

## Why Jesus Came ...Love (Pt. 3)

A lady had a circle of friends for whom she really wanted to buy Christmas presents. Time slipped away and it was so busy at work for her she just wasn't able to get to the store to purchase those gifts. Time was running out. So not too many days before Christmas she decided to give up on the gift idea and just buy everybody the same beautiful Christmas card. She went to the local gift store and hurriedly went through the now picked over stack of cards and found a box of fifty, just exactly what she wanted. She didn't take time to read the message, she just noticed a beautiful cover on it and there was gold around it and a floral appearance on the front of the card and she thought, that's perfect. So she signed all of them, "*With all my love.*"

As New Year's came and she had time to go back to two or three cards she didn't send from that stack, she was shocked to read the message inside. It said, in a little rhyme,

"THIS CHRISTMAS CARD IS JUST TO SAY, A LITTLE GIFT IS ON ITS WAY."

At Christmastime God gave us the ultimate gift - love.

Christmas is a celebration of Christ's coming into the world.

John wrote,

Beloved, let us love one another, for love is from God; and everyone who loves is born of God and knows God. The one who does not love does not know God, for God is love. By this the love of God was manifested in us, that God has sent His only begotten Son into the world so that we might live through Him. In this is love, not that we loved God, but that He loved us and sent His Son to be the propitiation for our sins. Beloved, if God so loved us, we also ought to love one another.... And we have come to know and have believed the love which God has for us. God is love, and the one who abides in love abides in God, and God abides in him.

(1 John 4:7-11; 16)

In John's Gospel he added:

For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, what whoever believes in Him should not perish, but have eternal life.

For God did not send the Son into the world to judge the world, but that the world should be saved through Him. (John 3:16, 17)

Why did Christ come at Christmastime?

To display His love.

## **I. BECAUSE GOD IS LOVE WE LOVE.**

We love because of who God is.

Beloved, let us love one another, for love is from God; and everyone who loves is born of God and knows God. The one who does not love does not know God, for God is love. (1 John 4:7-8)

Everyone who is in a relationship with God should display the character of God. Because God is love we should love.

In this section (4:7-5:3) 'Love' is used thirty-two times in some form.

v. 7 – let us love one another - *exhortation*

v. 11 – we also ought to love one another - *duty*

v. 12 – if we love one another – *thesis* –

... then God abides in us and achieves His goal in us.

When Jesus was asked which of the commandments was the greatest, He said, "YOU SHALL LOVE THE LORD YOUR GOD WITH ALL YOUR HEART, AND WITH ALL YOUR SOUL, AND WITH ALL YOUR MIND.' This is the great and foremost commandment. The second is like it, 'YOU SHALL LOVE YOUR NEIGHBOR AS YOURSELF.' On these two commandments depend the whole Law and the Prophets." (Matt. 22:37-40)

At Christmastime love became more than a what, it became a 'Who.'

I. BECAUSE GOD IS LOVE WE LOVE.

## II. BECAUSE GOD LOVED US HE SENT HIS SON.

By this the love of God was manifested in us, that God has sent His only begotten Son into the world so that we might live through Him.

(v. 9)

### 1. Jesus' coming was a manifestation of God's love.

God's motive was love.

For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son...

In *Mere Christianity* C. S. Lewis succinctly stated the significance of Christ's incarnation:

**"THE SON OF GOD BECAME A MAN TO ENABLE MEN TO BECOME SONS OF GOD."**

### 2. The ultimate expression of God's love was in Christ's sacrifice.

In this is love, not that we loved God, but that He loved us and sent His Son to be the propitiation for our sins. (v. 10)

Jesus came so He could take away our sins.

18 Now the birth of Jesus Christ was as follows: when His mother Mary had been betrothed to Joseph, before they came together she was found to be with child by the Holy Spirit.

19 And Joseph her husband, being a righteous man and not wanting to disgrace her, planned to send her away secretly.

20 But when he had considered this, behold, an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream, saying, "Joseph, son of David, do not be afraid to take Mary as your wife; for the Child who has been conceived in her is of the Holy Spirit.

21 "She will bear a Son; and you shall call His name Jesus, for He will save His people from their sins."

