

The Christmas Child

Part I: Why Did He Come?

TALKINGPOINTS WALKINGPOINTS

2019.12.1



Talk together about the glory of God's kingdom. —*Psalms 145:11*
Love the Lord your God and **walk** in all his ways. —*Joshua 22:5*

Questions for Discussion & Application

Triangle Community Church aims to be a “transforming church”. We exist to be used by God as He transforms ordinary people into extraordinary followers of Jesus Christ. TCC believes not only that life-change is possible—but that it is to be expected. Growth is God's will for *all* his people. But transformation **does not** happen by accident. It requires intentional, intelligent action. 1 Timothy 4:7 instructs you to “discipline yourself for the purpose of godliness.” Since “**Talking Points, Walking Points**” is intended both for individual reflection and for group discussion, questions vary in degree of vulnerability required. Generally it is best to begin group discussions with questions which involve less personal disclosure—but don't linger there. Be sure to “dive deep” too! The questions which require the greatest openness and honesty, as well as those in the section entitled “**Digging Deeper in your Daily Quiet Time**”, are perfect for private reflection.

- Pastor Doug surveyed the false teachings regarding Christmas that the Colossians faced. What are some of the misunderstandings about Christ and/or Christmas **that we have today**?
- Apparently Paul had never visited Colossae (2:1). Instead, Epiphra (who was from Colossae; see 4:12), brought the gospel to his home town (1:7)—probably after having been converted through Paul's preaching in the nearby city of Ephesus (see Acts 19:10). With this in mind, read Colossians 1:1-14. **How is it** that Paul has such warmth for people he's never met? Why does he care **so much**?
- Review the three perspectives for why Jesus came to Earth (see the Sermon Summary).

If “*Jesus left heaven to give us a hope that will never dissappoint*”—**why** are so many today disappointed? How do we explain that? What might be some solutions to that disappointment?

If “*Jesus left heaven to reveal God's perfect plan for our lives*”—**why** are so many people adrift today? How do we explain that? What can we do about it in our own lives? How can we help our families?

Since “*Jesus left heaven to rescue us from the power of darkness*”—**who** do you know and love who still is in need of rescue? What can we do if they don't want or think they need to be rescued?

Are you in need of hope and help?
For free biblical counseling, write to:
counseling@tcc.org

Application-Challenge

- What most amazes you about God's plan revealed in the Christmas story?
- Which of the three reasons for Jesus leaving heaven resonate most deeply with you?
- How will heaven's perspective of Christmas transform how you experience Christmas?
- For whom did Jesus come? How will they know about him? What should you do?

Sermon Summary Key Passage: Colossians 1:1-14

Christmas is about the baby that changed the world. His story could be viewed through Mary's eyes, through Joseph's eyes, through the wise men's or the shepherds' eyes. Because you all know the basic story, instead, throughout December we will look at heaven's perspective on Christmas. The New Testament book of Colossians will answer four questions: "**Why** did He come?", "**Who** is He?", "What does He want **for** us?" and "What does he want **from** us?". In Colossae, false teachers had come on the scene who brought in a variety of false Jewish and Gentile teachings. On the one hand, they demanded that church members keep the Jewish Law, which no one can actually keep. On the other hand, they brought in some Greek philosophy that said that only "spirit" is good; everything material is evil. Of course, this created a problem with the idea that God could come in the flesh, because, according to them, flesh is evil. These false teachers were puffed up with pride. They had this sense of elitism and sophistication because they had this "higher knowledge." Paul wrote the Colossian letter to correct this bad theology, and in so doing, gives us heaven's perspective on why Jesus came.

[1] Jesus left heaven to give us a hope that will never disappoint (Colossians 1:3-8). Paul gave thanks to God for the Colossians' faith in Christ and love for fellow believers. Their faith and love sprang from their Christian "hope"—which refers to "that which is absolutely certain, unchangeable, definite and true about the future" (see John 14:1-3). Paul said that the Christian gospel (literally "good news")—contrary to what these false teachers are saying—is true and is consistently bearing fruit. It was transforming lives, love was growing, needs were being met, joy and peace were replacing conflict, bondage, and addictions. The gospel is the message that God came in the form of a little baby, fully human, fully God. He grew up and lived an absolutely sinless life. He revealed what the Father is like. He is full of truth and grace—and he is coming back again. This good news can energize us to keep going when life's difficulties come our way—the death of a loved one, the loss of a job, the death of a marriage, a cancer diagnosis. We have a living hope that will never disappoint.

[2] Jesus left heaven to reveal God's perfect plan for each of our lives (Colossians 1:9-11). Paul prayed that the Colossian Christians would be overflowing with the knowledge of God's will in all spiritual wisdom and understanding. He wants them to have skill in living—God's perspective on relationships, on money, on how to raise your kids in a deteriorating culture. Spiritual wisdom helps us know how to deal with adversity. Paul says that when we have God's wisdom and understanding, we'll please God in all respects, bear fruit, increase in our knowledge of God, and have patience and God's power for living in difficult circumstances.

[3] Jesus left heaven to rescue us from the power of darkness (Colossians 1:12-14). He qualifies us for an inheritance in heaven; he named us in his will! The darkness God rescues us from is inside us all, and he brings us into his kingdom.

Jesus came because he loves you and wants to have a personal, intimate relationship with you forever. That is why he came. That is why we celebrate the baby. When God took on human flesh he was born in a common stable among the animals. My prayer is that during this Christmas season you will make room for Jesus in your heart.

Talking To God About This Week's Message

"Heavenly Father, today I want to be a 'doer' of the Word, and not just a 'hearer'. Amen."

Talking To Others About This Week's Message

If a neighbor or friend at work asked you, "*What kind of stuff do they talk about at your church?*", how would you summarize the most important elements of this week's sermon and the key lessons you intend to apply to your life? Can you explain it in **plain language** anyone could understand?

Digging Deeper in Your Daily Quiet Time

"Five Question Bible Study" (see page below) is a simple way to study any topic. Throughout this week, let's learn more about that Christmas Child...

Monday— Study Romans 5:1-5

Tuesday— Study Romans 5:6-11

Wednesday— Study Romans 5:12-14

Thursday— Study Romans 5:15-17

Friday— Study Romans 5:18-21

Saturday— ***In preparation for worshiping your risen Lord tomorrow with your church family,*** study Colossians 1:15-20.

Need blank copies for doing more

"Five Question Bible Study"?

e-mail: Dan.Clement.TCC@gmail.com

Bible Text: _____

Date: _____



What idea particularly strikes me from this text? [Note in which verse(s) it is found.]



What question does this text raise in my mind—and how would **this text** answer it?



What about Jesus Christ—his character and/or his redemption—relates to this text?



What action must I take as a result of this text? Be concrete and specific.



With whom will I share what I learned from this text? [and what was their response?]