

## Christmas Changes Everything

At Christmas time we often talk about *how* he came. But in reality the issue isn't that Jesus came, but *why* did He come? This was essential because we begin to understand who God is.

Let's admit it, part of what we love about Christmas is the gift giving. This was started long before our holiday; for it came from our Father God, the original gift giver. "For God so loved the world he GAVE..." God not only gives us gifts that we need, (you know like the Grandma that gives you socks and underwear) but what we truly want.

### ***Why He came is found in how He came:***

#### **1) The Incarnation was where He changed form**

- **God is Holy** – *He cannot be corrupted*
- **God is Immutable** – *He cannot be improved upon*

**He became flesh; He became human.**

*"In your relationships with one another, have the same mindset as Christ Jesus: <sup>6</sup> Who, being in very nature (form) God, did not consider equality with God something to be used to his own advantage; <sup>7</sup> rather, he made himself nothing by taking the very nature (form) of a servant, being made in human likeness. <sup>8</sup> And being found in appearance as a man, he humbled himself by becoming obedient to death—even death on a cross!" (Philippians 2:5-8)*

He took the form of humanity for all of eternity...he became one of us!

*"This is how God showed his love among us: He sent his one and only Son into the world..." (1 John 4:9)*

*"For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten son..." (John 3:16)*

#### **2) The Incarnation changed how God relates to us**

## 2) The Incarnation changed how God relates to us.

*“For this reason he had to be made like his brothers in every way, in order that he might become a merciful and faithful high priest in service to God, and that He might make atonement for the sins of the people. Because He Himself suffered when He was tempted, He is able to help those who are being tempted.” (Hebrews 2:17-18)*

Because he became one of us, he knows how it feels to be tempted, hungry, etc.

*“Therefore, since we have a great high priest who has gone through the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold firmly to the faith we profess. 15 For we do not have a high priest who is unable to sympathize with our weaknesses, but we have one who has been tempted in every way, just as we are — yet was without sin. 16 Let us then approach the throne of grace with confidence, so that we may receive mercy and find grace to help us in our time of need.” (Hebrews 4:14-16)*

He is not a distant God who has no idea what it is like living here on earth. But we have a God who completely understands everything we face in this life. He not only understands, but also overcame everything we face and because he overcame, we can overcome.

He is dealing with us in compassion, mercy and understanding.

## 3) The Incarnation changed how we relate to God.

- Now we can relate to God from the heart (relationship), not through rules, rituals, obligation or duty.

*“It's by grace you have been saved through faith and this not from yourselves. It's the **gift of God.**” (Ephesians 2:8)*

God is saying this is the gift I have given to you; we now have relationship with him because of what he has done.

***“Relationships exist at the lowest level of willingness”***

*“Which of you, if his son asks for bread, will give him a stone, or if he asks for a fish, will give him a snake. If you then, though you are evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your Father in heaven give good gifts to those who ask Him?” (Matthew 7:9)*

**“God is the original giver and you and I are called to re-gift what God has given to us”**

## Discussion Questions

- 1) On page one of your notes, we talked about the enjoyment at Christmas time of gift giving. The scriptures indicate that God is truly the original “gift giver”. Have you found this to be true as you walk through your walk with him or as you read the scriptures? Please share with your group.
- 2) Although God is Holy and “immutable” (he cannot be improved upon) we learned that at the Incarnation was where He changed form. By this we mean he became flesh, he became a human. Before we discuss the “*why’s*” what does it mean to you that He took the form of humanity for **all of eternity**...he became one of us? (Philippians 2:5-8)
- 3) At this time of year we often talk about *how* he came. But as Randy suggested the issue isn’t that Jesus came, but *why* did He come? In light of this
  - a) Discuss how the Incarnation changed *how God relates to us*. (Page 2)
  - b) Also discuss how the Incarnation changed how *we relate to God*. (Page 3)
- 4) We know our salvation is a gift that God has given to us. We now have relationship with him because of what he has done. So what does this quote say to you moving forward in that relationship? “*Relationships exist at the lowest level of willingness*”
- 5) Lastly finish with our last thought: “*God is the original giver and you and I are called to re-gift what God has given to us*”

