



Thank you for downloading the
CQ Rewind - Summary Only Version!

Each week, the **Summary Only** version provides you with approximately 4 pages of brief excerpts from the program, along with Scripture citations.

If you would like to receive the
CQ Rewind FULL EDITION at no charge, simply sign up at
www.ChristianQuestions.com.

The **FULL EDITION** of approximately 10-12 pages includes comprehensive excerpts from the program, fully quoted Scriptures, graphics, illustrations, and even extra study points that time prevented us from covering during the live program.



What is the Point of Christmas?

Luke 2:13-14: (KJV) ¹³And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host praising God, and saying, ¹⁴Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men.



'Tis the season to be jolly! Christmas happened just a few days ago so we ask the question, what really happened? Did we have lots to eat - see lots of family and friends - give and receive lots of gifts? Did we smile and laugh and decorate? Did we watch Christmas specials and listen to all kinds of holiday music? I hope we did! I hope we took the time to reconnect with a spirit of love, life and giving. I hope we entered into the happiness that this season brings! Now the big question - how did we recognize the true reason for the season - how did we honor the life to change all lives? Well, if you are looking for more of *that* part of things, stick around - we have a story to tell!

CHAPTER 1: WHAT DOES CHRISTMAS LOOK LIKE?

What does Christmas look like? It is fun and it is entertaining. When you have those two elements on one side of an equation it is a very difficult task to overcome them. Christmas has in many ways become that difficult equation. You can always tell where a society is by what the masses of people focus on. What are we focusing on?

FIRST we focus on fun - now there is nothing wrong with fun, but too often the fun *in* our lives here and now derails the potential for the happiness of our lives to flourish...fun can get in the way of happiness. We want to keep what we do in perspective.

Colossians 3:16-17: Thankfulness can be a fun experience! There is an excitement in living thankfulness, with joy in our worship.

SECOND we focus on being entertained - again, to be entertained is good - it can be a wonderful way to wind down from various stresses in life. Entertainment can be healthy and positive, but like any good thing, it can also be excessive. Once entertainment crosses the line from being a positive outlet to becoming an obsessive need, it then loses its value. Christmas now lives in the danger zone of *entertaining us* rather than exercising us to entertain thoughts of godness, holiness and thankfulness for God's unspeakable gift. This truly is a serious danger zone.

With these challenges in mind, let us again ask the question: What does Christmas look like?

Time for a new old-fashioned focus: **Philippians 2:3-5,9-10**

CHAPTER 2: WHAT DID THE PROMISE OF THE CHRISTMAS EXPERIENCE LOOK LIKE?

God does have a way of bringing about His will in ways we would never expect. He often gives hints - lots of hints - and He gives them for a very long time. In spite of this - in spite of His pointing us in the proper direction - we are still often clueless. Let's take a few minutes and review some old, old prophecies that laid out the masterful plan God had designed. We begin with the last prophecy of the Old Testament, given 400 years before the birth of Jesus. 400 years of prophetic silence (!!!) would follow this glimpse of the future.

The last prophecy of the Old Testament: Malachi 4:1-2: (NASB) ¹For behold, the day is coming, burning like a furnace; and all the arrogant and every evildoer will be chaff; and the day that is coming will set them ablaze, says the LORD of hosts, so that it will leave them neither root nor branch. ²But for you who fear My name, the sun of righteousness will rise with healing in its wings;

The sun of righteousness rising with healing: This was an allusion to Jesus. We know this because when he came to earth, he healed. What a comforting thought in the midst of all the turmoil that the prophecy detailed.

There were other prophecies as well - some much older - but all pointing to the same thing: **Genesis 3:15: (NASB)** *And I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your seed and her seed; He shall bruise you on the head, and you shall bruise him on the heel.* That was the oldest prophecy - a kind of veiled promise of redemption for the first sin. Hope was planted within this bad experience. This seed of the woman would eventually be Jesus.



Genesis 22:16-18: (NASB) ¹⁶and said, *By Myself I have sworn, declares the LORD, because you have done this thing and have not withheld your son, your only son, ¹⁷indeed I will greatly bless you, and I will greatly multiply your seed as the stars of the heavens and as the sand which is on the seashore; and your seed shall possess the gate of their enemies. ¹⁸In your seed all the nations of the earth shall be blessed, because you have obeyed My voice.*

That is another old, old prophecy given to Abraham long before Israel was even a nation. That one gets so much more specific, detailing the blessing of all the nations of all the earth - not just one - or a few, but ALL!

