

Christmas Without Christ?

As the year nears its end, the question is often asked “*What are you doing for Christmas, this year?*” The likely answer will be about where and with whom we are going to spend a few days over the festive season; what will be eaten – will it be a turkey or a goose; what favourite drink will be consumed; what presents are likely to be received or given. In short – the question is meant to prompt some heart-warming recollections about a time of self-indulgence and excess.

There is nothing wrong with the idea of families getting together and enjoying themselves, of course. We like to share time and goods with those we love. But how many of us think of the reason for all that celebration? At the true heart of these festivities should be the belief that Jesus Christ our Saviour was born.

Whether Christ was born in December or not doesn't really matter; scholars think that it was more likely that he was born in September. The important thing is that there is a time of the year when people might stop to think about Jesus as someone who is right at the centre of God's plan of salvation.

Celebration!

His coming into the world was certainly a cause for celebration. Why not open your Bible now and read the accounts? You will find them in Matthew chapters 1 and 2 and Luke chapters 1 and 2. Angels, shepherds and wise men celebrated his birth, so why shouldn't we? Some of the promises made about Jesus were fulfilled during his life on earth, like this one about Mary:



She will bring forth a Son, and you shall call his name Jesus, for he will save his people from their sins.” So all this was done that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the Lord through the prophet, saying: “Behold, the virgin shall be with child, and bear a Son, and they shall call His name Immanuel,” which is translated, “God with us” (Matthew 1:21–23).

But many of the promises given at the time of his birth were not fulfilled. Bring Christ into your Christmas this year by reading Luke 1:30–33 and Luke 2:11–12. These prophecies will only be fulfilled when Jesus comes back to earth – not as a baby in a manger, but as King over God's Kingdom (see Luke 1 verses 32–33).

So, this Christmas read the Bible story again. Make it the start of a daily routine when you can spend time finding out more of God's wonderful purpose for you, me and the whole world. Use the Daily Bible Reading Planner (overleaf) to make that happen.

Bring Christ into Christmas and make sure he becomes part of your whole life.

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