

## WHAT DOES CHRISTMAS MEAN TO YOU?

I. Luke 2:30

II. Word Association tests are quite common in psychological circles. The psychologist will give an individual a word and tell him to respond with the first thing he thinks of relating to that particular word.

Some years ago a psychology professor was giving his class just such a test and one of the words he gave happened to be *Christmas*. He instructed them to write the first thought that came to their mind regarding that holiday. The class responded with such words as mistletoe, Santa Clause, parties, holly, trees, presents, etc. Not one student in that class referred to the birthday of our Lord. What a sad commentary on our times! So often we forget that it is Christ's birthday that we are celebrating. It is like a boy having a birthday party and everyone receiving a present but him. That is the way many treat Christ. It is His birthday but He gets no presents. What does Christmas mean to you? To some it means hard work as the stores are crowded with shoppers; the post office is overflowing with mail. To some Christmas means a visit home. To some a holiday around the tree. To some it is a time to be more congenial. To some it is just another day on the calendar.

But Christmas means everything to the Christian. It means God loved man with all His heart

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and has done something about it. God has given the best Christmas gift which a man can receive. In II Corinthians 9:15 Paul said, “Thanks be unto God for His unspeakable gift.”

### I. WHAT WE NEED TO KNOW ABOUT GOD’S GIFT

A. Simeon recognized the baby Jesus as God’s salvation. Simeon also prophesied about the purpose of Jesus’ coming into the world (Luke 2:31-34).

B. The angels gave a clear message about Jesus as they welcomed His birth and spoke to the shepherds who watched their flocks that Holy night on the Bethlehem hills nearly 2000 years ago. Luke 2:10 records His words, “Fear not, for, behold I bring unto 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.”

C. In Galatians 4:4 Paul tells us that Jesus came at the right time. God probably waited about 4000 years before sending Jesus to earth. Why did He wait so long? God has a program for this world and He is always on time. Satan has tried everything to stop God’s plan, but he has always failed. Jesus was born

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on time. He died on time. He arose on time. He is coming back to this world on time.

D. In John 1:14 the scripture teaches Jesus was made flesh and dwelt among us. He is called “Immanuel,” which means “God is with us.” Matthew 1:23, Hebrews 2:14-15.

## II. HOW SHOULD WE RESPOND TO CHRIST AT CHRISTMASTIME?

A. Make room for Jesus. When Joseph and Mary came to the inn, there was no room for them. If the Innkeeper had understood what would take place that night and who was to be born, I wonder if he would have made room for Jesus. The key word is make. To make room for Jesus requires desire and purpose. It requires a conscious decision. Simeon had been serving God faithfully and waiting for the consolation of Israel (Luke 2:25). There is quite a contrast between Simeon and the Innkeeper.

B. WORSHIP – In Luke 1:13 the Bible says that a multitude of heavenly hosts appeared giving praise to God. In Luke 2:28 Simeon took the baby Jesus in his arms and praised God. In Matthew 2:7, 8, Herod told that wise men to let him know when they had found the

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baby Jesus so he could worship him too. Herod was a cruel ruler. It was said of him, “It is safer to be Herod’s pig than Herod’s son.” Good intentions are not enough. Worship involves a personal response.

C. It is obvious from reading about Simeon that he had given his life to God. The Wise Men in Matthew 2 brought gifts and presented them to Jesus. Gift giving is an important Christmas tradition, It is a testimony to the power to God’s love. What can I give? In Acts 3 Peter said, “Such as I have I give thee.” Give what you have. Give faith. Give love. Give companionship. Give kindness.

## CONCLUSION

What Jesus wants from you cannot be bought and placed under a Christmas tree. He wants your life. He wants your heart. He wants your devotion. Open your heart to Him and let His glory shine into your heart.