

If you want a REAL Christmas gift (Eternal life) and a REAL Christmas present (salvation from hell), then believe in Jesus Christ and allow Him to be your Savior.

Luke 2:11 again states:

“For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord.”

The coming of Christ by way of a Bethlehem manger seems strange. But when we take Him out of the manger, put Him on the cross, and believe on Him to be our Savior, then the true meaning of Christmas unfolds and the strangeness vanishes away. It’s then that Christ Himself comes to live within us.

A photograph of two sculptors who had decorated a new post office in a suburb of Cologne, West Germany, appeared in the daily newspaper. Two giant hands, each two meters long, seem to be grasping for each other but in vain. One hand, the higher hand, is seen going right out of the side of the building toward the second hand rising from the ground. We do not know the meaning of the mysterious sculptures, but to us they represent the hand of man stretched out for help and the hand of almighty God, stretched out to deliver man from the pit into which he has fallen.

This is essentially the real Christmas story. It is the RIGHT Christmas message. The babe in the manger was God incarnate, who would one day die upon the cross, rise again from the dead, and become the personal Savior of those who place their faith in Him. God was reaching His hand

down to each one of us and today His hand is reaching out to you. He wants you to become His child by personally believing on Christ to be your Savior.

John 1:12

“But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name.”

Jesus was born to die upon Calvary's cross so He might be our Savior from hell. This is the real and the only right Christmas story. Do not become distracted from the real meaning of Christmas. Don't miss the real meaning of Christmas. Many are dreaming about a WHITE Christmas but you must remember and embrace the true message of the RIGHT Christmas by keeping Christ at the center of it and if necessary embracing Him as your own personal Savior today.