

## The Christmas Attitude (Part 2)

### Excerpt from: *Let's Keep Christmas* by Peter Marshall

"We feel the pressure of approaching Christmas. The traffic is terrible. You can't find a parking space... The stores are crowded... Mob scenes make shopping a nightmare. You are thinking about presents-wondering what in the world you can get for so-and-so. You think of friends and loved ones who are so hard to shop for. You can't think of anything that they need (which is rather strange when you think about it). Maybe there is nothing in a store that they need."

### Review: Christmas Attitude (Part 1)

#### **Reasons** for Christmas: The 1<sup>st</sup> Coming of Jesus Christ

1. **Fulfilled Prophecy** (see chart of 44 Prophecies fulfilled by Jesus Christ)
2. **Salvation** (Turning people back to God, Redemption from slavery to sin, Mercy from God, Forgiveness of sins, Light for those who walk in darkness, Everlasting Joy, Peace with God, Glory to God, Eternal Life)

#### **Emptying** of Christmas: Jesus Christ's sacrifice to bring salvation

1. **Relinquishment** of infiniteness, loftiness, power, knowledge, existence
2. **Taking on** finiteness, humility, weakness, unawareness, inexperience, limitation, restriction
3. **Human experiences** – fatigue, hunger, pain, temptation, learning, growing, suffering, grief

#### **Responses** to Christmas: From those who were there

1. Careful investigation of the truth (Not just a nice story... Like Santa Claus)
2. Praise, Exaltation, Gratitude towards God for bringing the Good News of salvation
3. Recognition, Fear and Awe of who God is and the sacrifice He made on our behalf
4. Faith in what God did and promised
5. Obedience to God's call
6. Testimony of God's amazing mercy and grace

### Selected Bible References

#### The Christmas Attitude

##### *(Philippians 2:5-11)*

Have this attitude in yourselves which was also in Christ Jesus, 6 who, although **He existed in the form of God**, did not regard equality with God a thing to be grasped, 7 but **emptied Himself**, taking the form of a slave, and being made in the likeness of men.

8 Being found in appearance as a man, He **humbled** Himself by becoming **obedient to the point of death**, even death on a cross. 9 For this reason also, God highly **exalted** Him, and bestowed on Him the **name** which is **above every name**,

10 **so that** at the name of Jesus **EVERY KNEE WILL BOW**, of those who are in heaven and on earth and under the earth, 11 and that **every tongue** will confess that **Jesus Christ is Lord**, to the glory of God the Father.

#### Why did Jesus Christ need to become a man?

##### *(Hebrews 2:17-18)*

Therefore, He had to be made **like His brethren in all things**, so that He might become a merciful and faithful high priest in things pertaining to God, **to make propitiation for the sins of the people**.<sup>18</sup> For **since He Himself was tempted** in that which He has suffered, **He is able to come to the aid** of those who are tempted.

##### *(Hebrews 4:14-15)*

Therefore, since we have a **great high priest** who has passed through the heavens, **Jesus the Son of God**, let us hold fast our confession.<sup>15</sup> For we do not have a high priest who cannot sympathize with our weaknesses, but **One who has been tempted in all things as we are, yet without sin**.

##### *(Hebrews 5:7-9)*

In the days of His flesh, He offered up both prayers and supplications with **loud crying and tears** to the One able to save Him from death, and He was heard because of His piety. Although He was a Son, **He learned obedience from the things which He suffered**. And having been made perfect, **He became to all those who obey Him the source of eternal salvation**,

## What does salvation accomplish and why is it such Good News?

*(Luke 2:10b-11)*

“Do not be afraid; for behold, I bring you **good news** of **great joy** which will be for all the people; for today in the city of David there has been born for you **a Savior**, who is **Christ the Lord**.

