

# Why People “Miss” the Meaning of Christmas

Guided Growth with Pastor Keith @ CBC Sunday, Dec. 20<sup>th</sup>

While Christmas is a delightful time for some, It’s a dark time for many! While some recognize, receive and so rejoice at the gospel message of pardon, peace and joy. Others are either ignorant of or indifferent to God’s gracious “Christmas gift”. This leaves them to face the emptiness and despair of a life without eternal significance. Christmas is all about God bridging the vast gap between himself and sinful humanity in order to bring life, light, and love to our spiritually dead, dark and despairing hearts. Isaiah 59 describes the terrible gap between sinful men and a Holy God.

Isaiah 59:16 *“And He saw that there was no man, and wondered that there was no intercessor: therefore his arm brought salvation;”* (yāsha<sup>‘</sup>: freedom, deliverance.) Only God could bridge this Gap, and He did so on that first Christmas!

Mt. 1:21 *“Thou shalt call his name Jesus!”* (Yehōwshūwa<sup>‘</sup>: from Jehovah and yasha)

Isaiah 7:14 *“a virgin shall conceive, and bear a son, and shall call his name Immanuel.”* (“God with us” Mt. 1:23)  
Sadly many people “missed” the significance of that event, and many do so today. (John 1:4-14)

Why do so many miss the reality and significance of Christmas?

## 1. Preoccupation: The innkeeper: Luke 2:7

Represents those who Give God the “left-overs”.

Luke 2:7 *“And she brought forth her firstborn son, and wrapped him in swaddling clothes, and laid him in a manger; because there was no room for them in the inn.”*

A. We get preoccupied by:

- 1) Pleasure: Foolish lad: (Pr. 7:6-23)
- 2) Possessions / Prosperity: Rich fool (Lk 12:15-21)
- 3) Power: Pilate (Jn 19:10,11) and Felix, (Acts 24,25)
- 4) Prejudice: Peter and Cornelius (Acts 10:14)
- 5) Purposes/Priorities: The Pharisees (Jn 11:48)

B. He meant well, but “missed” what God was doing because he was too busy! (Mk 4:19)

## 2. Pride (Fear of being de-throned!) Herod Mt. 2

Represents Those Who Wish To Remain “In Charge!”

A. Christ was the rightful King of Israel. *Herod wasn’t even Jewish!*

B. People panic when someone threatens to interfere with their position; power; plans; or Priorities.

They see Jesus as “competition” instead of as the Christ!

## 3. Pompous Indifference: The Priests Mt. 2:4-6

Represents those who are too “comfortable” to bother investigating the claims of God.

A. Comfort often breeds complacency.

- 1) They had enough “religion” to be “respectable.” *“They have their reward.”* (Mt. 6:2,5,16)
- 2) Their “knowledge” had no practical effect on their lives.
  - a) They immediately “knew” where Jesus was to be born, but never bothered to make the 5 mile journey to investigate! (See Jn. 5:39,40)
- 3) Jesus Will eventually “shatter” that comfort zone. Mt. 3:12; Phil 2:10

**B. The Root Of Indifference Is Pride.**  
**My agenda is more important than God's**

**4. Personal Familiarity: The people of Nazareth. Luke 4:18→**  
**Represents far too many of us in America!**

**A. We're so "familiar" with Christmas and "Christianity" that we are not "Fundamentally" changed by it.**

- 1) There are more than 3.5 billion "Christmas images" a on the Web.  
The vast majority that I scrolled through had nothing to do with Jesus!

**B. One of Jesus' first stops was in Nazareth. Luke 4:18-22**

- 1) When asked to read the scriptures in the Synagogue, he read Isaiah 61:1-3 and said:  
*"This day is this scripture fulfilled in your ears."* Luke 4:21
- 2) Then they *"bare him witness, and wondered at the gracious words which proceeded out of his mouth. And they said, Is not this Joseph's son?"* vs 22.
- 3) Jesus responded: Vs: 24 *"No prophet is accepted in his own country."*  
**By verse 29 they were trying to kill him!**

**C. Their "familiarity" had prejudiced them from hearing him. Mt. 13:57,58**

*"And they were offended in him. But Jesus said unto them, A prophet is not without honour, save in his own country, and in his own house. And he did not many mighty works there because of their unbelief."*

## CONCLUSION:

We often miss the "Important" because we're caught up in the "Expected"  
In Dec 1903, after many attempts, the Wright brothers were successful in getting their "flying machine" off the ground. Thrilled, they telegraphed this message to their sister Katherine: "We have actually flown 120 feet. Will be home for Christmas." Katherine hurried to the editor of the local newspaper and showed him the message. He glanced at it and said, **"How nice. The boys will be home for Christmas." He totally missed the big news--man had flown!**

## Application:

Are any of the following threatening to cloud our view of the Claims of Christ?

- 1) Preoccupation with our own plans and priorities?
- 2) Prideful resentment of God's Claims on our lives?
- 3) Pompous Indifference to the call and commands of God?
- 4) Personal Familiarity with the things of God?

When we "miss" what God is actually trying to accomplish in our lives we, like the people of Nazareth, hinder God.

**Will it be said of us that:**

*"he did not many mighty works there because of their unbelief."* **Mt 13:58**

If we want God to work "mightily" in our lives, we must surrender our:  
Preoccupations...Pride....Pompous Indifference, and even our Personal familiarity  
in order to experience the reality of: "Immanuel...God with us!" (Mt 1:23)

**Prince Philip is known everywhere as the husband of Queen Elizabeth II of Great Britain. He was born a Greek prince, though there is no Greek blood in his veins. He is of German and Danish ancestry. As a baby he was smuggled out of Greece in a crate made from an orange box. A crate hardly befits a prince, and a manger hardly befits the infant King of Kings!**

