



圣诞节是怎么回事？

**What is Christmas All About?**



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“所以无论何事，你们愿意人怎样待你们，你们也要怎样待人。因为这就是律法和先知的道理。你们要进窄门。因为引到灭亡，那门是宽的，路是大的，进去的人也多。引到永生，那门是窄的，路是小的，找着的人也少”（马太福音 7:12-14）。“我就是道路、真理、生命，若不借着我，没有人能到父那里去”（约翰福音 14:6）。

**圣诞节的意义来自耶稣所带给我们的信息和应许。**耶稣要赐我们新的生命，最高的生活目标。耶稣告诉我们天上的神爱我们，认识我们。连我们的头发都细数过。树上的麻雀落地，神晓得；那么，我们心里的深处，他怎么不知道呢？耶稣愿意成为我们的朋友，帮助我们修身，改变我们的生活。

耶稣说，如果我们转向神，悔改我们的过犯和罪孽，信仰他，顺服他，他要赦免我们的罪。这个过程非常难。什么事比改恶从善难呢？但是，耶稣答应赐给我们力量，内在的能力，让我们成为一个新造的人。“江山易改，本性难移。”在内心深处，如果您承认我们需要改变，耶稣就出现告诉我们，他愿意协助我们。

我们为什么要骂人，打人，毁谤人？我们为什么在酒瓶里寻找快乐？我们为什么淫欲他人的妻子，但漠视自己的配偶？我们为什么认为，有钱万事兴？我们为什么过一个自私自利的生活，而不多多的为别人设想？耶稣的信息就是他能够改变我们这些，同时让我们在改变的过程当中，寻找耶稣所说的“丰盛的生命”（约翰福音 10:10）。

除掉耶稣，“圣诞节”就失去了意义。接受耶稣为“道路、真理、生命，”每天就变成圣诞节！

如果您要“过”圣诞节，我建议您阅读《圣经》，从中认识那位诞生的耶稣基督。从中看见那位行善者，欣赏那位受难者，仰望那位救世者。同时就明白为什么耶稣基督的诞生能够让普世欢腾，普天同庆。

祝福您圣诞节快乐！

“In everything do to others as you would have them do to you; for this is the law and the prophets. Enter through the narrow gate; for the gate is wide and the road is easy that leads to destruction, and there are many who take it. For the gate is narrow and the road is hard that leads to life, and there are few who find it” (Matthew 7:12-14 NRSV). “I am the way, and the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me” (John 14:6 NRSV).

**The meaning of Christmas comes from the message and promises of Jesus.** Jesus wants to give us new life and the highest possible objective for life. Jesus tells us that the God of heaven loves us and knows us. God even knows how many strands of hair are on our heads! When a sparrow falls to the ground, God knows it, so how can God not know the innermost recesses of our hearts? Jesus wants to become our friend, to help us cultivate our moral behavior and change our lives.

Jesus said that if we'll turn to God and repent of our sins, put our faith in him and obey him, then he stands ready to forgive our sins. This is a difficult process however. What can be more difficult than leaving evil and doing good? But Jesus wants to empower us on the inside to become a new creation, a new person. A Chinese proverb says, “Moving a mountain is easy compared to changing a person’s nature.” Deep inside our hearts, however, if we will admit that we need to change, Jesus appears and says that he is willing and ready to help us change.

Why do we say unkind things? Why do we hit, slander and malign? Why do we try to find happiness in a bottle of alcohol? Why lust for the wife of another while ignoring our own spouse? Why do we think that money is the answer to all problems? Why do we live a self-centered life, rather than thinking of others more? The message of Jesus is that he can change all of these aspects of our lives, and, in the process, enable us to find what he calls “the abundant life” (John 10:10).

Remove Christ from Christmas and it loses its meaning. Receive Jesus as “the way, the truth and the life,” and everyday becomes Christmas!

If you want to celebrate Christmas, I suggest that you do so by reading the Bible. Meet this Jesus Christ who was born in a manger, watch him perform miracles, appreciate his suffering on the cross, and put your faith in him as the Savior of the world. At the same time, you'll understand why the birth of Jesus Christ causes the whole world to rejoice and all mankind to celebrate!

Merry Christmas!

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In Asia, Europe and the Americas, most people know about Christmas, but they don't necessarily understand what Christmas is all about. Whose birthday does Christmas celebrate? Why is it called a "holy" birth?

