

Keeping Christ in Christmas.

Message 04 of the series "Simple Christmas."

A. It's surprisingly easy to pay little or no attention to Jesus on his birthday.

B. Three good reasons to celebrate Jesus' birthday:

1. Jesus came to save us from our sins.

"Because God's children are human beings—made of flesh and blood—the Son also became flesh and blood. For only as a human being could he die, and only by dying could he break the power of the devil, who had the power of death. Only in this way could he set free all who have lived their lives as slaves to the fear of dying... Therefore, it was necessary for him to be made in every respect like us, his brothers and sisters, so that he could be our merciful and faithful High Priest before God. Then he could offer a sacrifice that would take away the sins of the people." Hebrews 2:14-17 (NLT)

"This is how Jesus the Messiah was born. His mother, Mary, was engaged to be married to Joseph. But before the marriage took place, while she was still a virgin, she became pregnant through the power of the Holy Spirit. Joseph, her fiancé, was a good man and did not want to disgrace her publicly, so he decided to break the engagement quietly. As he considered this, an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream. 'Joseph, son of David,' the angel said, 'Do not be afraid to take Mary as your wife. For the child within her was conceived by the Holy Spirit. And she will have a son, and you are to name him Jesus, for he will save his people from their sins.'" Matthew 1:18-21 (NLT)

Note: "Jesus" = (Hebrew "Joshua") = "the Lord saves."

2. Jesus came to make it possible for us to become part of God's family.

"Even before he made the world, God loved us and chose us in Christ to be holy and without fault in his eyes. God decided in advance to adopt us into his own family by bringing us to himself through Jesus Christ. This is what he wanted to do, and it gave him great pleasure. So we praise God for the glorious grace he has poured out on us who belong to his dear Son." Ephesians 1:4-6 (NLT)

"But to all who believed him and accepted him, he gave the right to become children of God. They are reborn—not with a physical birth resulting from human passion or plan, but a birth that comes from God." John 1:12-13 (NLT)

3. Jesus came to give us abundant, eternal life.

"I have come that they may have life, and that they may have *it* more abundantly." John 10:10 (NKJV)

"For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish, but have eternal life." John 3:16 (NKJV)

"I heard a loud shout from the throne, saying, 'Look, God's home is now among his people! He will live with them, and they will be his people. God himself will be with them. He will wipe every tear from their eyes, and there will be no more death or sorrow or crying or pain. All these things are gone forever.' And the one sitting on the throne said, 'Look, I am making everything new!' And then he said to me, 'Write this down, for what I tell you is trustworthy and true.'" Revelation 21:3-6 (NLT)

C. Five simple ways to keep Christ in Christmas:

1. We can fill our homes with Christ-centered Christmas music.

"Don't be drunk with wine, because that will ruin your life. Instead, be filled with the Holy Spirit, singing psalms and hymns and spiritual songs among yourselves, and making music to the Lord in your hearts." Ephesians 5:18-19 (NLT)

2. We can decorate our homes with Christ-centered Christmas décor.

"So commit yourselves wholeheartedly to these words of mine. Tie them to your hands and wear them on your forehead as reminders. Teach them to your children. Talk about them when you are at home and when you are on the road, when you are going to bed and when you are getting up. Write them on the doorposts of your house and on your gates..." Deuteronomy 10:16-21 (NLT)

3. We can read the Christmas story from the Bible, Christ-centered Christmas books and watch Christ-centered Christmas movies.

"We will not hide these truths from our children; we will tell the next generation about the glorious deeds of the LORD, about his power and his mighty wonders." Psalm 78:4 (NLT)

4. We can plan Christ-centered activities.

"They devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and to the fellowship, to the breaking of bread and to prayer... Every day they continued to meet together in the temple courts. They broke bread in their homes and ate together with glad and sincere hearts...." Acts 2:42, 46 (NIV)

5. We can prayerfully invite someone to join our Christmas celebrations.

"When you give a luncheon or dinner, do not invite your friends, your brothers or relatives, or your rich neighbors; if you do, they may invite you back and so you will be repaid. But when you give a banquet, invite the poor, the crippled, the lame, the blind, and you will be blessed. Although they cannot repay you, you will be repaid at the resurrection of the righteous." Luke 14:12-14 (NIV)

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Resources:

- **Helpful websites / blogs**

www.wearethatfamily.com/2013/12/30-ways-to-keep-christ-in-christmas-2

www.thedatingdivas.com/12-ways-to-keep-christ-in-christmas

www.pluggedin.com

www.Christianbook.com

- **Christ-centered Music**

You Tube playlist: "Music for a Christ-centered Christmas" by Becca Olave

Spotify playlist: "Christian Christmas"

- **Christ-centered décor ideas**

Nativity scenes, advent wreaths, Christ-centered tree ornaments, printing, framing and hanging small passages of Christmas Scripture, etc.

- **Christ-centered movies & books**

"The Best Christmas Pageant Ever" by Barbara Robinson

"The Christmas Candle" by Max Lucado

"A Charlie Brown Christmas" by Charles Schulz

"The Nativity Story" (2006)