

A GIFT THAT CHANGES THE HEART!

#3098 1231 23A
Post-Christmas

The gift of our Savior is the change to our life; our desires; our attitudes; our destination! The lights of the season remind us AV John 12:46 “*I am come a light into the world, that whosoever believeth on me should not abide in darkness.*” Jesus lights our way and sends His Spirit to inspire us to follow His lead by obeying His words.

Many things can distract our attention during Advent—we can easily miss the *reason* for the *season* if we are not careful. It is usually a time when too many people, spend too much money, on too many others who don’t need more *things*—but more *inspiration* of the Spirit to live a godly life of faith in God.

It is to be a *joyous* time of the year—gathering with family, friends, and loved ones who share a common faith in Christ. The good news of Christmas is not just lights, gifts, and good foods, but it is a reminder to focus on the *Gift* from God that changes the heart of those who believe and obey His instructions.

Advent is when we *search* our heart; when we *think* about our attitudes; and when we make a renewed commitment to follow God’s plan by His Spirit; and a time when we *trust* the Lord

Jesus to give us a forgiving and loving heart toward everyone.

Jesus was born on earth to give a living *hope* of Heaven. *His* life is to change *our* life of self-interest and self-centeredness, to divine-interests and Christ-centeredness.

Jesus is *Emmanuel*—*God with us*. The One who *formed* the universe came to *live* with us. Jesus has the *power* to do anything we need done in our life—especially the spiritual work of preparing us for Heaven. AV Matthew 28:18 Jesus told His followers before He ascended: “*All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth.*”

There are 4 main aspects of the birth of Jesus...

1—To show us the Father NLT John 1:18 “*No one has ever seen God. But his only Son, who is himself God, is near to the Father’s heart; he has told us about him.*”

God is not seen by humans, but Jesus shows us the *nature* of God—and AV Romans 5:8 “*His love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us.*”

Since Jesus lived here for a time, we have been shown the personality and nature of God. AV 2 Corinthians 4:6 “*For God, who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined in our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ.*”

Two thousand years ago God left His throne in Heaven and appeared on earth in the Person of Jesus. Old Testament patriarchs only saw an angelic *form* of God, but New Testament believers personally met the Lord Jesus.

AV Mark 9:4 “*And there appeared unto them Elias with Moses: and they were talking with Jesus.*” When Stephen was being stoned, AV Acts

7:55 he “*saw the glory of God, and Jesus standing on the right hand of God.*”

2—Jesus came to deal with our sin problem—AV 1 John 3:5 “*Ye know that he was manifested to take away our sins; and in him is no sin.*”

Jesus answered Pilate: NKJV John 18:37 “*You say rightly that I am a king. For this cause I was born, and for this cause I have come into the world, that I should bear witness to the truth.*”

Everyone has fallen short of God’s righteousness, so Jesus was born in Bethlehem to die for the sins of everyone, so anyone could have His righteousness.

Sin places a separation between us and God and the gulf between us is *so wide*, and the separation *so great*, that *no one* would be able to close it by their own ability. This gulf cannot be closed by outward religion; not by efforts of self; not by saying long prayers; and not by any other way.

Honesty and sincerity cannot justify us before a holy God because virtuous deeds cannot remove the guilt of our sin—we need a *Savior* to *pay* for our sins by a perfect blood sacrifice.

The *message* of this season is the Gift of a *Savior* who is received by those who believe that Jesus *is* who He *says* He is—AV John 8:24 “*Ye shall die in your sins: for if ye believe not that I am he, ye shall die in your sins.*”

Jesus willingly left His throne in Heaven to be born on earth to complete the divine plan that would save anyone who would *believe* Him, *accept* Him, and *follow* Him every day by the power of His Spirit.

NKJV 1 John 3:5 “*You know that He was manifested to take away our sins, and in Him there is no sin. 6 Whoever abides in Him does not sin.*” God came to earth, made the journey to the Cross,

and paid the sin-debt of the world. The Lord Jesus was born to be Light for mankind.

AV Colossians 1:13 “*Who hath delivered us from the power darkness, and hath translated us into the kingdom of his dear Son: 14 In whom we have redemption through his blood, even the forgiveness of sins.*”

If anyone will *believe* and *accept* the Lord Jesus into their heart, they can be *forgiven* of their sins; they will be *justified* before God; and they will be *redeemed* by the Blood of the Lamb. This results in a *restored* relationship with God the Father.

We have to really *want* to change, and then place our *trust* on God to *convert* our heart—AV Matthew 18:3 “*Except ye be converted, and become as little children, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven.*”

3—Jesus came to destroy the works of the devil 1 John 3:8 because Satan is out to destroy everyone’s *soul*.

He wants to *separate* us from God and be *unprepared* for eternity, but Jesus was born to save us from a horrible fate. We have to *choose* to put our faith in God and to *allow* Him to prepare us to meet Jesus at the Rapture.

Nothing the devil has ever *done* is too hard for Jesus to *undo*. Whenever we are tempted to sin, we must call on the Lord to *help* us get through without yielding.

The *works* of the devil are the unscriptural *desires* he puts in our heart. He wants us to crave *something* or *someone* that God has said is *not right* for us to have—treasure on earth; resentful attitudes in our heart; or anything else outside the will of God. AV James 1:14 “*Every*

man is tempted, when he is drawn away of his own lust, and enticed.”

4—Jesus came to prepare us for Heaven.

AV Hebrews 9:28 “*So Christ was once offered to bear the sins of many; and unto them that look for him shall he appear the second time without sin unto salvation.*” We look to Him for **Light** in the world so we will not walk in spiritual darkness.

Generally, most people’s thoughts this season are of joy and gladness, because of the first arrival of Christ. We sing the songs of the shepherds and think of the hope that filled *their* hearts.

But we also know that this world cannot continue as it is! The horrible wrongs against people; the lawlessness that seems to be everywhere; the increase of crime; terrorism; and immoral behavior—all point to Jesus being at the very door.

The Jesus who *came*, is the Savior who *returns!* We must allow God to prepare us to meet Him—it should be our **only** focus!

When Jesus ascended into Heaven AV Acts 1:10 two men in white stood by saying—NIV Acts 1:11 “*Men of Galilee, why do you stand here looking into the sky? This same Jesus, who has been taken from you into heaven, will come back in the same way you have seen him go into heaven.*”

Jesus will return—but most people today live as if life will go on and on—like they have all the time in the world. The truth is, however, they *don’t* have all the time in the world and *neither* do we.

Jesus *went* to the cross and *paid* our debt, and He is coming *back* to this earth to take us with Him! We must remain in a position of faith and trust on Him!

Christmas introduces the world to the **Forever Gift of God**—a Gift that can **forever change** our heart and attitudes—if we are *willing* to believe that He **is** God and is **able** to do for us what *needs* to be done to enter His kingdom—that all-important *Change of Heart!*

Christmas is a good time to reflect on God’s *love* and to think about His *promise* to heal; protect; provide; give peace; a right attitude toward all people and every other blessing God has for us.

Christmas is a time to be more *considerate* of others; a time to say, How can I *help* you? It is a time of *giving* and wanting *nothing* in return; a time to make someone feel *wanted* and *loved* and *appreciated*. It is a time to *forgive* because *we* have been forgiven of so *much!*

AV John 15:12 “*This is my commandment: That ye love one another, as I have loved you.*”

A *Forever Gift* that keeps on *giving forever* to those who AV John 6:29 “*Believe on him whom he hath sent.*”

May this *Gift of God’s love, forever change our heart!*



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