“Nine Christmas Words”

12/24/2017

Luke 2:1-11

There are those who say that when you write down your thoughts you think more clearly. So, if you were asked and required to write down the meaning of Christmas in fifty words or less, what would come to your mind? What do you think you’d say?

I’m not asking “What would a modern worldly child say or even a Millennial or a twenty-something college student.” What would *you* say if you had just fifty words to put down on a piece of paper? Well, someone would say “Christmas means giving.” And then you’d write on the topic of giving. Or Christmas means sharing and showing good will. Or Christmas means love. Or Christmas means family because our whole family gets together. Christmas means we’ll be reading “The Night Before Christmas.” Christmas means we’ll be watching “It’s A Wonderful World.” Or Christmas means the most to me when we decorate the tree while we listen to Christmas carols playing in the background. Or it’s a Christmas pageant, or “we’ll be reading the Christmas story,” etc.

Well, who ever asks “What would God write? What would God say is the *meaning* of Christmas?” So, for Christmas this year, I want you to find with me, not fifty, but just nine word; nine word in which God tells us what Christmas means to Him.

Now, the Bible. Everyone who reads it likely knows the Christmas story; that it’s found in two places, in Matthew one and in Luke two. But today I want you to take your Bible in your hand and open it with me to someone else’s words on the meaning of Christmas; God’s words. They’re found in Paul’s epistle to Timothy; I Timothy chapter one. And they’re God’s words; God’s idea; what God thinks about Christmas. Please open there with me; I Timothy chapter one.

Let me show you those nine Christmas words. I Timothy 1:15 *“This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptation, that* ***Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners****; of whom I am chief.”*

I’ve titled today’s message “Nine Christmas Words.” Let’s pray.

So, can you see Christmas here in verse fifteen? You’ll need all nine words to see it. *“Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners.”* And can you see that this is what God says is the meaning of Christmas; that this is why Christ came into the world?

There is, as you well know, a lot that surrounds Christ-mas. We call all those things the trappings of Christmas. So, let me encourage your hearts today with these few words.

First, this is a faithful saying.

I know you’ve heard me say that there’s only One Book that always tells the truth on every subject; and that Book is the Bible. Well, this holds very true on the subject of Christmas.

Now you might not know that there are five “faithful sayings” in your Bible. Here they are: I Timothy 3:1; 4:9; II Timothy 2:11; and Titus 3:8. But those are for another day. Today’s faithful saying is I Timothy 1:15.

It’s a faithful saying. It’s a Christian saying. For example, in our modern day, a faithful saying might be. *“The will of God will never lead you where the grace of God cannot sustain you.”* Or, *“God whispers in our pleasures, but He shouts in our pain.”* (C. S. Lewis).

It appears as though it was a common *saying* among the Christians of Paul’s day. Did you ever wonder what sayings were used at that time in history? Well, this one was well-used, well-repeated, well-known, well-believed, and well-loved.

It wasn’t any ordinary man-made saying that came to be passed around from town to town and Church to Church and person to person. It was, according to the Holy Spirit speaking in Paul, “a faithful saying.” And faithful. What does it mean? It means “true, reliable, and trustworthy.”

I’m sure there were plenty of sayings that were used in those days just like there are many in our day. But, simply put, this Christmas word is a reliable and true saying.

First, this is a faithful saying.

Second, this is a saying worthy of universal reception. I Timothy 1:15 *“This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptation, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners; of whom I am chief.”*

Now, I’ve heard over the years that the Bible never tells us to quote “accept” Jesus as our Savior. But, what do we read in I Timothy 1:15? Paul says I Timothy 1:15 *“This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptation …”*

When something is that significant and so valuable that its worthy of everyone’s accepting it, it must be something that is personally significant to everyone. It has meaning. And it has meaning for every living person. It’s not some-thing that is only to be received by Christians. It’s a word for every soul on the planet.

Some words or some letters were written for just some people to read. But, others have much more meaning in them.

Here’s one by Billy from July 1999. [Slide of Billy’s Letter – “July 16, 1999 Dear Hobos, This is a project for my school. We are doing a special unit on careers. We are supposed to write to someone who has a job we like. My first choice of a job is 7-11. But if that doesn’t work out, I’d like to be a hobo. Could you tell me what I should study to become a good hobo?” [Found on [www.google.com](http://www.google.com)].

Great letter. He probably got an “A” for his completing his writing project. But it’s really just a cute letter.

Now, many years back a man was working on the glass roof of the famous Crystal Palace in London, England. It was built in 1854 and it’s 1,800 feet long and 128 feet high. And, just for information, it burned to the ground in 1936.

