

Christmas According to John
Is Christmas Just a Beautiful Lie?
John 1:1-14; Luke 2:1-20; I Cor. 1:18-21, 27-29; Phil. 2:5-8
Grace Fellowship Church / Pastor Brad Bigney / December 4, 2022

While people are more than willing to reject God and His authority on their lives, they still want to hold onto some of the benefits of Christianity:

“I don’t believe in God but I miss Him.”

“I miss the God that inspired Italian painting and French stained glass, German music and English chapter houses, and those tumbledown heaps of stone on Celtic headlands which were once symbolic beacons in the darkness and the storm.”

“It was a beautiful lie.”

~ Julian Barnes, *Nothing to Be Frightened Of*

If Christianity and the Christmas story are not true, then there is no hope for mankind because Jesus came to solve our biggest problem—the sin problem that separates us from a holy God—not to just add some beauty and wonder to the world.

I. The Gospel and This Christmas Story Sound Foolish to Us

The Gospel and this Christmas story sound foolish to our human way of thinking, but just because something sounds foolish doesn’t mean it’s a lie.

The Apostle Paul himself would agree that this Christmas story of God in the flesh strikes the human mind as sheer foolishness.

1 Corinthians 1:18–21 “For the word of the cross is folly to those who are perishing, but to us who are being saved it is the power of God. ¹⁹For it is written, ‘I will destroy the wisdom of the wise, and the discernment of the discerning I will thwart.’ ²⁰Where is the one who is wise? Where is the scribe? Where is the debater of this age? Has not God made foolish the wisdom of the world? ²¹For since, in the wisdom of God, the world did not know God through wisdom, it pleased God through the folly of what we preach to save those who believe.”

II. The Gospel and This Christmas Story Also Look Weak to Us

Weakness and shocking humility—two things that human beings have a huge aversion towards—are inherent in this Gospel message and this Christmas story!

At the very heart of Christianity is a Savior who laid aside His rights and humbled Himself to save us.

Philippians 2:6-8 “...though He was in the form of God, did not count equality with God a thing to be grasped, ⁷but emptied Himself, by taking the form of a servant, being born in the likeness of men. ⁸And being found in human form, He humbled Himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross.”

This cuts against the grain of our sinful human nature that seeks to promote ourselves, cling to our rights, and push and shove and posture ourselves to get, gain, take, and keep as much as possible.

III. The Gospel and This Christmas Story Are What God Designed to Save Us

1 Corinthians 1:27–31 “But God chose what is foolish in the world to shame the wise; God chose what is weak in the world to shame the strong; ²⁸God chose what is low and despised in the world, even things that are not, to bring to nothing things that are, ²⁹so that no human being might boast in the presence of God. ³⁰And because of Him you are in Christ Jesus, who became to us wisdom from God, righteousness and sanctification and redemption, ³¹so that, as it is written, ‘Let the one who boasts, boast in the Lord.’”

After 400 years of silence between the Old Testament and New Testament with no word from God—no prophets, visions, or dreams—God chooses to break the silence with the gurgling cry of a newborn baby in a manger, in a stable, in a little, insignificant town called Bethlehem.

See Luke 2:1-20

This was the premeditated, purposeful, merciful, redemptive, and humbling act of an Almighty God who took on flesh and stepped into this world to save us!

See John 1:1-14

IV. John Loves You and Wants You to Believe and Be Saved!

John was known throughout history as the Apostle of love. He makes reference to “love” 80 times in his writings and “truth” 45 times. A third word he uses, more than any other word in his gospel, is the word “believe” which he uses 100 times.

When you put it all together, you can see that he wants us to **believe** in the **truth** *about* Jesus... so that we can enter into a relationship of **love** *with* Jesus that can never be taken or shaken from us.

The purpose of John is to convince you that Jesus is your only hope and to get you to believe in Him!

John 1:11-12 “He came to His own, and His own people did not receive Him. ¹²But to all who did receive Him, who believed in His name, He gave the right to become children of God.”

John 20:31 “But these are written so that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that by believing you may have life in His name.”

The word “life” here is the Greek word “zoe” that means the essence of real living, where you begin to experience how God meant for you to really live. Until you believe in Jesus, all you have is “bios” (which means “breathe.”) You’re alive, but not really living until you believe in Jesus Christ.

1 John 5:11-13 “And this is the testimony, that God gave us eternal life, and this life is in His Son. ¹²Whoever has the Son has life; whoever does not have the Son of God does not have life. ¹³I write these things to you who believe in the name of the Son of God, that you may know that you have eternal life.”