

CHRISTMAS: A CELEBRATION LIKE NO OTHER**By Robert J. Tamasy**

This week marks the annual celebration we call Christmas, observed in many parts of the world. For many people it is about the arrival of Santa Claus, known in other nations by names like Pere Noel, Sinterklaas, St. Nicholas, Der Weihnachtsmann, Father Christmas, Noel Baba, Babbo Natale, and Kris Kringle. Traditions and depictions of famous Christmas person vary markedly.

In the business world, Christmas often means the last, most important step in trying to achieve a profitable calendar year. 'The Christmas season' often involves lavish gift giving, festive parties and events, and other end-of-year activities. All of these can lead to greatly increased revenues that will please any company's finance department.

Of course, the origin of the festive event had nothing to do with a man wearing a red suit, a white beard, big smile and a hearty "Ho, ho, ho!" as he is depicted in the United States. Or holiday sales promotions. It originated in the Middle East, in what one Christmas carol called, "O Little Town of Bethlehem," which is located less than seven miles (about 10 kilometers) from Jerusalem. The word "Christmas" refers to Jesus Christ, who was born there more than 2,000 years ago.

The first two chapters of both the gospels of Matthew and Luke in the Bible's New Testament give us accounts of the birth of Jesus Christ, the promised Messiah. They tell us a young woman named Mary was visited by an angel who declared, "Mary, you have found favor with God. You will be with child and give birth to a son, and you are to give Him the name Jesus. He will be great and will be called the Son of the Most High. The Lord God will give Him the throne of his [ancestral] father David, and He will reign over the house of Jacob forever; His kingdom will never end" (Luke 1:30-33).

In the second chapter we learn Mary and her betrothed husband, Joseph, journeyed from their town of Nazareth to Bethlehem in accordance with a census decree by the Roman emperor Caesar Augustus. Jesus being born in Bethlehem fulfilled an Old Testament prophecy: "But you, Bethlehem Ephrathah, though you are small among the clans of Judah, out of you will come for Me one who will be ruler over Israel, whose origins are from of old, from ancient times" (Micah 5:2).

The most compelling description of Jesus Christ, however, is found in the gospel of John: "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was with God in the beginning.... The Word became flesh and made His dwelling among us..." (John 1:1-2, 14). What this means would be unbelievable – if it were not true.

God took on human flesh as Jesus, living on earth for 33 years, teaching and preaching, setting an example of how to live, being crucified as the atoning sacrifice for the sins of humankind, and being resurrected from the dead, achieving once and for all victory over death and assuring that everyone who trusts in Him will have eternal life.

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As the Scriptures declare, “And this is the testimony: God has given us eternal life, and this life is in His Son. He who has the Son has life; he who does not have the Son of God does not have life. I write these things to you who believe in the name of the Son of God so that you may know that you have eternal life” (1 John 5:11-13). To summarize in a few words, if it were not for Jesus’ birth, His life, death, and resurrection, there would be no reason for Christmas. But they did occur – so we can sing, “Hallelujah”!

© 2025. Robert J. Tamasy has written Marketplace Ambassadors: CBMC’s Continuing Legacy of Evangelism and Discipleship; Business at Its Best: Timeless Wisdom from Proverbs for Today’s Workplace; Pursuing Life With a Shepherd’s Heart, coauthored with Ken Johnson; and The Heart of Mentoring, coauthored with David A. Stoddard. Bob’s biweekly blog is: www.bobtamasy.blogspot.com.

Reflection/Discussion Questions

1. Describe what Christmas means for you. What impact – if any – does it have on the productivity and profitability of your company or organization? Explain your answer.
2. Have you observed that in many cases Christmas is observed and celebrated without any direct reference to Jesus Christ – His birth and life? Why do you think that is?
3. If you have taken time to reflect on the birth of Jesus Christ and its significance, both for your life and for the world in which you live, what have been your conclusions?
4. The last Bible passage cited in this ‘Monday Manna’ states that everyone who believes in Jesus Christ – has sincerely placed their faith and trust in Him – can know they have eternal life? What do you think that means? What does it mean for you?

Challenge for This Week

If you observe Christmas, have you ever noticed your feelings about it becoming stale, that you do not have the same enthusiasm and excitement about it that you once did? If so, this would be a very good time to reread the passages listed above and reconsider what they mean for you.

In Psalm 51:7-9, King David of Israel wrote these words: “Create in me a clean heart, O God, and renew a steadfast spirit within me.... Restore to me the joy of Your salvation and grant me a willing spirit, to sustain me.” If Christmas for you has become ho-hum, rather than ho-ho-ho, this might be a good time to pray this prayer for yourself and seek to regain the joy of knowing Jesus Christ and all He has done for you.’

NOTE:

If you have a Bible and would like to read more, consider the following passages: Isaiah 53:1-12; Matthew 1:18-24-2:12; Luke 2:1-20; Romans 8:1-4; Philippians 2:7-8

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