Well, while it was being built, at lunch time this particular worker had a very interesting thing happen to him. He’s been working on the glass roof and decided to sit down for lunch. But, something had been happening in his heart for weeks and weeks prior. He had been concerned for his soul and wanted to be saved; but hadn’t yet exercised his will to receive the LORD as his Savior. Now, at lunchtime, as he sat alone high up on the glass rooftop, he began to eat. As he ate, he heard these words coming out of nowhere just as crystal clear as the glass beneath his feet *“This is a faithful saying and worthy of all acceptation, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners…”*

The worker thought for sure it had be the voice of God. The man stopped his lunch, bowed before the LORD and asked Him to be his Savior. He was wondrously saved that day only later to find out that some 120 feet down below in the auditorium a preacher was there that day by the name of Charles Spurgeon. Spurgeon was testing his voice before that evening’s meeting. [Found in “Awake My Heart” by J. Sidlow Baxter – December 18th devotion]. You seek, these words are and they are worthy of universal reception. Anyone anywhere who hears these nine words and response in faith to them, will be saved.

These nine words are

First, a faithful saying.

Second, worthy of universal reception.

Third, they contain the only answer to your sin and my sin.

I Timothy 1:15 *“This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptation, that* ***Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners****; of whom I am chief.”*

Can you see Christmas in these words? Jesus, the son of the carpenter, was and is the Messiah. He’s the Christ. He’s the Son of God. He’s God, the Son. He’s the One the angel of the LORD spoke to Mary about.

Christ Jesus is His title. Christ in the NT is the Hebrew Messiah of the OT.

He came. Yes, He was born. But He came from Heaven to earth. The Eternal Son became the babe in Bethlehem’s manger. He came into the world. He came here from the invisible world of Heaven. He entered the human race that He Himself had created.

But, more than all that, these nine words tell us exactly why He came. I Timothy 1:15 *“This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptation, that* ***Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners****; of whom I am chief.”*

He came to save sinners. He came to deliver us from our sins. Do you remember the words of the angel to Mary His mother? Luke 1:30 *“And the angel said unto her, Fear not, Mary: for thou hast found favour with God. (31) And, behold, thou shalt conceive in thy womb, and bring forth a son, and shalt call his name Jesus. (32)**He shall be great, and shall be called the Son of the Highest: and the Lord God shall give unto him the throne of his father David:*

*(33) And he shall reign over the house of Jacob forever; and of his kingdom there shall be no end. (34) Then said Mary unto the angel, how shall this be, seeing I know not a man?*

*(35) And the angel answered and said unto her, The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee, and the power of the Highest shall overshadow thee: therefore also that holy thing which shall be born of thee shall be called the Son of God.”*

You see, the only way possible for a sinner to find forgiveness with God is found in these words. *“Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners.”*

Without this view of Christmas there is no Christmas. God became a man so that man might be saved from his sins. Whatever anyone anywhere thinks of Christmas, this is how God sees it.

It was all about sin. It was God’s only answer to sin. It was the only thing that could remove it. It was God’s love being poured out upon the sinful souls of mankind. It was a Savior that we need.

Folks, we are sinners through and through. We are dead in our sins and we need the life of Christ in us both to remove those sins and to enable us to overcome sin. Christmas is the only answer to sin.

We all love Christmas. We all love having our family around us. We all love giving gifts to each other. We all love the decorations and the music. And we all love the story. And, so, shouldn’t we love the very purpose for the celebration?

A lady said to me last week that she was so busy with getting ready for Christmas that she was getting tired out. So, I said “It’s not worth all the effort that goes into Christmas if it takes away from the whole purpose which is to celebrate the birth of Jesus.” And she stepped back and said “You’re right.”

Your sin was so bad. Your sins are so bad that God had to go to the extreme degree to help you. He gave us His Son. He sent us His Only Begotten Son. He loved us so much in our sin to have His Son become a little baby and enter the human race so He could die.

And what did the angel say to Matthew about His entering into the world?

Matthew 1:18 *“Now the birth of Jesus Christ was on this wise: When as his mother Mary was espoused to Joseph, before they came together, she was found with child of the Holy Ghost. (19) Then Joseph her husband, being a just man, and not willing to make her a public example, was minded to put her away privily.*

*(20) But while he thought on these things, behold, the angel of the Lord appeared unto him in a dream, saying, Joseph, thou son of David, fear not to take unto thee Mary thy wife: for that which is conceived in her is of the Holy Ghost. (21) And she shall bring forth a son, and* ***thou shalt call his name Jesus: for he shall save his people from their sins.***

*(22) Now all this was done, that it might be fulfilled which was spoken of the Lord by the prophet, saying, (23) Behold, a virgin shall be with child, and shall bring forth a son, and they shall call his name Emmanuel, which being interpreted is, God with us.*

*(24) Then Joseph being raised from sleep did as the angel of the Lord had bidden him, and took unto him his wife: (25) And knew her not till she had brought forth her firstborn son: and* ***he called his name Jesus****.”*

*“Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners”* says Paul. Just say the Name and you are telling us what He came to do.

