

# Christmas is not just Shopping!

Christmas is here..! What is Christmas after all? This question was once posed to a group of people who were “Christmas shopping” at a mall! “Well, it’s something related to Christ, right... his death?” was the answer of a girl... Good! At least she knew that it is related to Christ...

Once, a girl of another faith, who worked in a store as a sales girl, met with an accident and was taken to hospital. The nurse who tended to her was a Christian. One day the girl asked the nurse: “Is it true that you are a Christian?” The answer was an affirmative YES! The girl replied “Wonderful! The only Christians I’ve ever met were the Christmas shoppers! You are so kind, polite and gentle!”

You will find “happy shoppers” at Christmas fest everywhere. However, Christmas is not just shopping! Christmas is the most amazing moment when God almighty took the form of a man and stepped into the earth. God decided to live with man, and that’s the reason JESUS is called “Immanuel”, meaning “God is with us!”

It is good news, right? How often have we thought “Oh! Had God been with us...”? With wars and earthquakes and natural disasters on the increase; with bombs and air crashes, with homosexuals and murderers lurking at every nook and corner, it’s not hard to say that the world has gone crazy. The bad news is, it’s going to get worse. “Oh! Had God been with us...” *Sexually immoral people, idolaters, adulterers, male prostitutes, homosexuals, thieves, greedy people, drunks, slanderers, and robbers will not inherit the kingdom of God. (1Co 6:10)*

We have come to a critical juncture where the world’s system cannot be trusted. We have tried everything from feudalism to communism in politics, Monarchy to Anarchy in ruling, capitalism to socialism in economics, primitivism to Guruism in religion, Asceticism to Transcendental meditation in discipline, technology to metaphysics in science... and have miserably failed everywhere! As someone rightly pointed out, Man can fly like a bird in the skies, swim like a fish in the water, but he cannot live in harmony with his brother or neighbour!

Man has contrived many boundaries and barriers, especially religious, putting God outside those barriers. Man is trying to gain control of this world which is the magnificent creation of God Almighty. God is just a piece of information for many of us. What is the outcome? Though we live a comfortable life, we feel utterly void and empty within. Some even say “life has no meaning at all”.

Where did we fail? If you seriously consider this question, dear friend, the answer is: we failed in God! We failed and neglected to live with a God who

is able and willing to guide us, understand us and strengthen us to fulfill the task before us... Man is trying to be “independent” from God... Oh! Man, if you live without God, you will die without God and if you die without God, you will live eternity without God- which we call eternal hell!

Yes we need a God who understands us, who walks with us, talks with us and guides us in the right path; a God who is far away in the heavens - who has never known humans and human realities- can never understand us fully. JESUS, however, understands us because He lived in this world in human form for thirty three years... He knows our struggles and the pain we bear... He, who was once a man, is in reality, eternal God!

We give “gifts” on Christmas. Jesus Christ was the perfect gift to mankind from God... The amazing thing about this perfect gift is that the gift and the giver are the same. Jesus came to this world on the first Christmas day, lived and died on a cross as a sacrifice for the sins of mankind, including yours and mine, so that we can escape hell.

The world has gone crazy. However, there is hope for a happy and blissful life, but only for those willing to live a life that is devoid of these pressures and inclinations of flesh and death. The bible declares: “whosoever believeth in Him – JESUS – shall not perish but have eternal life” (John 3:16). Yes, Jesus wants to live with us... in this world and the world to come! However, He is not a “dictator” who stamps you down, sits on your back and forces you to be a slave. He wants you to “accept” Him, acknowledge His friendship and Lordship...

Christmas is the celebration of the Birth of JESUS into this world... Christmas can now have a new meaning... if you allow JESUS to be BORN IN YOU... The celebration then is not just a day in a year but every moment of your life, because the JESUS who is born in you will reside in and abide with you forever... Be a home for Jesus to live in and God will help you to see that every day is a celebration with your “Immanuel.”

May this Christmas message help reveal to you the mystery of your own life. Take this moment to simply weigh your life and to understand the meaning of your existence. Jesus is the reason for the season! Without Him, we are void and shapeless... With Him, we are children of God! Let JESUS be born in you, today! For the message about the cross is nonsense to those who are being destroyed, but it is God’s power to us who are being saved. (1Co 1:18)

***Talk to Him: “Jesus, I need you... I am in darkness, give me Light. I am in death, give me Life. Take away my confusion... I want you to be my IMMANUEL, Amen!”***

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