

December 24, 2000

Luke 1:26-38

The Meaning of Christmas.

Having cable TV, we have the Disney channel, which is the most politically correct channel on TV. Almost all of their shows have black stars, and several of their shows have the interracial dating. I am sure this season has been no different, but Disney, as well as the rest of the networks, have made a real effort to explain to their viewers what they see as the TRUE MEANING OF CHRISTMAS.

And on top of that, all the news programs have been dominated with the Christmas news that consumers are not spending enough money to keep the retailers in business. These news programs even compare how much US **consumers** spend with how much some European consumers spend. I have noticed, however, that the comparisons are always with countries where **more is spent**, not with the countries like Russia, where the people have nothing to spend.

It seems to me as though the news people have the Christmas spirit in the sense that they are doing their part to put Americans on a **guilt** trip, so they will spend more I should say, go deeper in debt.

They **conveniently ignore** the fact that the **car industry** particularly is laying off workers by the thousands, and people would be **crazy to increase** their debt in this climate, or in any climate, for that matter.

Christmas, nor life in general, is **not about consuming** our income on our own lusts, but using our income for the **glory of God**. And I must say that, as a whole, the group of Believers the Lord has given us here has been very faithful in giving to the Lord **His portion** right off the top.

Here is what the world tells us is the TRUE MEANING OF CHRISTMAS:

First, the meaning of Christmas is that **Santa Clause** is coming to town.

Second, the meaning of Christmas is to **be nice** to people. THE CHRISTMAS SPIRIT, OR THE SPIRIT OF CHRISTMAS.

Obviously, we **should** be nice to people, for we are commanded to *love our neighbours as ourselves*.

Third, the meaning of Christmas is **having family** and friends close at hand.

Don't get me wrong I **look forward** to Christmas as a **time for family** to get together. And I hate it that the Need family is **scattered** from Virginia Beach to Los Angeles to Redman, Washington, and we have **never had** a family reunion. My dad came from a family that was very independent; I only remember going to **one** family reunion when I was maybe 9 or so, and that was on my dad's mother's side, the Johnsons.

Carol came from a very close family, and the Lord has been good to correct that lack of family closeness with our family.

Fourth, the meaning of Christmas is **shop till you drop**, and spend it all now, even if you must go into debt.

And the big push among Christians is to **purchase** and give a video or the series of books by Tim LaHay, Left Behind. From what I have seen in the ads, it is a **heretical prophetic** view of Christ's return, in which Tim cashes (\$\$) in on Rapture Fever.

Now, it is impossible to justify the **shop till you drop** idea of Christmas. In fact, this is the **most corrupt** of all the meanings, and this idea of Christmas justly **causes** many Christians to **completely reject** any celebration of this holy day.

However, not a one of the media programs has even hinted at the proper, **Biblical meaning of Christmas**. And that meaning is given by **the word, CHRIST**.

FIRST, Luke 1:31, Christmas means JESUS, the SAVIOUR. Matthew tells us the meaning of the name:

Matthew 1:21 *And she shall bring forth a son, and thou shalt call his **name JESUS**: for he shall save his people from their sins.*

Jesus is the same word as Saviour, signifying **to save**. In the Hebrew, it is the same as **Joshua**, who led Israel into Canaan. Obviously, Joshua was very highly respected among the Hebrews, so his name became a very common name.

Joshua, David, John, Luke, Paul, are all **popular names** among the new Israel of God, so these names are quite common among Christians.

In the movie, **Three Ninjas**, the grandfather was an **oriental** man, though both the mother and father were clearly all Anglo-Saxon. One of the first things he did when he started teaching his three grandchildren Ninja stuff, was have them **pick non Christian**, oriental, pagan names by which to be called. His actions clearly spoke of an **anti-Christ intent**. It was a light slap in the face of Christianity.

SECOND, Luke 1: 31, *thou shalt call his name JESUS*, and Matthew adds this, **for he shall save his people from their sins**, 1:21. Thus Christmas means that JESUS *shall save his people from their sins*. Notice the angel did not say, *He shall save the world from their sins*, but **his people...** He had a people chosen in Himself before the worlds began, and He came to save them from their sins.

Christ was quite clear on the matter, saying that only those given to Him by the Father would be saved from their sins:

John 6:37 *All that the Father giveth me shall come to me; and him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out. 39 And this is the Father s will which hath sent me, that of all which he hath given me I should lose nothing, but should raise it up again at the last day.*

And they were given *before the foundation of the world* :

Ephesians 1:4 *According as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love: (See vv. 3-6.)*

2 Thessalonians 2:13 *But we are bound to give thanks alway to God for you, brethren beloved of the Lord, because God hath from the beginning chosen you to salvation through sanctification of the Spirit and belief of the truth 14 Whereunto he called you by our gospel, to the obtaining of the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ.*

As Christians we are commanded to **present the gospel of Christ to every living person**, for we know that God s Spirit **WILL speak** to some, yet the others are blinded. I have seen it many times over any desire toward the Lord in an individual is **usually a sign** that the Lord is speaking to him or her.