During the Christmas season, the stores are all decorated in special ways. Everywhere you look, you see Santa Clause, elves, reindeer and Christmas trees. Throughout the stores are red and green, ribbons and bows, lights and ornaments. Displayed presents are beautifully wrapped, as thousands of shoppers purchase clothes, electronics, toys and books. It's easy to see that Christmas is Big Business!

The real meaning of Christmas, however, is not in these things. Santa Clause, Christmas trees, buying and exchanging of gifts are all extras. The real meaning of Christmas comes from a man, and the man is Jesus Christ. Because Jesus came from heaven as God in the flesh, he is holy; hence his birth is termed a "holy birth." (The English term Christmas literally means the "mass of Christ," which is not in the Bible; indeed the term Christmas is not in the Bible.)

When Jesus was on the earth, he didn't ask anyone to turn his birthday into a festival or celebration. Although the Bible records the birth of Jesus, no where in the Bible is there any mention that the first century Christians celebrated his birth. In fact, the Bible does not tell us on what day or even in which year Jesus was born.

**The meaning of Christmas comes from the infant Jesus who was "the Word made flesh."** Remember, however, that the infant grew up! Christians today not only remember the infant in the manger, we venerate the adult who suffered on the cross, and we worship the Savior who overcame death and exited the tomb.

**The meaning of Christmas comes from what Jesus did.** God was with Jesus and empowered Jesus to perform miracles and signs. Jesus enabled the lame to walk, the blind to see, the deaf to hear. While on earth, Jesus even raised from death a man named Lazarus.

**The meaning of Christmas comes from what Jesus said.** Here are some statements Jesus made, "You are the light of the world. A city built on a hill cannot be hid...in the same way, let your light shine before others, so that they may see your good works and give glory to your Father in heaven" (Matthew 5:14, 16 NRSV). "But if God so clothes the grass of the field, which is alive today and tomorrow is thrown into the oven, will he not much more clothe you—you of little faith? Therefore do not worry, saying, "What will we eat?" or "What will we drink?" or "What will we wear?" For it is the Gentiles who strive for all these things; and indeed your heavenly Father knows that you need all these things. But strive first for the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well (Matthew 6:30-33 NRSV)."

亚洲, 欧洲, 美洲, 大多数的人都知道“圣诞节”一词, 但是不一定明白圣诞节是怎么一回事。圣诞节是庆祝谁的诞生呢? 怎么会有“圣”这个字在里头呢?

圣诞节期间, 街道上的店铺, 处处都洋溢着圣诞节的气氛。圣诞老人, 圣诞树等, 到处可见。店铺装饰红红绿绿。礼品都包装得漂漂亮亮的。成千上万的人上街购买衣服、电器、玩具、书籍等。由此可见, 圣诞节真是赚钱的好商机。

其实, 圣诞节的意义不在这些。圣诞老人, 圣诞树, 购买百货, 交换礼物, 都是多余的。圣诞节的意义来自一个人, 就是耶稣基督。因为耶稣从天上降世, 因为他是上帝成为肉身, 所以耶稣是至圣的。因此, 这个节日才被称为“圣诞”节。(圣诞节一词不在《圣经》里。)

耶稣在世的时候, 并没有要求任何人要把他的生日当作节日。虽然《圣经》记载耶稣的诞生, 但是在《圣经》里, 第一世纪的基督徒从来没有纪念过耶稣的生日。事实上, 《圣经》也没有告诉我们耶稣在哪年, 哪一日出生的。

**圣诞节的意义来自“道成肉身”的婴孩耶稣,** 但是那位婴孩长大了。今天的基督徒不只怀念马槽里的婴孩, 我们更崇拜钉于十字架的受难者。我们更加敬拜从坟墓里出来, 胜过死亡复活了的救世主。

**圣诞节的意义来自耶稣所作的事情。**上帝与耶稣同在, 使得耶稣行许多神迹奇事。耶稣让瘸腿的走路, 瞎眼的看见, 耳聋的听见。耶稣在世时, 甚至叫一位名叫拉撒路的复活。

**圣诞节的意义来自耶稣所说的话。**耶稣讲道, 说, “你们是世上的光。城造在山上、是不能隐藏的。…你们的光也当这样照在人前、叫他们看见你们的好行为、便将荣耀归给你们在天上的父” (马太福音 5:14, 16)。“…野地里的草、今天还在、明天就丢在炉里、神还给他这样的装饰、何况你们呢? …所以不要忧虑、说、吃甚么, 喝甚么、穿甚么。这都是外邦人所求的。你们需用的一切东西, 你们的天父是知道的。你们要先求他的国、和他的义, 这些东西都要加给你们了” (马太福音 6:30-33)。