

“Why Christmas?”

Christmas Sunday 2018

Introduction to “Christmas – Why?”

- **Reason #1: The condition of man as lost in sin and sins and our spiritually dead condition**
- **Reason #2: God’s response to our hopelessness as unbelievers**
- **Reason #3: Our response to reasons #1 & #2 - what will it be?**

Let’s Summarize what we will be seeing today as we look forward to our own “celebrations” of this Christmas season . . .

- **Our focus will be on the Heart and the distinction between it and the Mind – A most Critical Distinction indeed. Religion dwells in the realm of the mind and of the soul. But God works in the heart and the spirit.**
- **Bible Usage:**

Heart: >1000 times

Mind: <100 times

For centuries Israel struggled under the Mosaic Law which they were unable to keep and which could not provide salvation and life. They were all bound apart from a very special and saving faith to a life in the mind and independent of the spirit. Their hearts had not been purified by the precious word of grace.

The rich young ruler illustrates this:

“Which is the first commandment of all?” – Mark 12:28

“Master, which is the great commandment in the law?” –
Matthew 22:36

“And, behold, a certain lawyer stood up, and tempted him,
saying, Master, what shall I do to inherit eternal life?” - Luke
10:25

What does Moses say? “Thou shalt have no other gods before
me.” - Exodus 20:3 **[the bondage of the law was so great
and there was no deliverance . . .] See Ex. 19 / Her. 42 &
43 etc.]**

***But there were some who had been delivered through a
pure faith in the Lord God and with a living hope of the
coming of “the Seed of the Woman”. Such were those we
read about in Matthew and Luke. Though they did not
know Christ the way we do today under grace, there is no
question that they were saved through the faith of
Abraham. Consider Simeon:***

[READ] Luke 2:25-35

25 And, behold, there was a man in Jerusalem, whose name
[was] Simeon; and the same man [was] just and devout,
waiting for the consolation of Israel: and the Holy Ghost was
upon him.

26 And it was revealed unto him by the Holy Ghost, that he
should not see death, before he had seen the Lord's Christ.

27 And he came by the Spirit into the temple: and when the
parents brought in the child Jesus, to do for him after the
custom of the law,

28 Then took he him up in his arms, and blessed God, and
said,

29 Lord, now lettest thou thy servant depart in peace,
according to thy word:

30 For mine eyes have seen thy salvation,

31 Which thou hast prepared before the face of all people;

32 A light to lighten the Gentiles, and the glory of thy people
Israel.

33 And Joseph and his mother marvelled at those things which were spoken of him.

34 And Simeon blessed them, and said unto Mary his mother, Behold, this [child] is set for the fall and rising again of many in Israel; and for a sign which shall be spoken against;

35 (Yea, a sword shall pierce through thy own soul also,) that the thoughts of many hearts may be revealed.

This then is the key issue for mankind, the discernment between the heart and the mind and between soul and spirit as the apostle Paul writes of it in Hebrews chapter 4.

[Your questions / comments before we proceed?]

I. Reason #1: The condition of man:

Let's read:

[READ] Gal. 4:1-3

1 Now I say, [That] the heir, as long as he is a child, differeth nothing from a servant, though he be lord of all;

2 But is under tutors and governors until the time appointed of the father.

3 Even so we, when we were children, were in bondage under the elements of the world:

[READ] Gal. 4:4-7

4 But when the fulness of the time was come, God sent forth his Son, made of a woman, made under the law,

5 To redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons.

6 And because ye are sons, God hath sent forth the Spirit of his Son into your hearts, crying, Abba, Father.

7 Wherefore thou art no more a servant, but a son; and if a son, then an heir of God through Christ.

Ephesians 2 tells us exactly the same story:

[READ] Eph. 2:1-3

1 And you [hath he quickened], who were dead in trespasses and sins;

2 Wherein in time past ye walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience:

3 Among whom also we all had our conversation in times past in the lusts of our flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind; and were by nature the children of wrath, even as others.

So man's condition apart from God is desperate beyond words, "dead in trespasses and sins"

Further proof from Paul's pen:

Acts 13:39 And by him all that believe are justified from all things, from which ye could not be justified by the law of Moses.

