

## **The Essence of Christmas** **1 Timothy 1:15 (12/3/2017 PM)**

This verse is within Paul's personal testimony of salvation. It is good to remind ourselves of what Christmas is really about.

### **The Essence of Christmas Is the *Gospel*.**

The whole message of the Bible compressed into one verse. "This is a faithful saying and worthy of all acceptance." This one verse expresses the true essence of Christmas.

#### ❖ **The *eternal person*** "Christ Jesus"

These names have great significance.

##### ➤ Christ means that He is the *annointed* One.

In the Old Testament kings, priests and prophets were called by God. No one could just decide they wanted to be a king, a priest or a prophet and be recognized as such by God. God appointed them, anointed them and commissioned them, Exodus 28:40-41. The eternal Second Person of the Trinity was appointed by God to be our Savior. Hebrews 1:9, "Therefore God, Your God, has anointed You with the oil of gladness more than Your companions." John 3:16, "For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son." This means His one and only unique one of a kind Son.

##### ➤ Jesus means that He is the *human* One.

"Jesus" is His human name. Jesus means savior. This is the name God chose for His Son. The angel commanded Joseph to name the child of Mary, Jesus, Matthew 1:21. This is critical to know that Jesus Christ is God's anointed One to be the Savior. Jesus is the God/man. Jesus is God of very God yet a true human being.

1 Timothy 3:16, "And without controversy great is the mystery of godliness: God was manifested in the flesh...."

Jesus assumed all of the weaknesses and limitations of humanity but without sin.

Hebrews 4:15, "For we have not an high priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin."

#### ❖ **The *historical event*** "came into the world"

How did God become a man yet continue to be God?

##### ➤ Christmas is a celebration of the *Incarnation*.

This is a theological term meaning Christ took on a human body. Colossians 2:9, "For in Him dwells all the fullness of the Godhead bodily." Jesus wasn't in the world in the same way before this. Christ appeared at times in the Old Testament often in human form. This does not deny Christ's omnipresence. He came through the supernatural conception of the Virgin Mary. His conception was supernatural, His birth was natural. Galatians 4:4, "But when the fullness of the time had come, God sent forth His Son, born of a woman, born under the law." The humanity of Jesus is essential to the fulfillment of prophesy. Jesus is the "Seed" of the woman promised to Adam and Eve in Genesis 3:15. This promised descendant "Seed" of Adam would come by way of human birth. The historical fact of the Incarnation is so crucial that one cannot be a Christian who does not believe this truth, 1 John 4:2-3.

#### ❖ **The *divine purpose*** "to save sinners"

Jesus did not come to condemn, John 3:17. Ever since the fall in Genesis 3 all human beings are born in sin. We are already under the condemnation of a Holy God. Christ Jesus came into this world to save men from the guilt and penalty of their sin.

- ***Mary is not the Savior***
- ***The church is not the Savior***
- ***Religion is not the Savior***
- ***We are not the Savior***

Jesus is the only Person qualified to bridge the gap between God and sinful men, 1 Timothy 2:5. Jesus Christ is the one and only Savior, John 14:6, Acts 4:12, & Luke 2:11-12. The essence of Christmas is that God sent us the Savior, Luke 19:10. The accusation against Jesus by the religious leaders was "This Man receives sinners and eats with them", Luke 15:2. Jesus entered paradise with a sinner, Luke 23:43. Who does this include? It includes everyone, Romans 3:10; 23.

##### ➤ The confusion concerns the *many kinds* of sinners.

Walking down the broad way that leads to damnation are all different types of sinners, Matthew 7:14.

- ***Religious sinners and secular sinners***
- ***Ordinary sinners and notorious sinners***
- ***Self-righteous sinners and hopeless sinners***

We compare ourselves to others to make us feel better about ourselves. We are still sewing our aprons to cover our sin. The problem is that we have to sew a new apron every day. Jesus did not come to help sinners save themselves, Ephesians 2:8-9, "This always creates a bit of push back from many people. The Apostle Paul helps us with this by his own example, "of whom I am chief." Paul is introduced in the book of Acts as "Saul of Tarsus", Acts 9:11. Saul was persecuting Christians when he was encountered by Jesus. Paul reveals to us how to receive this great gift of salvation.

- ***Confession and repentance of sin***

The word "chief" has the idea of occupying the first in rank of sinners. Paul no longer justified himself before God. Jesus said, "I did not come to call the righteous, but sinners, to repentance", Mark 2:17. A person must first admit the fact that they are a sinner and be willing to repent of their sin and turn to Christ. Notice that Paul said "I am chief" not "I was chief". Every truly saved person carries within them the continual consciousness of their sin.

- ***Confession of and faith in Jesus Christ***

The Gospel is true but only those who believe the truth and have faith in the Son are saved, 1 John 5:12. We are responsible to proclaim the Gospel. Some people will hear and receive the gift of salvation, Romans 10:9. Others will hear and ignore or reject the message. John 3:18, "He who believes in Him is not condemned; but he who does not believe is condemned already, because he has not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God."

**The Essence of Christmas Is that Jesus Came to Save Sinners through His Death, Burial and Resurrection**