

Why the World Needs Christmas

Genesis 3:1-13, Romans 1:16-32, Genesis 3:22-24, John 1:1-5, Matthew 1:23-25, Luke 2:10-11, Matthew 4:12-17, Isaiah 9:1-7

INTRODUCTION:

N.T. Wright, *For All God's Worth: True Worship and the Calling of the Church*

“Christmas is not a reminder that the world is really quite a nice old place. It reminds us that the world is a shockingly bad old place, where wickedness flourishes unchecked, where children are murdered, where civilized countries make a lot of money by selling weapons to uncivilized ones so they can blow each other apart. Christmas is God lighting a candle, and you don't light a candle in a room that's already full of sunlight. You light a candle in a room that's so murky that the candle, when lit, reveals just how bad things really are. The light shines in the darkness, says St. John, and the darkness has not overcome it.”

I. The Deception: Truth Disobeyed

Genesis 3:1-13, 22-24

Now the serpent was more crafty than any other beast of the field that the LORD God had made.

He said to the woman, “***Did God actually say, ‘You shall not eat of any tree in the garden?’***”² And the woman said to the serpent, “We may eat of the fruit of the trees in the garden,³ but God said, ‘You shall not eat of the fruit of the tree that is in the midst of the garden, neither shall you touch it, lest you die.’”⁴ But the serpent said to the woman, “You will not surely die.⁵ For God knows that when you eat of it your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, knowing good and evil.”⁶ So when the woman saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was a delight to the eyes, and that the tree was to be desired to make one wise, she took of its fruit and ate, and she also gave some to her husband who was with her, and he ate.⁷ Then the eyes of both were opened, and they knew that they were naked. And they sewed fig leaves together and made themselves loincloths.

⁸ And they heard the sound of the LORD God walking in the garden in the cool of the day, and the man and his wife hid themselves from the presence of the LORD God among the trees of the garden.⁹ But the LORD God called to the man and said to him, “Where are you?”¹⁰ And he said, “I heard the sound of you in the garden, and I was afraid, because I was naked, and I hid myself.”¹¹ He said, “Who told you that you were naked? Have you eaten of the tree of which I commanded you not to eat?”¹² The man said, “The woman whom you gave to be with me, she gave me fruit

of the tree, and I ate.”¹³ Then the LORD God said to the woman, “What is this that you have done?” The woman said, “The serpent deceived me, and I ate.”

II. The Destiny: God’s Wrath on Sin

Romans 1:18-32

¹⁸ For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who by their unrighteousness suppress the truth. ¹⁹ For what can be known about God is plain to them, because God has shown it to them. ²⁰ For his invisible attributes, namely, his eternal power and divine nature, have been clearly perceived, ever since the creation of the world, in the things that have been made. So they are without excuse. ²¹ ***For although they knew God, they did not honor him as God or give thanks to him, but they became futile in their thinking, and their foolish hearts were darkened.*** ²² Claiming to be wise, they became fools, ²³ and exchanged the glory of the immortal God for images resembling mortal man and birds and animals and creeping things.

²⁴ Therefore God gave them up in the lusts of their hearts to impurity, to the dishonoring of their bodies among themselves, ²⁵ ***because they exchanged the truth about God for a lie*** and worshiped and served the creature rather than the Creator, who is blessed forever! Amen.

²⁶ For this reason God gave them up to dishonorable passions. For their women exchanged natural relations for those that are contrary to nature; ²⁷ and the men likewise gave up natural relations with women and were consumed with passion for one another, men committing shameless acts with men and receiving in themselves the due penalty for their error.

²⁸ And since they did not see fit to acknowledge God, God gave them up to a debased mind to do what ought not to be done. ²⁹ They were filled with all manner of unrighteousness, evil, covetousness, malice. They are full of envy, murder, strife, deceit, maliciousness. They are gossips, ³⁰ slanderers, haters of God, insolent, haughty, boastful, inventors of evil, disobedient to parents, ³¹ foolish, faithless, heartless, ruthless. ³² Though they know God’s righteous decree that those who practice such things deserve to die, they not only do them but give approval to those who practice them.