*(Ephesians 2:1-7)*

And **you were dead in your trespasses and sins**, 2 in which you formerly walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, of the spirit that is now working in the sons of disobedience. 3 Among them we too all formerly lived in the lusts of our flesh, **indulging the desires of the flesh and of the mind**, and **were by nature children of wrath**, even as the rest. 4 **But God**, being **rich in mercy**, because of His **great love** with which He loved us, 5 even when **we were dead in our transgressions, made us alive together with Christ** (by grace you have been saved), 6 and **raised us up** with Him, and **seated us** with Him in the **heavenly places** in Christ Jesus, 7 **so that** in the ages to come **He might show** the surpassing **riches of His grace in kindness toward us** in Christ Jesus..

*(1 Peter 3:18)*

For Christ also died for sins **once for all**, the **just** for the **unjust**, **so that** He might **bring us to God**, having been put to death in the flesh, but made alive in the spirit;

*(1 Corinthians 15:51-57)*

Behold, I tell you a mystery; we will not all sleep, but **we will all be changed**, 52 in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, **at the last trumpet**; for the trumpet will sound, and **the dead will be raised imperishable**, and we will be changed. 53 For this **perishable** must put on the **imperishable**, and this **mortal** must put on **immortality**. 54 But when this perishable will have put on the imperishable, and this mortal will have put on immortality, then will come about the saying that is written, “**DEATH IS SWALLOWED UP in victory**. 55 “**O DEATH, WHERE IS YOUR VICTORY? O DEATH, WHERE IS YOUR STING?**” 56 The sting of death is **sin**, and the power of sin is **the law**; 57 but thanks be to God, who gives us the **victory through our Lord Jesus Christ**. 58 Therefore, my beloved brethren, be steadfast, immovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, knowing that your toil is not in vain in the Lord.

*(Psalm 32:1)*

How blessed is he whose **transgression** is **forgiven**, whose **sin** is **covered!**

*(Psalm 32:2)*

Yes, **what joy** for those whose **record** the LORD has **cleared of guilt**. (NLT)

## What did Jesus do that allowed us to be saved?

*(2 Corinthians 5:14-15)*

For the love of Christ controls us, having concluded this, that **one died for all**, therefore all died; 15 and He died for all, so that they who live might no longer live for themselves, but for Him **who died and rose again on their behalf**.

*(2 Corinthians 5:17-21)*

Therefore if anyone is in Christ, he is a **new creature**; the old things **passed away**; behold, new things have come. 18 Now all these things are from God, who **reconciled us to Himself through Christ** and gave us the ministry of reconciliation, 19 namely, that God was in Christ **reconciling the world to Himself, not counting their trespasses against them**, and He has committed to us the word of reconciliation. 20 Therefore, we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God were making an appeal through us; **we beg you** on behalf of Christ, **be reconciled to God**. 21 **He made Him who knew no sin to be sin on our behalf, so that we might become the righteousness of God in Him**.

*(Hebrews 9:26-28)*

For Christ did not enter a holy place made with hands, a mere copy of the true one, but into heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God for us; 25 nor was it that He would **offer Himself often**, as **the high priest** enters the holy place **year by year** with blood that is not his own. 26 Otherwise, **He would have needed to suffer often** since the foundation of the world; but now **once** at the consummation of the ages **He has been manifested** to **put away sin by the sacrifice of Himself**. 27 And inasmuch as **it is appointed for men to die once** and **after this comes judgment**, 28 so Christ also, having been **offered once to bear the sins of many**, will appear a **second time for salvation** without reference to sin, **to those who eagerly await Him**.