I think **Heather Ostheimer** is a **good example**. Though she **knew** she was not saved, she remained where she knew she should be, and the **Lord worked** in her heart.

THIRD, Matthew 1;21, Christmas means that Jesus came to *save his people from their sins*.

The great business of Jesus coming into the world and dying was to **save men from their sins**, **not in** their sins.

Titus 2:14 *Who gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works.*

The Scriptures are clear:

Christmas means that **Christ came to make an atonement**, or payment, for the sins of His people that is, pay their sin debt. Christ s payment means that the **fellowship** with the Heavenly Father lost by Adam can be **renewed** through the payment Christ made on the Cross as the substitute for His people.

Christmas means that **Christ came to renew the heart and purify the soul**; Christ came to **equip and empower His people** to live a life of good works here on this earth:

Mark 12:33 *And to love him with all the heart, and with all the **understanding** (in everything we understand about the Lord, for to him that knoweth to do good and doeth it not, to him it is sin), and with all the soul, and with all the strength, and to love his neighbour as himself, is more than all whole burnt offerings and sacrifices.*

Those who do not give evidence with their *zeal for good works* have **not been delivered** from the power of sin, and they **have no right to claim** to be one of HIS PEOPLE. Those who do not give up their pride and their lusts for and pleasure in worldly things, have no hope of heaven.

Christmas means that when God's people hear from the word of God what they should do, they will move toward doing that.

CHRISTMAS MEANS THAT THERE IS NO SALVATION UNLESS IT INVOLVES SALVATION FROM THE PLEASURE AND POWER OF SIN.

FOURTH, Luke 1:35, Christmas means the virgin birth, which was the only way **God could become** man. And that man is called **Emmanuel**, *which being interpreted is, GOD WITH US*, Matthew 1:23.

FIFTH, Luke 1:32, Christmas means that Christ in **even now seated** upon *the throne of his father David*. Christmas means that Christ even now **rules and reigns** over the whole earth, directing all things for His own good pleasure by His Divine Providence.

Ephesians 1:5 *Having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself, according to the good pleasure of his will, 9 Having made known unto us the mystery of his will, according to his good pleasure which he hath purposed in himself:*

Philippians 2:13 *For it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure.*

Colossians 1:16 *For by him were all things created, that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers: all things were created by him, and for him: 17 And he is before all things, and by him all things consist.*

Revelation 4:11 *Thou art worthy, O Lord, to receive glory and honour and power: for thou hast created all things, and for thy pleasure they are and were created.*

Ephesians 1:15 ¶ *Wherefore I also, after I heard of your faith in the Lord Jesus, and love unto all the saints, 16 Cease not to give thanks for you, making mention of you in my prayers; 17 That the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give unto you the spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of him: 18 The eyes of your understanding being enlightened; that ye may know what is the hope of his calling, and what the riches of the glory of his inheritance in the saints, 19 And what is the exceeding greatness of his power to us-ward who believe, according to the working of his mighty power, 20 Which he wrought in Christ, when he raised him from the dead, and set him at his own right hand in the heavenly places, 21 Far above all principality, and power, and might, and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this world, but also in that which is to come: 22 And hath put all things under his feet, and gave him to be the head over all things to the church, 23 Which is his body, the fulness of him that filleth all in all.*

Conclusion:

Certainly, we should be nice to people, and we as Christians have been commanded to be nice to others.

Certainly, families are important. I dread the day when my children will move away, as I know all parents have that dread. Though our mobile society has brought great physical prosperity, it has also brought the destruction of the family unit. So **any excuse** to unite the family is a good excuse.

The world's emphasis on spending and giving gifts is **not motivated** by any love for the Lord. It is clearly motivated by the **love of money**, as they urge the consumers to spend more and more each year.

As we looked at the TRUE MEANING OF CHRISTMAS, is it any wonder that the world has done all it can to totally ignore the **Christ represented** by this season of the year?

Christmas means man is a sinner who needs a saviour. And man will face eternal judgment as a sinner one day. Christmas means that God became man, was born into the world of a virgin, and born to die a substitutionary death for sin. That man is Christ Jesus.

Christmas means that salvation is by God's grace alone.

Christmas means that whosoever has the desire to come to Christ to pay the debt for their sins, can come.

Christmas means Christ, and all that is available through faith in Him.