Jesus in the NT is Joshua in the OT. And what does Jesus mean?

And how common was His name in those days? Jesus was just as common as David or Bill or Joe. Everybody, or it seemed that say, everybody was named Jesus. The LORD of Heaven didn’t send His Son to be famous Scribe or Pharisee or even give Him a name of some great King. Instead, He told both Joseph and Mary to call Him Jesus.

So far, archeologists working on the ruins in Israel have found the tombs of 71 men from that same time period who were given the name Jesus. [Found on www.slate.com “Was Jesus A Common Name When He Was Alive?” by Brian Palmer].

It means “Savior” and “Deliverer.”

So, think with me about what must go through the LORD’s heart when He hears people swearing in His name. How many times have you heard it this Christmas; I mean; heard it used as an expression of disgust or amazement?

Yet, His Name, given to Him by His Father through the lips of an angel, is the best name ever spoken or recorded. He’s the Savior of the world. He’s the Only Savior of the world.

So, when you use His Name from now on, say it because you know exactly what it means. Matthew 1:21 *“And she shall bring forth a son, and thou shalt call his name Jesus: for he shall save his people from their sins.”*

First, a faithful saying.

Second, worthy of universal reception.

Third, they contain the only answer to your sin and my sin.

And last, what will you do with these “Nine Christmas Words”? Will you see them as God’s view of Christmas? Will you see them nine of the most powerful words ever written? Will you give these nine words to someone this Christmas season?

Why? Why give these nine words to someone this week? Here’s why?

I Timothy 1:15 *“This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptation, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners;* ***of whom I am chief****.”*

It’s because you are the chief of sinners. You are the greatest of sinners. Please don’t think that everyone since Paul has been less of a sinner than he was. And, please don’t think you’re better than other quote “more wicked” sinners than yourself. You are the greatest of sinners. You are the chief.

It’s your sins that put Jesus on the Cross. It’s your sins that nailed Him there. It’s your sins that He was paying for that day. It was your sins that needed a Sacrifice and a Savior. It was your sins that brought Jesus from Heaven’s glory to earth’s misery and death.

Folks, here’s why you can celebrate Christmas this year. It’s because you have Someone Who cared enough for you to deal with *your* sins once and for all. Who did Jesus come for? Who did He die for? He died for you. He paid for your sins; all of them.

So, “Chief of sinners, what have you done with these Nine Christmas Word”? Have you repented? Have you believed on the Savior? If not, why not?

*“His Name shall be called Jesus. For He shall save His people from their sins.”* The purpose for Christ becoming a Man is that He would become the Substitute for *your* sin.

Here’s the *reason* why He arrived here on the earth 2,000 years ago. It was for *you* and for me. It was so that He would be crucified and take upon Himself the penalty of all *your* sin. It was so that *you* would have a Substitute for your sin. *“God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life. For God sent not His Son into the world to condemn the world; but that the world through Him might be saved.”*

Now you may be here today and have never really heard the simple message of Salvation by grace. And the reason may be because you haven’t seen your life in the Light of the Ten Commandments. These ten laws were given so that you might finally admit that you are a sinner in need of God’s free salvation. All your sins are are a breaking of God’s commands. And the person who sees himself as justly condemned for his sins is the only candidate who will truly believe the that Jesus really is the Center of Christmas and that the Gospel of Grace is what you personally need.

Will you, today, admit you are a sinner and deserving of God’s judgment? Will you admit you need for God’s grace to save your soul today? The word for you is this. Believe on Christ and be saved? Here’s the message. Repent and believe.

Today is the Day of Salvation. In order to be saved, here’s what you must do.

* To repent means “to change your mind about God, Christ, your sin, and God’s free gift of salvation.”
* To believe means “to simply trust Jesus Christ alone as the One Who paid the entire penalty for your sins.”

Will you repent today and be saved? Here’s a simple, but wonderful prayer that is yours to pray. *“Father, I realize I am a sinner. I believe that Jesus died in my place on the cross. I repent of my sins. I want to be completely forgiven today. I am trusting you right now to save me. Thank you. Amen*

Hymn # \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ “\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_”