## **What can a person do in order to receive this great gift of salvation?**

**(John 3:16-17)**

“For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that **whoever believes in Him** shall not perish, but have eternal life.<sup>17</sup> “For **God did not send the Son** into the world to judge the world, **but that the world might be saved through Him.**

**(Romans 10:8b-13)**

“THE WORD IS **NEAR YOU**, IN YOUR MOUTH AND IN YOUR HEART”—that is, the **word of faith** which we are preaching, 9 that **if you confess with your mouth Jesus as Lord, and believe in your heart that God raised Him from the dead, you will be saved;** 10 for with the heart a person **believes**, resulting in righteousness, and with the mouth he **confesses**, resulting in **salvation**. 11 For the Scripture says, “**WHOEVER BELIEVES IN HIM WILL NOT BE DISAPPOINTED.**” 12 For there is no distinction between Jew and Greek; for the same Lord is Lord of all, abounding in riches for all who call on Him; 13 for “**WHOEVER WILL CALL ON THE NAME OF THE LORD WILL BE SAVED.**”

**(Acts 2:36-38)**

“Therefore let all the house of Israel know for certain that God has made Him both Lord and Christ—this Jesus whom you crucified.” 37 Now when they heard this, **they were pierced to the heart**, and said to Peter and the rest of the apostles, “Brethren, **what shall we do?**” 38 Peter said to them, “**Repent**, and each of you **be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ** for the **forgiveness of your sins**; and you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit.

### **Excerpt from: *Let's Keep Christmas* by Peter Marshall**

Let's not permit the crowds and the rush to crowd Christmas out of our hearts... for that is where it belongs. Christmas is not in stores - but in the hearts of people. Let's not give way to the cynicism and mutter that “Christmas has become commercialized.” It never will be-unless you let it be. Your Christmas is not commercialized, unless you have commercialized it. Have you been saying, “I just can't seem to feel the Christmas spirit this year”? That's too bad. As a confession of lack of faith, it is rather significant. You are saying that you feel no joy that Jesus came into the world... You are confessing that His presence in the world is not a reality to you... Maybe you need all the more to read the Christmas story over again, need to sit down with the gospel of Luke and think about it.

