

## THE MEANING OF CHRISTMAS

Introduction – This season of the year was selected to remember the birth of Jesus in the Middle Ages. We have no historical data in the Bible or elsewhere to confirm or deny this claim. The reality that God became flesh in the virgin birth of Christ is confirmed in Scripture. The real question is what does this mean for us today.

- A. The songs that the church sings reflect their core Christian beliefs. The apostle Paul quoted songs familiar to the congregations in the letters he wrote to them. One example is found in the letter to the church in the city of Philippi.

Philippians 2:5-11

1. We must internalize the mindset of Christ and reflect it in our relationship with others.
2. Jesus is the living Word of God who is a part of the triune God.
3. Jesus relinquished His position as our omnipotent Creator to become a man.
4. Compared to His position as Deity, He made Himself nothing. He became a helpless and dependent baby.
5. As a human being, Jesus humbled Himself and became a servant of God and man.
6. This required complete obedience to God as a man, even to the point of the humiliating and tortuous death on the cross.
7. Because of these decisions made by Jesus, God raised Him from the dead and exalted Him above all spiritual and human beings.

- B. The example of Jesus is our model for our attitudes and behavior.

Philippians 2:12-13

1. We have the responsibility to work out our salvation in obedience to God.
2. A proper attitude coupled with the work of the Spirit to will and act to fulfill God's good purpose is promised.

- C. We are called to create a community of Christ among ourselves. The world is often antagonistic, critical, harsh, proud, and self-centered.

Philippians 2:1-5

1. We are initially united to Christ and one another through repentance, faith, and baptism (Acts 2:38).
2. We are encouraged in Christ because we are forgiven and promised eternal life.
3. We are comforted because of the love of God.
4. We share in the life of the Spirit of God. which includes tenderness, compassion, and joy.
5. We become like-minded with the same love and are one in Spirit and mind.
6. Much of the bad behavior in the world is motivated by selfish ambition and vain conceit – that is looking out only for our own interest.
7. Because of Jesus we can choose to humbly value others above ourselves, like Jesus, and consider others' interests before our own.

Conclusion – The meaning of Christmas is that God sacrificed everything for us in order to save us from self-destruction. He calls on us to trust in the way of Christ and commit ourselves to live like Jesus. We must do it in community and by the power of the Spirit given us at baptism. Let us celebrate Christ's birth together during all seasons of the year.