III. The Dilemma of Mankind

Genesis 3:22-24

²² Then the LORD God said, “Behold, the man has become like one of us in knowing good and evil. Now, lest he reach out his hand and take also of the tree of life and eat, and live forever—” ²³ therefore the LORD God sent him out from the garden of Eden to work the ground from which he was taken. ²⁴ He drove out the man, and at the east of the garden of Eden *he placed the cherubim and a flaming sword that turned every way to guard the way to the tree of life.*

III. The Dawn: A New Beginning

Matthew 4:15-16 referencing back to Isaiah 9

¹⁵ “The land of Zebulun and the land of Naphtali, the way of the sea, beyond the Jordan, Galilee of the Gentiles—
¹⁶ the people dwelling in darkness have seen a great light, and for those dwelling in the region and shadow of death, on them a light has dawned.”

John 1:1-5

In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. ² He was in the beginning with God. ³ All things were made through him, and without him was not anything made that was made. ⁴ In him was life, and the life was the light of men. ⁵ The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it.

IV. The Deliverer: Hope Incarnate

Matthew 1:23-25

Behold, the virgin shall conceive and bear a son, and they shall call his name Immanuel” (which means, God with us). ²⁴ When Joseph woke from sleep, he did as the angel of the Lord commanded him: he took his wife, ²⁵ but knew her not until she had given birth to a son. And he called his name Jesus.

Luke 2:10-11

And the angel said to them, “Fear not, for behold, I bring you good news of great joy that will be for all the people. ¹¹ For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, who is Christ the Lord

Isaiah 9:2-7

- ² The people who walked in darkness
have seen a great light;
those who dwelt in a land of deep darkness,
on them has light shone.
- ³ You have multiplied the nation;
you have increased its joy;
they rejoice before you
as with joy at the harvest,
as they are glad when they divide the spoil.
- ⁴ the yoke of his burden,
and the staff for his shoulder,
the rod of his oppressor,
you have broken as on the day of Midian.
- ⁵ For every boot of the tramping warrior in battle tumult
and every garment rolled in blood
will be burned as fuel for the fire.
- ⁶ For to us a child is born,
to us a son is given;
and the government shall be upon his shoulder,
and his name shall be called
Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God,
Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.
- ⁷ Of the increase of his government and of peace
there will be no end,
on the throne of David and over his kingdom,
to establish it and to uphold it
with justice and with righteousness
from this time forth and forevermore.
The zeal of the LORD of hosts will do this. ¹

Augustine

He was created of a mother whom He created. He was carried by hands that He formed. He cried in the manger in wordless infancy, He the Word, without whom all human eloquence is mute."

¹ [*The Holy Bible: English Standard Version*](#) (Is 9:1–7). (2016). Crossway Bibles.

CONCLUSION:

Matthew 4:15-17

¹⁵The land of Zebulun and the land of Naphtali, the way of the sea, beyond the Jordan, Galilee of the Gentiles—

¹⁶ the people dwelling in darkness have seen a great light, and for those dwelling in the region and shadow of death, on them, a light has dawned.”

¹⁷ From that time Jesus began to preach, saying, “Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand.”²

3 Observations of a Biblical Understanding of Christmas

1. **The Magnitude of Christmas:** God became a man and understands us
2. **The Meaning of Christmas:** God has come to us to love us and forgive us
3. **The Message of Christmas:** Repent for the Kingdom of God is at hand.

Vance Havner

Christmas is based on an exchange of gifts, the gift of God to man - His unspeakable gift of His Son, and the gift of man to God - when we present our bodies a living sacrifice.

Peter Marshall

May we not 'spend' Christmas or 'observe' Christmas, but rather 'keep' it.

J.I. Packer

The Christmas message is that there is hope for a ruined humanity--hope of pardon, hope of peace with God, hope of glory--because at the Father's will Jesus became poor, and was born in a stable so that thirty years later He might hang on a cross.

Illustration: The Story of the Unseen Four-Wheeler

² [*The Holy Bible: English Standard Version*](#) (Mt 4:15–17). (2016). Crossway Bibles.