

Who Needs Christmas? | Part 2

Lesson 4

Matthew 1:20-23; Luke 1:1-25, 57-80; Acts 3:14-15;

Romans 5:7-8; Galatians 4:4

December 17, 2023

Who Needs Christmas? God Did.

INTRODUCTION

“But when the set time had fully come, God sent His Son....” (Galatians 4:4). In other words, before time existed, God planned that His Son should come to earth at a specific time to fulfill our need for a Savior.

John Calvin said it differently: “that (Jesus) might present our flesh as the price of satisfaction to the just judgment of God, and in the same flesh pay the penalty which we had incurred.” (*Institutes of the Christian Religion*)

Calvin is right, but it is difficult to harmonize his explanation with the sweet holy child sleeping in the manger, an image that symbolizes Christmas and the reason for celebration.

Christmas observance begins soon after Columbus Day, obvious in retail displays of all things glittery. The true meaning is buried under commercial hype, but we can ignore it and give thanks that “For God so loved the world that He gave His one and only Son....” (John 3:16)

***Memory verse: “Praise be to the Lord, the God of Israel, because He has come to His people and redeemed them.”
—Luke 1:68***

Pray, and read the passages listed above. What questions or observations do you have about them?

OBSERVATION: What does the passage say?

1. Why is Joseph instructed to give Mary's son the name of Jesus? (Matthew 1:21)
2. Why did God give a son to Elizabeth and Zechariah? (Luke 1:13-17)
3. Paul claims the Israelites are responsible for what immoral acts? (Acts 3:14-15)
4. How does God show His love to His creations? (Romans 5:8)
5. Why did God send His Son to earth? (Galatians 4:4-5)

3. In Acts 3:14-15, Paul lashes out against the Israelites because of their approval of Jesus' murder. What is the most important fact which the Israelites disregarded or did not realize? (Leviticus 11:44; Isaiah 6:3; Luke 1:35)
4. Christ died for *sinners*, specifically named in Romans 5:8, but for whom and what else did He die? (John 1:4, 3:16; Ephesians 5:25)

APPLICATION: How do the passages apply to your life?

1. The fact that God sent his divine Son to earth as half-man may be difficult for some to accept. As Christians, how do we absorb such an incredible act into our believing?
2. How can we answer strangers (usually clerks) whom we encounter in the supermarket or other stores when they ask (which happens to everyone!), “Are you ready for Christmas?” (Ideally, we should always be ready for the gift of Jesus, not only at Christmas)
3. We are near the close of Advent. Rather than putting our focus on Christmas gifts that will not last, pray to thank God (daily) for His gift that will be with us throughout eternity.