

# December

## Jesus - The One Who Came for Us

*John 3:16*

*"For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life."*

When I hear Christmas hymns, when I watch Christmas plays, and when I am reminded of the great Truth that was born on Christmas, I cry. Every time. Do you ever respond emotionally to the Story of Christmas? Here's why I do.

It's not just that I enjoy the music or think the performers did a brilliant job... because I've endured some pretty rough performances. *Haven't we all?* The truth is, I cry because the reality that Jesus came for us is never more real to me than when my heart is turned toward His birth.

If you had to recap the birth story of Jesus using only the four lines below, what are the most important details you'd make sure to include? (*Read Matthew 1 & 2 and Luke 1 & 2*)

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You might have said something like:

THE ANGEL, GABRIEL, TOLD THE VIRGIN, MARY, SHE WOULD GIVE  
BIRTH TO JESUS. MARY AND JOSEPH TRAVELED TO BETHLEHEM  
WHERE MARY GAVE BIRTH IN A BARN/CAVE. ANGELS ANNOUNCED  
THE BIRTH TO SHEPHERDS AND MAGI CAME WITH GIFTS.

Those are certainly the facts of Jesus's birth, and the ones we focus on most often this time of year. But the BIG Story of Jesus's birth began before time. I suppose we could fill in those same four lines with words like these:

GOD MADE MAN TO BE WITH HIM. SEPARATION CAME BETWEEN GOD  
AND MAN. JESUS AGREED TO GIVE HIS LIFE SO HIS BLOOD COULD  
BE THE OFFERING THAT BREAKS THE SEPARATION. JESUS WAS  
BORN INTO HUMAN FLESH IN BETHLEHEM SO THAT HE MIGHT DIE.

Let those details grip your heart for just a moment. Don't rush past them. Imagine the pure love of God which propelled Him to leave Heaven and to be born as a baby. Think about the Almighty God, the One who as before all things, the Word, the One by whom all things were made, coming into our broken world through the innocence of a newborn just so He could die and restore us back to Himself.



Are the details so familiar that we are in danger of losing the wonder surrounding the arrival of the God who came for us?

Let's remember them for a moment. If God came just to restore our relationship and didn't do anything else for us it would have been more than we deserved. Right?

If God came down and made a way for us to be with Him forever and then never provided peace or healing or strength... the eternal life with Him would have been enough. Wouldn't it?

But His gift of eternal life is just the beginning of what He offers. He is our Savior, AND He is our Healer, Provider, Strong Tower, Deliverer, Hope, and Prince of Peace. He came not just to free us from the separation, but to free us from what that separation meant as we live day to day.

*See what great love the Father has lavished on us, that we should be called children of God! And that is what we are!*

1 John 1:3

There is so much we need from the Lord. There is so much we ask of Him and He eagerly desires to answer. But it is so important here at the beginning of our time together, that we thank Him for what He's already done. Take a moment to journal. What has He done for you personally?

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My friend, I know you're facing so much. You've endured so much. Your heart is weary and worn and you need the life of Jesus to be reborn in your own heart again. I know everything you're facing seems to stand in the middle of your view.

But there is freedom available to you today as you turn toward the gift of the God who came close.

## Let's Pray

Father, thank You for sending Your Son for me. Thank You for the gift of eternal life. Being with You for eternity is more than I deserve, yet You offer more than eternal life once this life ends. My eternal life with You began the day I believed. So, please help me live as though You are close. Help me not lose the wonder of Your Presence. I ask in Jesus's name, Amen.