22 Now all this took place to fulfill what was spoken by the Lord through the prophet:

23 "BEHOLD, THE VIRGIN SHALL BE WITH CHILD AND SHALL BEAR A SON, AND THEY SHALL CALL HIS NAME IMMANUEL," which translated means, "GOD WITH US."

Matt. 1:18-23

Jesus' purpose in coming was to become a sacrifice for sin.

**Propitiation** – hilasterion – expiation; sacrifice of atonement,

as of the mercy seat LEB;

the sacrifice for sin NLT;

The atoning sacrifice NRSV

- *Turning away of anger by the offering of a gift.*

Paul wrote,

“for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God,  
being justified as a gift by His grace  
through the redemption which is in Christ Jesus;  
whom God displayed publicly as a propitiation in His blood  
through faith...” (Rom. 3:23-25).

Christ was God’s means of payment for our sins.

Our sins separated us from God and the life God planned for us.

Because God loved us He gave His Son to be a substitute sacrifice.

“God incarnate” was named Jesus - “God is Salvation.”

On the cross He purchased our salvation, giving us life.

On June 23, 2000, a deaf couple stood before Judge Donald McDonough in Fairfax, Virginia, court and offered not rebuttal to their landlord’s complaint that they were behind on the rent. Their recent marriage unfortunately resulted in the loss of disability benefits, most of which kept a leased roof over their heads. Now they were \$250 behind and had no hope of making up the deficit.

Judge McDonough couldn’t disagree. The landlord was due his rent, the couple was indeed guilty of nonpayment, and justice could not be set aside. Nevertheless, the judge’s compassion would not allow him to drop the gavel. Not just yet. Once the attorney for the plaintiff had closed his case, the judge suddenly left the courtroom. A few moments later, he returned from his chambers with \$250 in cash, handed it to the landlord’s attorney, and said, “Consider it

paid.” With a transfer of funds from the just to the unjust, the debt was paid and the case dismissed. The law had been satisfied. The defendants were then “just” or “righteous” in the eyes of the court.

When God sent Jesus at Christmastime, it was Love that came down.

God incarnate was Love incarnate.

### **III. WE LOVE BECAUSE GOD LOVED US.**

Beloved, if God so loved us, we also ought to love one another....

(1 John 4:11)

The love of God becomes our motive for our loving others.

A very successful businessman asked me this question:

If God is love and created us to love Him and others, then why is there so much evil instead of love in the world?

A key element of love is being able to choose. If God were to remove free will there would be no more evil. However, it would also eliminate love. Love must be freely offered, or it is no longer love. Without the ability to choose then men would become robots – loveless machines.

Evil would cease but so would love.

I remember him slapping the table, saying, “God is a genius!”

Thomas A Kempis said,

“A wise lover values not so much the gift of the lover  
as the love of the giver.”

Understanding the extent of God’s love will help us love others.

“But God demonstrates His own love toward us,  
in that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us”  
(Rom. 5:8).

At Christmastime love became a Person.

God walked down the stairs of heaven with a Baby in his arms.

PAUL SCHERER

For a child will be born to us, a son will be given to us; and the government will rest on His shoulders; and His name will be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Eternal Father, Prince of Peace

Is. 9:6

**I. BECAUSE GOD IS LOVE, WE LOVE.**

WE LOVE BECAUSE WE HAVE A RELATIONSHIP WITH GOD.

**II. BECAUSE GOD LOVED US HE SENT HIS ONLY SON.**

JESUS' COMING WAS MOTIVATED BY GOD'S LOVE.

**III. WE LOVE BECAUSE GOD LOVED US.**

Our experience of God's love changes us, our responses to others.

We love because He first loved us. (1 John 4:19)

God, who is love, left the Kingdom of Love and came to earth as a man.

Light came to darkness,

warmth came to the cold,

and love came to hatred and rejection.

"Christmas is not a myth, not a tradition, not a dream. It is a glorious reality. It is a time of joy. Bethlehem's manger crib became the link that bound a lost world to a loving God. From that manger came a Man who not only taught us a new way of life, but brought us into a new relationship with our Creator. Christmas means that God is interested in the affairs of people; that God loves us so much that He was willing to give His Son."

Billy Graham