

週一嗎哪 午間查經分享祈禱會

**MONDAY MANNA
DEC 19, 2022**

THE SEARCH FOR THE MEANING OF CHRISTMAS By Robert J. Tamasy

We have officially entered what is widely known as “Christmas week.” Of course, retail stores have been displaying their Christmas finery for months already: Christmas trees and ornaments, animated Santa Claus figures, candy canes of all sizes, and brightly wrapped fake holiday gifts shouting, “It’s time for you, shoppers, to spend your Christmas money and help us put our fiscal years in the black!”

I suspect you have also grown tired of the repeated question, “What is the true meaning of Christmas?” Amazingly, we hear celebrities and pundits offering their opinions, as if there were many answers to the question. They suggest answers such as “family,” “generosity,” “love and kindness toward one another,” “childlike wonder” and many others.

All very nice. But in reality, there is only one proper response to express the true meaning of Christmas. It is stated very clearly and concisely in John 1:14, “The Word became flesh and made His dwelling among us.” God – the Creator and sustainer of the universe – took on human form and came to earth in the form of a baby, growing to become our ultimate teacher, role model, Savior, Redeemer, and Lord.

During this season countless sermons and messages are presented to convey the importance and magnitude of Christmas. It has been this way for many centuries. So, what can be added to what has already been said and written? Perhaps we do not need something more, but to pause and reflect, to remember what we know. Consider a few of the other truths we find in the opening chapter of the New Testament’s gospel of John:

Jesus was from the beginning. Jesus Christ, the Son of God, did not come into existence one amazing morning 2,000 years ago in a small Middle Eastern town called Bethlehem. That was just the moment when, as quoted already, “the Word – Jesus – become flesh. He and God the Father have always been “In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was with God in the beginning. Through Him all things were made; without Him nothing was made that was made” (John 1:1-3).

Jesus came to give life and bring light. Before Jesus was born into the world as a human child, God had revealed Himself in many ways. He worked through human writers to give us the Old Testament, a history of His workings through humankind up to that point and a record of His commands and statutes for right living. But Jesus came to rescue us from dead, “religious” works and offer the one and only path to life that will not end. “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 1:4-5).

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Jesus offered us the way to become members of God's family. The Bible teaches that every man, woman, and children is God's creation, made in His image. But not all are members of His divine, eternal family. That requires a unique transaction, receiving as a gift what is available only through Jesus Christ. "Yet to all who received Him, to those who believed in His name, He gave the right to become children of God – children born not of natural descent, nor of human decision or a husband's will, but born of God" (John 1:12-13). Later Jesus expanded on this promise: "I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through Me" (John 14:6).

If we ponder these truths, need there be any questions about "the true meaning of Christmas"?

© 2022. 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.

Reflection/Discussion Questions

1. Have you heard people talking about the true meaning of Christmas, whether at work, in your community, or maybe on TV or the radio? What kinds of answers have you heard?
2. If someone were to ask you about your views regarding the true meaning of Christmas, how would you respond? Has the answer you would give changed over the years? If so, in what ways?
3. What does the phrase, "The Word became flesh and made his dwelling among us," mean to you? How would you explain your understanding of that to someone else?
4. Jesus said of Himself that He is light (John 8:12, 9:5) and life (John 11:25-26)? What are some ways in which you think that is true? Why is this important?

NOTE:

If you have a Bible and would like to read more, consider the following passages:
Micah 5:2; Luke 2:1-20,25-32; John 8:12, 9:5, 10:7-16, 11:25-26

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