

CCC PREACHED 12 14 2009 CHRISTMAS SERIES

THE CALVARY FAMILY CHRISTMAS 2009

“What’s So Special About Christmas”

Good Morning and welcome to The Calvary Family Christmas Eve Service. I always count it a joy and an honor to be able to come and speak to you. (PAUSE)

This Friday the whole world will shut down for Christmas. Think about it, stores will close, offices will close, and there will be very few people on the highways and bi-ways. It is an amazing event to me that something that happened over 2000 years ago can have that profound of an impact on us today here on the other side of the world. We even date our calendar by this event. Every time you used the words “two thousand and nine” this year you were referring to this event, the birth of Jesus Christ. So I ask why this event, what makes this so

special. What’s so special about Christmas? What’s the big deal about it? Well today we’re going to look at three things that will show what the big deal is. First we will look at the relevance of Christmas. In other words,

“Why is it so important?”

Second, we will look at the reason for Christmas.

Why did God do it?

And third we will look at the result of Christmas.

What difference does Christmas make to me?

I. FIRST THE RELEVENCE OF CHRISTMAS

I can sum up the relevance of Christmas in one phrase – God came to earth. See it was big news during World War II when the allies invaded Normandy on D-Day. But it was bigger news when God invaded earth 2006 years ago.

It was big news when man walked on the moon.
But it was bigger news when God walked on the earth.
And not only did God come to earth.../ but most shocking
of all is that He came in the form of a human being.
Notice in your bulletins what God's Word, the Bible says,
*"Jesus Christ is the exact likeness of the unseen God. He
existed before God made anything at all. In fact, Christ
Himself is the creator who made everything."* Colossians
1:15-16 LB

See many people think Jesus began at the stable.
But Jesus didn't start in the stable. His beginning was not
that little manger scene.../ God's Word the Bible tells us
He existed before creation. In fact the Bible says He is
the creator... because He is God. In other words He
created .../ He made you and me.

The Bible also tells us that, *"He became like men
and was born a human being."* Let me ask you a
question if you were God and you were the creator of
everything how would have come to earth. I would have
come to earth in a much more spectacular way. I would
have added a little more pizzazz and flash to my coming
to earth – I would have planned my coming at half time
during the Superbowl, it would have the Redskins playing
the Ravens and when the whole world was watching I
would have come with lots of fireworks and thunder and
lightning and all kinds of cosmic sounds. I would have
had all the leaders of the world lined up on the 50-yard
line waiting to celebrate my arrival.

Of all the ways God could have come to earth why
did He come as a baby in a manger and not during the
Super Bowl?

I'll tell you why, because He came to save us.../ not to impress you, not scare you, but to save you. God could have come to earth in a lot of ways that would have freaked us all out and scared us to death and made us run in terror. But He didn't do that. He came in a way that we could all relate to Him because we all had that experience ourselves. We've all been born. He came in a way that we could relate to Him.

The Bible tells us that Jesus Christ was in every sense a human being. When He came to earth He limited Himself so that He could become both God and man at the same time. He was all God and all man. He was born like us. He grew up like us. I don't want to blow your stereotype but Jesus didn't walk around in spotless white robes with a halo and a glow on His face like they show in some of these movies. He was every bit a Palestinian

Jew because that's what He was. He worked in a carpenter's shop. He looked just like an average guy.../ because He was. The Bible says that while He was here on earth He was tempted just like you and I are tempted. He had the same struggles in this life here on earth that you have and I have. He had the same temptations, the same desires, the same drives, the same problems. The Bible says He suffered just like we do. He was tempted just like you and I are tempted... There were times when Jesus was lonely when He was tempted to be discouraged, when He was frustrated. There were times certainly when He was fatigued and very tired and wanted to throw in the towel and just give up.

Why do I say this to you? Because this is "Good News.../ This is the Good News, He understands how you feel because right now. Because, He became a human

being like you. God says, I've been there. God is not some distant God who doesn't understand what you're going through, who doesn't understand your pain, your suffering, your loneliness. He is actually telling you now, I do understand. I came to earth in the form of a man and I have experienced what it means to be a human.

The real truth is Christmas is really not a happy time for a lot of people. Christmas stirs up all kinds of negative emotions for many people, sometimes grief over loved ones who aren't with us any more.

Sometimes depression over "Another year has passed and I'm no different.... I'm the same I was last year. I wanted to get married and I didn't... My marriage problems haven't gotten any better..." We feel sad or we feel depressed. The truth is Christmas is not a happy time for a lot of people. If you feel that way today let me share

something with you, Jesus Christ understands. He knows exactly what you're feeling right now.../ He has experienced what you're going through right now.

II. THE REASON FOR CHRISTMAS IS THIS: HE CAME FOR YOUR BENEFIT.

He came because you **needed** Him to come. And chances are you don't even realize it but you needed Him to come. Why did God come to earth at Christmas? The Bible tells us four reasons.

First Reason. Jesus came to earth to **show** us what God is like. Listen gang there is a lot of crazy ideas, bizarre ideas about what God is like... All you have to do is get on the Internet and find them. There are a lot of crazy ideas about God that just aren't true. Jesus said, "*I am the truth*". Jesus said, I came to show you what God is really like so you can know what I'm like."

When you go outside, when you go out into nature, there are some things you can learn about God the creator just by going up into the mountains. For instance, by looking at nature we can know that God is creative. By looking at nature we know God is powerful – obviously – the waves, the wind, the rotation of the earth, all the power of God that's seen in the universe. We know that God is organized because there is order to the universe. We know that God likes variety because there is a lot of variety. We know that God likes beauty. And we learn these things just by looking at nature about God.