Isaiah 9:6-7: (NASB) ⁶For a child will be born to us, a son will be given to us; And the government will rest on his shoulders; And his name will be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Eternal Father, Prince of Peace. ⁷There will be no end to the increase of his government or of peace, (No end of peace! Isn't that what everyone is hoping for - wishing for - working for...? Now that is a prophecy with a lot of hope!) on the throne of David and over his kingdom, to establish it and to uphold it with justice and righteousness from then on and forevermore. The zeal of the LORD of hosts will accomplish this.

There are hundreds of Old Testament prophecies that allude to the coming of Jesus, his life and death, his work, his resurrection and the coming kingdom. The Old Testament is full of hope! We definitely see the magnificent promise of Christmas in the Old Testament - what would come through both his birth, death and resurrection.

It is the zeal of God that gets it done! But it is not done yet and still has been such a long time - thousands of years. So, if God had been silent for the 400 years before Jesus' birth, should waiting these thousands of years further be such a problem? What God says, God does!

Malachi 4:5-6: (NASB) ⁵Behold, I am going to send you Elijah the prophet (picturing the work of John the Baptist prior to Jesus) before the coming of the great and terrible day of the LORD. ⁶He will restore the hearts of the fathers to their children and the hearts of the children to their fathers, so that I will not come and smite the land with a curse.

So, the last words of the Old Testament essentially tell us how the New Testament is going to start: Before the coming of Messiah there would be the coming of one who would prepare the people for the Messiah. After these words, there were 400 years of silence from God! Even though hope might be forgotten over time, it does not mean that the Giver of all hope forgets! The plan was in process even though it looked like nothing was happening.

CHAPTER 3: MARY AND THE CHALLENGE OF THE MIRACLE OF CHRISTMAS

Often when God works His miracles, there are significant challenges that need to be met. Mary had an amazing challenge to deal with and overcome. It is pretty easy to look at prophecy and its fulfillment and figure, "Now, that's a no brainer!" After all, all of the pieces are in place, the timing is right, the right people are all present - let's get this thing fulfilled and move on!

But not so fast...because it is not so easy! Did you ever think about being one of those people whom God has chosen to use? Did you ever wonder at the extraordinary faith they would have had to exhibit to follow through on the things God was putting in front of them? We will briefly focus on Mary and how her faith must have been so firmly grounded and true!

Luke 1:26-37: The angel Gabriel appeared for the second time, now six months after Elizabeth conceived. This time the circumstances were nearly polar opposite - Elizabeth had been old, married and childless. Mary was young and only engaged. Gabriel had spoken to Elizabeth's husband, Zacharias, the first time; here he spoke to the young bride-to-be. His greeting was one of great favor, yet Mary's reaction was confused and fearful. The angel Gabriel? Speaking to me? For what reason? Luke 1:30-38: Questions would have swirled in Mary's head - me? Have a son? He is to be called the son of the MOST HIGH? He is to be a king FOREVER? His Kingdom will have NO END? How? Why?

There was an obvious immediacy with all of this. The angel could not be speaking of some future son of Joseph. So, the question that needed answering above all else had to be asked, for faith could perceive of these other things, but this one question could not be fathomed... "How can this be, since I am a virgin?"



Gabriel answered: ³⁵...*"The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you; and for that reason the holy Child shall be called the Son of God. ³⁶And behold, even your relative Elizabeth has also conceived a son in her old age; and she who was called barren is now in her sixth month. ³⁷For nothing will be impossible with God.*

For Mary, Gabriel's last words must have rung true in the deepest recesses of her young heart - *for nothing will be impossible with God. ³⁸And Mary said, Behold, the bondslave of the Lord; may it be done to me according to your word. And the angel departed from her.*

Continuing the story, we will see the "fanfare" God saw fit to create in preparation for the world's deliverer: [Luke 1:39-45](#) [Luke 1:46-56](#): The "fanfare" was between these two women given a special privilege. There was no marching band, no press conferences; just two faithful women. They were given a sense of what would come - the greatness of God in little things. That is what we should really focus on - sometimes God works with the smallest things, humble and meek to get the greatest job done.

CHAPTER 4: THE TIME AND PLACE FOR THE BIRTH OF GREATNESS

Think of the greatest joys of life that you have ever heard of or experienced and inevitably, you will think about the birth of a child. This is an event that marks an end and a beginning. It is the end of a nine-month pregnancy that literally has a physical attachment needing to be cut, and it marks the beginning of a new, viable human life, whose attachments can now grow exponentially and in all directions. Any birth is a miracle, but the birth of Jesus - now that was a miracle of biblical proportions - for the heavens were alive with joy and celebration! Miracle of miracles!