	<b>44 Prophecies Jesus Christ Fulfilled</b>	<b>Old Testament Prophecy</b>	<b>New Testament Fulfillment</b>
1	Messiah would be born of a woman.	Genesis 3:15	Matthew 1:20; Galatians 4:4
2	Messiah would be born in Bethlehem.	Micah 5:2	Matthew 2:1; Luke 2:4-6
3	Messiah would be born of a virgin.	Isaiah 7:14	Matthew 1:22-23; Luke 1:26-31
4	Messiah would come from the line of Abraham.	Genesis 12:3; Genesis 22:18	Matthew 1:1; Romans 9:5
5	Messiah would be a descendant of Isaac.	Genesis 17:19; Genesis 21:12	Luke 3:34
6	Messiah would be a descendant of Jacob.	Numbers 24:17	Matthew 1:2
7	Messiah would come from the tribe of Judah.	Genesis 49:10	Luke 3:33; Hebrews 7:14
8	Messiah would be heir to King David's throne.	2 Samuel 7:12-13; Isaiah 9:7	Luke 1:32-33; Romans 1:3
9	Messiah's throne will be anointed and eternal.	Psalms 45:6-7; Daniel 2:44	Luke 1:33; Hebrews 1:8-12
10	Messiah would be called Immanuel.	Isaiah 7:14	Matthew 1:23
11	Messiah would spend a season in Egypt.	Hosea 11:1	Matthew 2:14-15
12	Massacre of children would happen at Messiah's birthplace.	Jeremiah 31:15	Matthew 2:16-18
13	Messenger would prepare the way for Messiah	Isaiah 40:3-5	Luke 3:3-6
14	Messiah would be rejected by his own people.	Psalms 69:8; Isaiah 53:3	John 1:11; John 7:5
15	Messiah would be a prophet.	Deuteronomy 18:15	Acts 3:20-22
16	Messiah would be preceded by Elijah.	Malachi 4:5-6	Matthew 11:13-14
17	Messiah would be declared the Son of God.	Psalms 2:7	Matthew 3:16-17
18	Messiah would be called a Nazarene.	Isaiah 11:1	Matthew 2:23
19	Messiah would bring light to Galilee.	Isaiah 9:1-2	Matthew 4:13-16
20	Messiah would speak in parables.	Psalms 78:2-4; Isaiah 6:9-10	Matthew 13:10-15,34-35
21	Messiah would be sent to heal the brokenhearted.	Isaiah 61:1-2	Luke 4:18-19
22	Messiah would be a priest after the order of Melchizedek.	Psalms 110:4	Hebrews 5:5-6
23	Messiah would be called King.	Psalms 2:6; Zechariah 9:9	Matthew 27:37; Mark 11:7-11
24	Messiah would be praised by little children.	Psalms 8:2	Matthew 21:16
25	Messiah would be betrayed.	Psalms 41:9; Zechariah 11:12-13	Luke 22:47-48; Matt 26:14-16
26	Messiah's price would be used to buy a potter's field.	Zechariah 11:12-13	Matthew 27:9-10
27	Messiah would be falsely accused.	Psalms 35:11	Mark 14:57-58
28	Messiah would be silent before his accusers.	Isaiah 53:7	Mark 15:4-5
29	Messiah would be spat upon and struck.	Isaiah 50:6	Matthew 26:67
30	Messiah would be hated without cause.	Psalms 35:19; Psalms 69:4	John 15:24-25
31	Messiah would be crucified with criminals.	Isaiah 53:12	Matthew 27:38; Mark 15:27-28
32	Messiah would be given vinegar to drink.	Psalms 69:21	Matthew 27:34; John 19:28-30
33	Messiah's hands and feet would be pierced.	Psalms 22:16; Zechariah 12:10	John 20:25-27
34	Messiah would be mocked and ridiculed.	Psalms 22:7-8	Luke 23:35
35	Soldiers would gamble for Messiah's garments.	Psalms 22:18	Luke 23:34; Matthew 27:35-36
36	Messiah's bones would not be broken.	Exodus 12:46; Psalms 34:20	John 19:33-36
37	Messiah would be forsaken by God.	Psalms 22:1	Matthew 27:46
38	Messiah would pray for his enemies.	Psalms 109:4	Luke 23:34
39	Soldiers would pierce Messiah's side.	Zechariah 12:10	John 19:34
40	Messiah would be buried with the rich.	Isaiah 53:9	Matthew 27:57-60
41	Messiah would resurrect from the dead.	Psalms 16:10; Psalms 49:15	Matthew 28:2-7; Acts 2:22-32
42	Messiah would ascend to heaven.	Psalms 24:7-10	Mark 16:19; Luke 24:51
43	Messiah would be seated at God's right hand.	Psalms 68:18; Psalms 110:1	Mark 16:19; Matthew 22:44
44	Messiah would be a sacrifice for sin.	Isaiah 53:5-12	Romans 5:6-8

### Discussion Questions

1. If someone asked you what the meaning of Christmas is, what would you tell them? Consider the Reasons for, the Emptying of, and the Responses to Christmas.
2. What ways do you celebrate Christmas, which would lead a person to believe that you practice the true meaning of Christmas? If you are having a difficult time thinking of something, then instead, focus on practices that you CAN do, in the future, to celebrate the true meaning of Christmas.
3. What role does salvation play in the true meaning of Christmas? Give your answer as if you were telling it to a friend or loved one.
4. Make a list of 5-10 friends or loved ones that need to hear the “good news” of Christmas. Will they hear it this year? How will they hear it?
5. Read the list of passages included in these notes. Is there any greater gift that you could give to a person than the message of Salvation? If so, what is it? If not, why not?
6. If you have already received the gift of salvation, what should your Christmas attitude look like? Are there things that need to change? If so, what?
7. Why did God give so many prophecies in the Old Testament regarding the 1<sup>st</sup> coming of Jesus Christ?
8. Extra credit: Read each of the passages in list of 44 prophecies that Christ fulfilled in His 1<sup>st</sup> Coming. How do you respond to all of this?
9. Memorize 2 Corinthians 5:21 and 1 Corinthians 15:58.
10. There has really only been one Christmas. But there will be one more. When will that be? Are you looking forward to it? Are you ready for it? (Hint: read Hebrews 9:26-28)