

## Sunday School Lesson for December 2014

### **What Is Christmas**

*Luke 2:14*

**Sunday, December 7, 2014**

Some things we accept by tradition and never question. The happy Christmas season we accept with never a question as to what it really is all about. “Well, it is a time of happiness and family fun,” we say. Yes, it is a time for Christmas trees, the wide-eyed looks of children as they wait for a visit from Santa Claus, the great stack of Christmas cards that fill the mailbox, the beautiful sound of Christmas carols; it is all of this, but let me hasten to say that Christmas is so much more than this. At the beginning of this season, there is a great need for each one of us to pause and reflect upon the true meaning of Christmas. What is Christmas all about anyway? Let me try and answer this question with three questions.

#### **I. What do unbelievers say about Christmas?**

A. Unbelieving historians may wish to banish Palestine and the story of Bethlehem’s stable from the plan of world history, teaching our pleasure-loving generation that nothing really begin then as it relates to spiritual life. Yet these self-same historians cannot explain the power of Jesus’ life. Jesus was born in lowly circumstances, lived among the low-income citizens, never attended a school of higher learning, never ran for an office. He was a transient lay preacher who never had a pulpit of his own. He had a way of rubbing the leaders in contemporary society the wrong way, incurring their wrath. He died after three short years of ministry as a result of a mock trial based on trumped up charges. He died the death of a common criminal on a cross between two thieves, and yet the world has never been the same since that occasion in Bethlehem’s stable. The birth of Christ was a light sent to a dark world.

**B.** The average unbelieving man sees the meaning of Christmas as commercialization. He would deny the truth of the Christmas story, declaring it to be nothing more than the figment of the imagination of the biblical writers, or he might be a “practicing atheist” with a poorly defined faith. The average unbeliever of our modern day seemingly takes pride in denying the miracle of Bethlehem’s stable, but his denial has yet to change the glorious truth of these twenty centuries of revelation.

**Sunday, December 14, 2014**

## **II. What does the Bible say?**

The Bible, which each believer rightly accepts as the Word of God, speaks plainly about the true significance of Christmas. It tells us that:

**A.** Christmas is the expression of God’s love. “God so loved the world that He gave” [John 3:16]. God set the example of giving for those who did not deserve His gift nor who had the ability to reciprocate, and this Christmas desire to give gifts to those in need who may not deserve such gifts and who cannot reciprocate.

**B.** Christmas is the celebration of what God did, gave His only begotten son to come down to earth to reveal that God is a God of love and not simply a God of righteous indignation. There are people who say that Jesus is a historical figure, a good man, but not any more the Son of God than you and I are Sons of God. This only indicates that they have never had a personal experience with Christ. When a person has had a personal experience with Christ, he knows what Christ’s power has done for him and is therefore able to recognize Jesus as the Son of the living God and to recognize that Jesus is very much God and also very much man- both divine and human. Thus he recognizes that God identified with the great need of humankind in this way.

**Sunday, December 21, 2014**

C. Christmas is God's purpose in redemption: "*That whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life.*" Christmas is the fulfillment of God's plan of the ages to step into the pages of human history and intervene on behalf of his sinful condition. Through the birth of Jesus in Bethlehem's stable, God set into motion His plan for saving sinful people who were totally unable to save themselves. The glorious completion of that plan would be found in the scene of the Cross of Calvary and the resurrection on Sunday morning.

**Sunday, December 28, 2014**

### **III. What do you say?**

What do you say about the significance of that event in Bethlehem's stable nearly two thousand years ago?

**A. In your heart?** Is Christmas a time of solemn review in your heart of what the coming of the babe in Bethlehem's stable means to you? Of how your faith in Him has given you a new perspective of the meaning of life and the hope of eternity?

**B. By your life?** Has the truth of Christmas changed your way of life? Have you placed your faith in Him to the extent that He has changed your way of life? Can you truthfully say that the babe of Bethlehem has been born, not only into the world but has been born into your heart?

In the beginning of this season, let us so conduct ourselves that all may see revealed in our hearts and lives, the glorious truth that the true significance of Christmas is that it is the commemoration of the birth of Christ, who was truly God coming down to earth to seek and to save those who were lost.