[Luke 2:1,3-6](#): (KJV) The experience of Mary and Joseph was one of complete normality. There were no special provisions, no special exemptions, no special circumstances. They were required to do what everyone else did, travel where everyone else traveled and pay what everyone else paid. [Luke 2:7](#): (KJV) To be born in a stable and laid in a manger among the animals was in fact the most fitting of places for the Lord of men to enter the world. After all, Jesus would live these humble beginnings each and every day for 33½ years, for it was through this humility that he would be able to pay the ransom price for Father Adam.

[Luke 2:8-12](#): (KJV) The fulfillment of such grand prophecy - in this case it required an angelic announcement to the most humble audience of shepherds - fitting - for the baby Jesus would grow to assume the throne of David, who himself was once a shepherd.

[Luke 2:13-14](#): (KJV) Remember, earthly humility does not preclude heavenly celebration; rather it provokes it! It was in this manner that Jesus our Lord was born...

CHAPTER 5: RESPONDING TO THE BIRTH OF GREATNESS

Let's go back to the shepherds who were told of Jesus' birth: [Luke 2:13-14](#) [Luke 2:15-20](#): These shepherds knew that they were part of something much bigger than they had ever conceived possible. They acted in faith; they acted right away and found Mary and Joseph. The baby lay quietly in a manger. Think of the tranquility and peace of the moment as they lay their eyes on their future Savior...this was Jesus, the one who would save the world! To go and see him was one thing. To take this miracle and publish it amongst the people...that was another! These were just shepherds! For Mary, this was a time of awe-struck wonder.

We have no gifts to give the King either, but we give him the best that we can. Where in our lives do we "see" the king? Can we find the child-like enthusiasm to come before the "newborn king" and offer him whatever little that we may have?

We know of course that the three wise men found Jesus and his parents and showered them with gifts...

The gifts of the three wise men were significant:

- **Gold** represented obedience and consecration;
- **Frankincense** represented praise, devotion, heart adoration, appreciation and gratitude;
- **Myrrh** represented submission, a willingness for service to the extent of bitterness and suffering.



What gift can WE bring worthy for a king? How do we "play our best" for him? What is it like to have the king, Jesus, smile at you? How do we better grasp the child-like faith needed to truly appreciate Jesus and his gift to us?

CHAPTER 6: RECEIVING THE BENEFITS OF GREATNESS

Here we sit, 2000 years after the birth, life, death and resurrection of Jesus and the world is in a turmoil of dramatic proportions. All is *not* well, all is *not* in order, and it is at times like these we tend to lose hope and perspective. **This is the precise reason we tell and retell the story of Jesus, so we can reset our feet upon solid ground.**

Matthew 11:28-30: So, take heart in the heart of Jesus and remember, he died for us, he died for the world.

In our turmoil, where do we find the quietness we need to cope? In our busy world where do we find the space to stop, look and listen for God's word?

One final example from the story of Jesus' birth - the experience of a very old man whose life was spent waiting for the Messiah, the prophet Simeon: Luke 2:21-22,24: Again this reminds us that Mary, Joseph and Jesus are given no special entitlement or dispensation, they are simply given opportunity to show their faith. Luke 2:25-26: Here was a man who had NOT forgotten hope, who had NOT allowed doubt or fear to rule his heart; rather he lived in anticipation and expectation of God's gift. Luke 2:27-29: Being aged, the only thing Simeon looked forward to in his life was a glimpse of God's gift of redemption. He sees the baby, takes him in his arms and knows that his life is now complete, thinking, "in *my* arms I hold the hope of the world!" Luke 2:30-33: Simeon realizes the full import of redemption: I have seen your salvation with my own eyes! He is a light that even reaches to all Gentiles - he is a light that is the glory of Israel! This light is now just a baby, but this baby is the hope of the world!

We hope you have gotten a sense not only of the magnitude of the birth and life of Jesus but the hope that the birth, life, death and resurrection of Jesus brings us. It was a world-changing event...for ALL mankind. The prophecies foretold there will be a never-ending kingdom on the earth. Jesus will rule that kingdom! We hope this Christmas season means something very special to you in terms of understanding the great hope and the great life we have been given in the Scriptures through the life of our Lord, Jesus.

*So, what is the point of Christmas?
(Salvation for the world!)
For Jonathan and Rick and Christian Questions...
Think about it...!*