

## God in The Manger

The miracle of Christmas surrounds an event that is almost impossible for the human mind to comprehend; that God came down to earth, was born in a manger, with the purpose to save mankind from our sinful nature. Because of the birth and influence of Jesus Christ, history is divided into two basic divisions: AD (Anno Domini, Latin for “in the year of the Lord,”) and BC (“Before Christ). As evidenced by the fact that calendars and historians count forward and backward from this time, this was a very significant time, even excluding it’s religious aspects.

Christmas is the beginning of a true classic story that contains all the right ingredients: love, joy, peace, celebration, salvation, reconciliation, and goodwill. That little baby in the manger is none other than God Himself and He entered human history to provide the solution to our problem of salvation.

When Jesus allowed Himself to be laid down in that manger, He was identifying Himself with all those He came to save. He was born in a manger and thereby made Himself accessible to all who would come to Him. To understand the significance of the birth of this baby, we need to understand the history that led up to this event. The only compilation of books in the world that records a detailed history of this event is the Bible.

### **Philippians 2:5-6 (KJV)**

**5** Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus: **6** Who, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God:

Jesus Christ, though He was God, gave up His divine privileges; He took the humble position of a slave and was born as a human being,

This means before becoming a tiny unborn baby within a young virgin, Jesus Christ was God!

### **John 1:1-3 (KJV)**

**1** In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. **2** The same was in the beginning with God. **3** All things were made by him; and without him was not any thing made that was made.

The scene at Bethlehem is one of simplicity: a mother, a father, and a baby. Thus, was “the Word made flesh” to dwell among us. God’s message to us is simple and clear; those who come in simple faith to the Lord Jesus Christ will find great peace.

For nearly 2,000 years, it’s been debated who Jesus is. Religious groups and skeptics have offered various explanations, but biblical evidence makes it overwhelmingly apparent that this child in the manger was the incarnation of God. This world is happy to let Jesus Christ be a baby in a manger, but not willing to let Him be the sovereign King and Lord that He is. Unfortunately, for the unbelievers, that is the central truth of the Christmas story; the child of Christmas is God! Christmas is not about the Christ’s infancy; it is about His deity. He was fully human, with all the needs and emotions that are common to us all. Yet, at the same time, He was also fully God; all wise and powerful.

If there is a single word that describes what Christmas is all about, It’s the word ‘love.’ The Bible says God is love. It doesn’t say God has love; it says God is love. Love is His nature. God created us as an object of His love. He made you so He could love you and so you would love Him.

### **John 3:16 (KJV)**

**16** For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.

God loves you so much that He sent His only son, Jesus, into this world for your salvation. The true meaning of Christmas is the celebration of this incredible act of love.

Why was Christmas necessary? Because we needed a Savior!  
Why does God love us so much? Because God is love!

### **Ephesians 3:17-19 (KJV)**

**17** That Christ may dwell in your hearts by faith; that ye, being rooted and grounded in love, **18** May be able to comprehend with all saints what is the breadth, and length, and depth, and height; **19** And to know the love of Christ, which passeth knowledge, that ye might be filled with all the fulness of God.

God loves us and provided a way, the only Way, for us to spend eternity with Him. He gave His only son to take punishment for our sins. He paid the price in full, and we are free from condemnation when we accept that gift of love.

**Romans 5:8 (KJV)**

**8** But God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us.

Why do we celebrate Christmas? Out of gratitude for what God did for us! We reflect on His birth by giving ourselves to Him, worshipping Him, sharing our blessing, and being especially conscious of those less fortunate than us.

A loving relationship with God satisfies our need for love and to be loved. We no longer seek to be loved and appreciated by others, because we have His love. We no longer seek to control or dominate over others, because we become His subjects and that satisfies the emptiness that lies within. We are empty without our loving service relationship with God, because this is our natural position. God created us to love and serve Him.

**Matthew 22:37-38 (KJV)**

**37** Jesus said unto him, Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind. **38** This is the first and great commandment.

The world is full of people with different beliefs and opinions. These differences translate into divisions. The Bible is attempting to teach us that in Christ, all our differences are put to death. While the world may fight their wars, society may argue over their different agendas, and homes may be divided, the kingdom of God is a place where unity and peace should prevail. In Christ, there is oneness that brings all people together on common ground. If we are to make the occasion complete, it must be a celebration of love and reconciliation. We must remember the cause for which Jesus was born and sacrificed His life. Remembering it, we must live by it ourselves for if we love Him, we must follow His Commandments.

**John 15:12 (KJV)**

**12 This is my commandment, That ye love one another, as I have loved you.**

We do this by renouncing violence, hatred, greed, selfishness and all evil motives in our hearts and minds. Let us celebrate this Christmas praying and doing all we can to promote love, peace, and goodwill among all people on earth. Remember Christmas began in the heart of God. It is only complete when it reaches the heart of man.