

Celebrating Christmas with Jesus



Too many of us celebrate the birth of Jesus while neglecting Christ Himself. This negligence is because, though many of us would like to experience the joy of our salvation, our indulgence in worldliness cuts us off from it. We have lost the reason to celebrate.

Many of us also desire for the Lord to use us in significant ways, but we do not live lives suited for it.

As we enter this Christmas season, our minds immediately go to the manger, but Luke starts the story by telling us of a man and woman stricken in years.

The lives of Zechariah and Elizabeth should instruct us (Luke 1 :5-25). They were uncommon people. They may have appeared ordinary in the eyes of the world, but they stood out, even amongst the children of God. Luke tells us they were righteous before the Lord. It does not mean they were sinless and perfect but they followed Him so closely that they were blameless.

Zechariah and Elizabeth were also childless and being well advanced in years, they had pretty much given up hope of having a child. Despite this disappointment, they walked closely with God.

Until an angel appeared to Zechariah to tell him his prayer had been heard. They were people of prayer. They lived in close communion with their God and, in that intimate communion, asked Him to grant them the desires of their heart.

Rarely do we, as believers, live with this level of devotion. We are often so distracted and overstimulated by the world's trinkets that spending time with God feels like a bore. As a result, God's deep and abiding peace that should fill our hearts with joy is nowhere to be found.

Few Christians today live as wholly devoted to God as Zechariah and Elizabeth. Our hunger for close communion with God is so low, our spiritual lives have been at a low ebb for so long, that we no longer know what we are missing.

This spiritual stagnation causes Christmas to pass us by without spending time with our Savior, neglecting the very One we are celebrating. Many of us will enjoy the warmth and merriment of the holiday, yet our celebration will lack its spiritual significance because the joy of our salvation has grown dim.

Let's prepare our hearts for Christmas by following the example of Zechariah and Elizabeth, and putting away our worldliness. The Lord loves you, personally and He longs for you to have personal, intimate communion with Him.

So let's spend time with Him because the only thing that is going to satisfy the hunger in our hearts is personal relationship with the Lord.

May the Lord use us to call others to our great Savior as we speak of the season's true meaning. May we walk through that opened door in God's kingdom and show others the fruits of an intimate relationship with the Lord : hope, love, peace, courage, joy, compassion, forgiveness and generosity of heart.

May the story of Jesus' birth be more than a story we rehearse. The child born that day is still alive and well, and we can commune with Him even now. All that are weary and heavy laden can come to Him, and He will give them rest.

May we celebrate this Christmas with Jesus Himself and experience the joy of our salvation.