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**MONDAY MANNA**  
**DEC 20, 2021**

**CHRISTMAS – THE HOLIDAY THAT CANNOT BE CANCELLED**

**By Robert J. Tamasy**

What a year it has been! The coronavirus/COVID-19 news reports have been relentless, and the pandemic's global impact has been unlike anything ever seen. It has gotten so bad, there have been warnings by top national leaders of a need to "cancel Christmas." All in the name of "stopping the spread." Disruptions in supply chains for transporting merchandise from one region or nation to another have created major concerns of goods wanted for gifts and holiday celebrations may not be available.

It brings to mind the classic book by Dr. Seuss, *The Grinch Who Stole Christmas*. The question is, can Christmas really be canceled? Can someone "steal" Christmas, regardless of their motivations or intentions? The answer, I believe, is that it all depends on to which Christmas we are referring.

If it is the Christmas that retailers anticipate year-round, the one that largely determines whether businesses end the calendar year "in the black" or "in the red," then maybe so. Because if products are not on the store shelves or even available through online retail sites, that is bound to effect revenues and the fiscal bottom line. However, if we mean the true Christmas, as described in the Bible, no government leaders or retail supply chain could ever disrupt or eliminate that special observance.

In Luke 2:1-40, we find a description of the birth of Jesus Christ, the Son of God, telling how His earthly mother, Mary, and her betrothed husband, Joseph, went from their hometown of Nazareth to Bethlehem, where centuries earlier prophets had said the Messiah would be born. It tells how angels declared the unique, holy birth to an unlikely audience, lowly shepherds, the first eyewitnesses to the Christ Child.

We find a similar account in another gospel, starting with Matthew 1:18 and continuing through chapter 2, verse 23. It tells of the one referred to as Immanuel, which means "God with us." In this account we find a collection of Magi, wisemen who traveled from great distances to see the fulfillment of an ancient prophecy, and an evil King Herod who feared this child would one day depose him from his throne.

But the most compelling words about Jesus Christ's incarnation are found in the opening chapter of the gospel of John: "In the Beginning was the Word, and the

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Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was with God in the beginning.... In him was life, and that life was the light of men. The light shines in the darkness, but the darkness has not understood it” (John 1:1-5).

This declaration remains as true today as it was then. During this holiday season we often hear people – from preachers to news commentators to politicians to entertainment celebrities – ruminating and giving all manner of opinions about “the true meaning of Christmas.” However, if we believe the accounts cited above, and other passages from the Scriptures, the true meaning of Christmas is not a matter of multiple choice or preference. It is simple yet profound: God becoming man, taking on human flesh to overcome the one problem that has no human cure – the problem of sin.

As John 1:14 declares, “The Word became flesh and made his dwelling among us. We have seen his glory, the glory of the One and Only, who came from the Father, full of grace and truth.” The result was the greatest gift of all: “Yet to all who received him, to those who believe in his name, he gave the right to become children of God” (John 1:12).

© 2021. 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](http://www.bobtamasy.blogspot.com).

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### Reflection/Discussion Questions

1. How has the pandemic affected both your plans and perceptions of Christmas this year?
2. What are your thoughts or responses when you hear someone speaking of “canceling Christmas” in the name of public health and safety?
3. If someone were to ask you, how would you express or define the “true meaning of Christmas”? Is it possible for it to have more than one meaning? Why or why not?
4. Do you think there is a possibility that pandemic restrictions and the predicted scarcity of products intended for Christmas gift-giving might actually be a good thing? Explain your answer.

#### NOTE:

*If you have a Bible and would like to read more, consider the following passages:*  
John 3:3-8,16-18; Romans 3:23, 5-8, 6:23; Ephesians 2:8-9; 2 Timothy 3:16

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