

**Title:** The Reason For Christmas - Part 1

**Text:** Various Scriptures

**Introduction:** Why do you give gifts? When you give a gift it is always rooted in some sort of gratitude or affection. And when you give, you cannot give expecting anything in return. Thus doing so it ceases to be a gift. As we come to remember the birth of Christ our Savior, the overall reason we do so is because God gave His Son. Isaiah 9:6 **"For a child will be born to us, a son will be given to us."** This affirms the long before planned redemption of man. A child born in the form of human flesh, a Son given, by God to save mankind. Ephesians 2:8-9 **"For by grace you have been saved through faith; and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God; not as a result of works, so that no one may boast."** Point being if man could brag about saving himself he would. Thus God gave, a gift, of salvation to man. In and of himself man could not do anything, nor can he, to make the wrath of God appeasable.

### **Point 1 - Why Did God Give Us A Gift?**

The short answer...sin. Luke 19:10 **"For the Son of Man has come to seek and to save that which was lost."** God does the seeking. God does the saving. 1 John 4:19 **"We love, because He first loved us."** This is why God sought mankind. Man needs a gift of appeasement, satisfaction for the wrath of God. He (man) cannot provide such. He may try, he may give it his best effort, but you cannot do anything to satisfy the justice of God.

The reason for this is because of sin, which is disobedience to God's commands, cf. Genesis 2:15-17. It is those four words **"you will surely die"** that were commanded by God. It was this command that Satan skewed, when he added an additional word "not" in Genesis 3:4 **"you shall NOT surely die."** Now if you believe the Scripture is sufficient, then you must believe that when you read the Word of God it's true, even if it effects what you want it to say. I say this because we can at times twist the words of God into affirming our sin.

Both our first parents violated the command of God. They tried to hide themselves. They made for themselves coverings, Genesis 3:7 **"Then the eyes of both of them were opened, and they knew that they were naked; and they sewed fig leaves together and made themselves loin coverings."** Herein lies the problem with us. We try to cover our sin with various things. Religion, works, good intentions and the like. We think we're okay by having a good thought or positive vibe. We read the Bible to relive some of our convictions, but we don't obey.

Sin creates shame and guilt. Genesis 3:8 **"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."** We know we cannot hide from God, but we try to. We think we are hiding. The fact now is our first parents knew their shame and sin. They hid

themselves from God because of what they did. We do the same thing. We realize the sin and shame of our guilt before God. Thus we hide instead of confess. You can't hide your sin today.

Then the blame game starts. Eve blames the serpent, Adam blames Eve and then blames God for giving him the woman (vs. 12). One can never be saved apart from realizing they need Savior. And this is exactly what God does in these verses. He shows both Adam and Eve their sin, their rebellion and disobedience. Genesis 3:10 "Who told you that you were naked? Have you eaten from the tree of which I commanded you not to eat?" I want to speak for a moment about this text. God sought Adam and Eve. He asked the question. As a Christian today you didn't "stumble" upon God. Adam and Eve hid themselves and God sought them out. I'm glad He found me. Im glad He came my way looking and seeking.

**Application:** we cannot save ourselves nor appease the wrath of God by making for ourselves fig leaf coverings. It was God who sought Adam and Eve, offered the gift of atonement. Genesis 3:21 "The Lord God made garments of skin for Adam and his wife, and clothed them."

## Point 2 - Why Man Cannot Save Himself

The short answer is sin, cf. Romans 3:10-18. Why do people not see the desperate need for the gift of God in their own lives? Because sin has become a common word and not a malignant word. In his 1973 book, Karl Menninger wrote, *"The very word 'sin' which seems to have disappeared, was once a proud word. It was once a strong word, an ominous and serious word...but the word has gone away. Why? Doesn't anyone sin anymore?"* This isn't surprising when it comes to the world right? But what about the church? The concept of sin has been accommodated to fit the church. Sin and lifestyles are no longer considered sin, but softened to be acceptable. Consider this, people no longer commit adultery, they have an affair. People no longer steal, they commit fraud. People don't lie, they simply misspeak.

Sin is malignant. It is spiritual and moral malignancy. Left unchecked it spreads, and causes great harm to our spiritual lives. Paul speaks of the danger of sin if left unchecked, cf. Romans 7:8-11. Galatians 5:17 "For the flesh sets its desire against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh; for these are in opposition to one another, so that you may not do the things that you please." When Nathan addressed David in his sin, we see this in 2 Samuel 12:9-10 "Why have you despised the word of the Lord by doing evil in His sight? You have struck down Uriah the Hittite with the sword, have taken his wife to be your wife, and have killed him with the sword of the sons of Ammon. Now therefore, the sword shall never depart from your house, because you have despised Me and have taken the wife of Uriah the Hittite to be your wife."

Wickedness resides in us today, but we have the Holy Spirit of God, and His word to help, refuse and honor Him. Thus, we know we cannot do this on our own. We cannot save ourselves. Left

alone in our sin, we perish. So what are we to do? God in His limitless grace and mercy, has provided a way of escape, an atonement, an adoption for wayward and rebellious people.

### **Point 3 - The Remedy For Sin**

The remedy isn't a five step process to be better. John Newton, who wrote, "Amazing Grace" said of his life before Christ, *"My memory is almost gone, but I remember two things: that I am a great sinner, and that Christ is a great Savior."* The remedy for sin is the gift of Christ. The gospel message, whether our sin is scandalous or acceptable, is the answer. The work of Christ, the gift of God, not only saves us from the wrath of God, but also from its dominion and reigning over us. In the hymn "Rock of Ages" we see this captured beautifully *"Let the water and the blood, from thy wounded side which flowed, be of sin the double cure, saved from wrath and make me pure."*

As a believer today, the gospel message isn't just for unsaved people. The believer needs to be refined by the working of the gospel. The gift of salvation refines us to be more like Christ. 2 Timothy 3:16 *"All Scripture is inspired by God and **profitable** for teaching, for reproof, for correction, for training in righteousness."*

Because of our sin, our wickedness, and our inability to do anything to save ourselves, God gave us a gift. The salvation of our souls for which came through the birth of Christ and the death on the cross, Romans 4:7-8 *"Blessed are those whose lawless deeds have been forgiven, And whose sins have been covered. Blessed is the man whose sin the Lord will not take into account."* Isaiah 53:6 *"All we like sheep have gone astray; We have turned, every one, to his own way; And the Lord has **laid on Him** the **iniquity** of us all."*

**Conclusion Application:** We are helpless, depraved and wicked by nature. However, by the gracious gift of God, He provided us with the atoning sacrifice of His Son, born in the flesh, but without sin, to die and save us. Do you think today of the magnitude of this gift? Do you think today of the long suffering of God with you?