Rom. 8:3 For what the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, God sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh:

II. Reason #2: God's response to our condition:

Gal. 4:4-5

4 But when the fulness of the time was come, God sent forth his Son, made of a woman, made under the law,

5 To redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons.

6 And because ye are sons, God hath sent forth the Spirit of his Son into your hearts, crying, Abba, Father.

7 Wherefore thou art no more a servant, but a son; and if a son, then an heir of God through Christ.

Several questions:

1. What law were we under? Hint: There are several laws that Paul writes about including the Mosaic and what we find in Rom. 8:2 “For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus has made me free from the law of sin and death.” Additionally, of course, there was Moses Law. Paul, as a Jew, could write personally of this. We Gentiles could never write Col. 2:14.

2. What is the only deliverance from that law? It had to be nailed to his cross! Amen. See Col. 2:14 Blotting out the handwriting of ordinances that was against us, which was contrary to us, and took it out of the way, nailing it to his cross; [See also 1 Cor. 1:17-18;

So God sent forth His Son to remedy our fallen and sinful condition! But will we receive it? Will we be willing to cast aside all of our past and come boldly into the realm of his abundant grace?

III. Reason #3: Our Heart Response to God and His Completed Redemption:

Reason #1 was: Our common condition before God — lost and without hope, awaiting judgment and the horrors of hell fire.

Reason #2 was: But God responded to our condition at the appointed time by sending forth his Son

So where have we come then here today? We have reached this key question: What is our response to the facts presented #1 & #2? Only if we have taken God at His word in saving faith concerning his Son and our Savior, can we know the Third Reason for Christmas.

What I mean is, given the truth revealed in our Reasons #1 & #2, there can be no reason for Christmas, for us individually and personally, without our personal heart-response to the gospel of the grace of God that Paul preached.

What a difference indeed there is between a “celebration” of Christmas without a recognition of who Christ is and why he came. And, what an empty “celebration” it is also without our heart response in personal faith. Testimony time!

Isn't that what our key verses from Luke were all about:

Luke 2:34-35

34 And Simeon blessed them, and said unto Mary his mother, Behold, this [child] is set for the fall and rising again of many in Israel; and for a sign which shall be spoken against;

35 (Yea, a sword shall pierce through thy own soul also,) that the thoughts of many hearts may be revealed.

Summary of our fellowship today:

Heart and Mind, right what can discern between them, what can give us understanding of the difference? What can discern (reveal) the true intents of our hearts? . . . For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness Rom. 10:9-10

Gal. 4:1-5

1 Now I say, [That] the heir, as long as he is a child, differeth nothing from a servant, though he be lord of all;

2 But is under tutors and governors until the time appointed of the father.

3 Even so we, when we were children, were in bondage under the elements of the world:

4 But when the fulness of the time was come, God sent forth his Son, made of a woman, made under the law,

5 To redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons.

Gal 4:6-7

6 And because ye are sons, God hath sent forth the Spirit of his Son into your hearts, crying, Abba, Father.

7 Wherefore thou art no more a servant, but a son; and if a son, then an heir of God through Christ.

What is Our Response?

1. This is not merely a matter of the mind

2. This is a matter of the heart

The glories of his Cross. Oh, that that message of pure grace might tug at the heart and draw the sinner to his completed redemption for us sinners today. That it might be true this Christmas season for so many still in the darkness of this world.

1 Cor. 1:17-18

17 For Christ sent me not to baptize, but to preach the gospel: not with wisdom of words, lest the cross of Christ should be made of none effect.

18 For the preaching of the cross is to them that perish foolishness; but unto us which are saved it is the power of God.

[READ] Heb. 4:12

For the word of God [is] quick, and powerful, and sharper than any twoedged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and [is] a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart.

May this word of the Cross of Calvary this Christmas bring great blessing to our hearts as we, believing, enter again through our testimonies this precious truth expressing the full meaning of Christmas.

Why Christmas? You know the answers.

Apart from the truths regarding our universal lost condition before Almighty God and our Savior's Completed work through the Cross of Calvary, AND apart from our heart-felt reception of that glorious truth, there is no positive response to the question: "Why Christmas". But, with those there is every reason to truly celebrate Christmas, for Christ has come and has become the divinely appointed "propitiation for all of our sins".

And our testimony of these things is most precious indeed.

Enjoy the day, redeeming the time, for the days are evil if they are not redeemed.

Amen. So be it, beloved!