

WHY DID JESUS COME TO
EARTH?

TODAY, December 25

Much of the world pauses to celebrate the birth of Jesus.

The fact that He was born is certainly worthy of remembrance.

BUT, how should we do that?

TODAY, December 25

Many believe Jesus was born on December 25 and that the typical nativity scene and festivities are accurate.

Furthermore, churches will decorate and have special services on this day. (Some will cancel because it happens to be on a Sunday - ??????????????)

Some observations about Christmas

- His birth is recorded in 2 gospels:
- **Matthew 1:18-2:23**
 - An angel appears to Mary
 - Joseph instructed about her and Jesus (He is Immanuel)
 - He marries her
 - Wisemen come from the East (to the child in his house – **2:11**)
 - Joseph & family flee to Egypt
 - After 2 years, they return and settle in Nazareth (of Galilee)

Some observations about Christmas

- His birth is recorded in 2 gospels:
- **Luke 1:26-2:40**
 - Gabriel announces to Mary
 - She visits Elizabeth who prophesies about Jesus
 - Jesus is born in Bethlehem and laid in a manger
 - Shepherds in the field see angels rejoicing (**2:8-14**). They visit and worship Him.

Some observations about Christmas

- His birth is recorded in 2 gospels:
- **Luke 1:26-2:40**
 - Jesus is presented at the temple
 - Simeon and Anna rejoice and prophecy about Him concerning His purpose and life
 - Luke moves ahead to Jesus living in Nazareth

Some observations about Christmas

- His birth is recorded in 2 gospels:
- **Galatians 4:4** - The only other passage that directly mentions His birth in the NT
NOTE: Several passages do address His incarnation (God coming in the flesh – **Romans 8:3, Philippians 2:7-8, 1 Timothy 3:16, etc.**)

Some observations about Christmas

- Concerning the observance of Christmas:
- There is NO observance of Christmas in scripture
- We do not know the day of His birth. Likely not December 25, as shepherds were in the field. Also, it was likely 4-7 years earlier than the calendar year we currently use (established by a monk – Dionysius Exiguus – 470-544 AD)

Some observations about Christmas

- Concerning the observance of Christmas:
- Celebrating His birth was not officially documented until the 4th century when a festival is documented (~336 AD), but there is evidence that ~200 AD, some Christians were ceremoniously celebrating various events of His life (baptism, possibly birth, resurrection).

Some observations about Christmas

- Concerning the observance of Christmas:
- At that time, December 25 (~336 AD) was officially recognized. This date corresponded with the pagan observance of the Mithraic sun god and winter solstice (beginning of winter and “birth” of a new sun).
 - About a century later, the observance became popularized.

Some observations about Christmas

- Concerning the observance of Christmas:
- The word “Christmas” means the “Mass of Christ” – a Catholic term. Not found until around 11th century. (Prior to this it was describes as the Feast of the Nativity, or the like).
Today, this word has also become secularized (i.e. It has reference to a national holiday with national traditions and encouragement toward goodwill)

Some observations about Christmas

- Concerning the observance of Christmas:
- Concerning the manger scene:
Typically, 3 wise men are depicted. But scripture (**Matthew 2:11**) places them visiting Jesus as a young child in a home. We do NOT know how many wisemen there were, but 3 gifts are mentioned (that is all we know).

Some observations about Christmas

- Concerning the observance of Christmas:
- NOWHERE in scripture are we told to celebrate His birth.
 - There is no authority for churches to establish a special service or set aside a special day to commemorate His birth.
 - What is observed today is the traditions of men – **Galatians 4:9-10, Matthew 15:3, 8-9**

Some observations about Christmas

- Concerning the observance of Christmas:
- NOWHERE in scripture are we told to celebrate His birth.
- God has given us a pattern for His church **Ephesians 3:10-11** – it was part of His eternal purpose and a manifestation of His wisdom. We need to respect His boundaries and pattern.