But there are some things you would never know about God except that Jesus came to tell us. For instance, nature doesn't teach us that God is loving. We only know that because of Jesus Christ. Nature doesn't teach us that God is forgiving. We only know that because of Jesus

Christ. Nature doesn't teach us that God has a plan and a purpose for your life, that you're not an accident, that He put you on earth for a purpose, for a reason. Only Jesus Christ can teach us that. He is the one that lets us know what God is really like.

The **second reason** God came to earth is to **show** us what life should really be like, to show us how to really live.

The truth is most people aren't really living. Most people are just existing. They get up in the morning, they go to work or go to school, they come home, watch TV, go to bed, they do it over and over for 60, 70, 80 years and then die. They never really are fully alive. They just exist. Never looking or dealing with what is to come... One of the most famous statements of Jesus is when He said, "*I have come that you might live life to the fullest.*"

Jesus brings meaning, He brings significance and satisfaction in your life. Jesus didn't say "I've come to give you a religion, He didn't say I have come to make you religious." He said "I've come to make you fully alive, to teach you the kind of life that God put you on the earth to live." And until you get connected with your creator you're not going to live that full life. You're just going to exist.

The **third reason** He came to earth is to **show** us that we can trust God.

The **fourth reason** God came to earth is to **show** His forgiveness. To give you to opportunity to be forgiven for everything you've ever done wrong... Why, so you can go to a perfect place called heaven when you die and live with Him forever in a place called Heaven.

That's quite a deal. The Bible says, "*He became a man so that He could take away our sins.*" 1 John 3:5 LB And "*Though He was God He laid aside His mighty power and glory taking the disguise of a slave and becoming like men. And He humbled Himself even further going so far as to actually die a criminals' death on the cross.*"

Philippians 2:6-8 Jesus Christ came to earth to die for all the things that you've done wrong, so you don't have to pay for them, so you can be forgiven, so you can go scott free. That's called grace and it's the only way you're ever going to get into heaven because none of us are perfect. What a deal.

It cost Jesus Christ a lot. He gave His life for us, He died on the cross. Jesus Christ didn't stay in the manger. He didn't stay in the crib. He went to the cross. Why in the world would He do that? Why in the world would

God come to earth in human form and die for you? Why did He do it? Because He loves you. He loves you more than you will ever understand. You can't fathom how much God loves you.

How much does God love me? Jesus Christ stretches out His hands on the cross and let them nail Him to the cross and says, "This much. I love you this much. This is how much you matter to Me. I made you, I created you and I will also die for you. That's how much I love you."

The Bible tells us "*God showed how much He loves us by sending His only Son into the world so that we might have eternal life through Him. This is real love, that God sent His Son as a sacrifice to take away our sins.*" 1 John 4: 9-10

The relevance of Christmas is this: God came to earth as a human being. But the reason for Christmas is this: He came for your benefit.

What is the result? What is the result of Christmas?

III. THE RESULTS OF CHRISTMAS IS: YOU CAN KNOW HIM.

The result of Christmas, you can know God personally. You can have a personal relationship with the creator of the universe. God knows everything about you. And He wants you to know about Him. He wants you to be His friend. He wants to be your friend. In fact, that is the reason you were created. The reason you were put on this earth is to have a relationship with God. That's why God made you. He says, "I want you to know Me like I know you." But you have to receive the gift if it's going to make any difference in your life.

Friends, God has a wonderful gift for you this Christmas. The Bible says, *“We were restored to friendship with God by the death of His Son while we were still His enemies and we will be delivered from eternal punishment by His life. So now we can rejoice in our wonderful new relationship with God all because of what our Lord Jesus Christ has done for us.”* This is the most wonderful gift you will ever be given. Nothing even compares to it.

Friday, you’re going to open up a bunch of gifts. Some of those gifts are going to be impersonal, some of them are going to be impractical, you really can’t use them, some of them are going to be temporary – they’re going to wear out or break before the day is over. And if you get a Christmas gift from me.../ it’s going to be flat

out cheap. None of those adjectives that I just used applies to God's gift to you.

In the first place God's gift is personal. It is custom made just for you. The Bible says, *“Unto **you** is born a Savior,”* God’s gift to you: is personal. It is practical. It is priceless and it is permanent.

So let me ask you a very personal question. How many more Christmases are you going to go through before you finally accept God's gift to you? You celebrate this event year after year after year without unwrapping the biggest gift under the tree – God's gift to you – The Bible says this *“If you will say with your mouth Jesus is my Lord and you will believe in your heart that God raised Him back from death(after the cross He died but He was God.../ so He came back to life. He*

Proved He was who He said He was.../ *you will be saved.*” (PAUSE)

This is your moment to accept God's Christmas gift to you. I'm going to say a prayer and if it kind of expresses the desire of your heart tonight whisper it with me.

Dear God, I don't want to let another Christmas pass without accepting Your gift to me. Thank You for coming to earth so I could know what You're like. I am amazed that You would want a relationship with me. I want to get to know You. I want to learn to trust You. Please help me to know the purpose that You put me on earth for. I know I've done a lot of things wrong and I'm especially grateful for Your forgiveness and Your gift of eternal life. From this day forward I want to be under

new management. I want You to be the Lord of my life.
Amen.