Some observations about Christmas

- Concerning the observance of Christmas:
- NOWHERE in scripture are we told to celebrate His birth.
- But isn't it good to remember His birth? Absolutely! But HOW?
As a church we sing, pray and study God's word. This can be done while following His pattern of worship.
We don't need special decorations and entertainment or holiday rituals

Some observations about Christmas

- Concerning the observance of Christmas:
- NOWHERE in scripture are we told to celebrate His birth.
- We ARE commanded to remember His death and resurrection – **1 Corinthians 11:23-26ff**
 - Having an example of what we ARE to observe, we should respect the silence of scripture as to what we should NOT do.
 - IF God wanted us to celebrate the birth of Jesus He would have told us, and HOW to observe it!

Some observations about Christmas

- Concerning the observance of Christmas:
- **NOWHERE** in scripture are we told to celebrate His birth.
- Therefore, what you observe in our assembling today is no different than any other Sunday morning worship service.

Some observations about Christmas

- Concerning the observance of Christmas:
- NOWHERE in scripture are we told to celebrate His birth.
- What about personal observances of the holiday?
 - What you choose to do privately is left to your discretion. **cf. Romans 14:5, 23-24.** Just make sure you are fully convinced in your mind.

Some observations about Christmas

- Concerning the observance of Christmas:
- This is also a good time to consider – is God pleased with the way you are serving Him?
Is 1-2 days a year sufficient to say that you are seeking His kingdom first? (**Matthew 6:33**)

Why Did Jesus Come to Earth?

- Having said all this, because the birth of Jesus is on the minds of many today, let's consider WHY He did come to this earth!
- Understand, we DO believe Jesus left heaven and came to this earth as portrayed in the gospels. And we OUGHT to address this from time to time! It is a PART of the gospel message. **Without His birth, there is no life of Jesus on earth.**

Why Did Jesus Come to Earth?

- **Jesus came to save us**

- Because of sin, we need salvation
(Romans 6:23)

Jesus came to provide that salvation –

1 John 4:14, John 3:16-17,
Philippians 2:5-8 – without His death
and resurrection, we would not be saved
and be without hope.

- He reconciles us to the Father –

Rom. 5:10, 2 Corinthians 5:18-20

Why Did Jesus Come to Earth?

- **Jesus came to reveal the Father to us**
 - Because of Jesus, we know who the Father is.
 - **John 1:18** – Jesus has declared Him
 - **John 14:9** – He who has seen Me, has seen the Father
 - **Hebrews 1:3** – the brightness of His glory and express image of His person
 - He is “Immanuel” – **Matthew 1:23**

Why Did Jesus Come to Earth?

- **To give us an example of how to live**
 - cf. 1 Corinthians 11:1
- **We can overcome and resist temptations – 1 Corinthians 10:13**
Hebrews 4:14-16
 - Remember His temptations –
Matthew 4:1-11

Why Did Jesus Come to Earth?

- **To give us an example of how to live**
- **We can forgive** – this is crucial to our standing before God
Matthew 6:14-15
Ephesians 4:32 – We forgive as He forgave, **Mark 11:25-26** (cf. **Luke 23:34**)

Why Did Jesus Come to Earth?

- **To give us an example of how to live**
- **We can serve others –**
Galatians 5:13 - through love we serve one another
John 13:12-17 – Jesus gave us an example (**Luke 22:24-27**, **Matthew 20:25-28**, etc.)


Why Did Jesus Come to Earth?

- **To give us an example of how to live**
- **We can endure sufferings and trials –**
1 Peter 2:21-24 - We will never outdo Jesus when it comes to suffering. But what are we willing to sacrifice for Him? Will we suffer for His cause?

We have seen that there is no mention of the Christmas celebration in the Bible.


Because of this, we assemble today as we normally do, with no special fanfare

AND, if on this occasion we choose to address the birth of Jesus, we ought to make it clear what we do and do not find in God's word (don't let people leave confused or ignorant)



BUT, one thing I do appreciate about this day, even with my concerns: It declares to the world that Jesus did live.

It is a yearly reminder to a world that wants to stamp out the Christian faith. And that IS a small victory!



Are you living for Jesus:
NOT just today,
but every day?

The background is a deep, dark blue with a subtle grid pattern of white stars. A prominent, bright white star is located at the top center, emitting a large, multi-pointed cross-shaped lens flare that radiates across the upper portion of the image. The overall effect is that of a starry night sky.

Let us pray