

“JESUS IS THE REASON FOR THE SEASON”

-How many of you love Christmas?(...)

-What were some of your favorite Christmas traditions as you were growing up?(...)

-If you didn't have a Christmas tradition, what were some favorite memories of Christmas that you have? It could be a meal, a gift, something funny that happened, maybe it snowed in the south, etc. (...)

-One tradition during Christmas that most of the world shares is the tradition of gift giving. Does anyone know how it started? (It is believed to have started in Christianity. The practice of giving gifts at Christmas is traced back to the gifts of gold, frankincense and myrrh that were given to the Christ child by the three Magi. The magi were kings from the East, wise men, who traveled a great distance following a star, to find the Christ child and to bring him gifts.)

-After hearing this, what do you think was the most precious gift given to all of humanity? (God giving us His Son, Jesus, to save us from our sins)

-How much did it cost Him? (Everything)

-How much does it cost us? (Nothing)

-This is the true reason why we celebrate Christmas.

-There is a Christmas saying that states “Jesus Is The Reason For The Season” and that is what we are going to talk about today. Over 2000 years ago Jesus was born so He could be our Savior from our sins. He did this so we may have eternal life and a relationship with our Heavenly Father.

-The Bible talks about Jesus' birth in several books.

-Does anyone know what 4 books in the New Testament tell us the story of Jesus' birth? Hint, it is the first four books in the New Testament! (Matthew, Mark, Luke and John)

-Today, we are going to look at John's story of Jesus' from the Book of John.

-First of all, does anyone remember who John was? Hint: this John was not John the Baptist. (He was one of Jesus' twelve disciples, he and his brother James [who were both fishermen] were one of the first to be called by Jesus to become His disciples, he was also an eyewitness to the many miracles Jesus performed during His time on earth, he not only wrote the Book of John but also wrote 1st, 2nd, and 3rd John and the Book of Revelations, he was also called the one that Jesus loved.)

-So, knowing this about John, he had firsthand knowledge of Christ's birth because He was so close to Jesus.

-We are going to study the unique way He described Jesus and His coming into the world.

-John begins his book by sharing with us a side of the story that we need to look at because it shows us Who Jesus was before His birth and the great sacrifice He made for us.

-Let's begin to study what John wrote about Jesus. Let's read together #1 on our Verse Sheet: (John 1:1-2 "In the beginning was the *Word* and the *Word* was with God and the *Word* was God. He was with God *in the beginning.*")

-Does anyone know Who the Word is here that John is talking about? (Jesus)

-So according to this verse, Who was He with? (God)

-And Who was He? (God)

-The last part of this verse says that He was with God in the beginning.

-So, according to this, in the beginning Jesus was the Word of God. He and God are One. Jesus even said this of Himself in John 10:30 when He said "I and the Father are One." He also said this in John 14:9 when he told Philip "Whoever has seen me has seen the Father." So, in this verse John reminds us that Jesus is divine. He was fully God and fully man when He came to earth, representing God the Father to a lost and dying world.

-Let's continue with #2 on our Verse Sheet to see what else John has to say about Him: (John 1:3 "Through Him *all things* were made: without Him nothing was made that has been made.")

-According to this verse, what was made by Him? (All things!)

-Quite simple isn't it! Jesus was the voice of God that spoke everything into existence.

-What does that include? (You and me!)

-Knowing that you were created by Jesus, how does that make you feel about Him? (...)

-How do you think He feels about you? (...)

-Let's continue with #3 on our Verse Sheet to hear what else John has to say about Him: (John 1:4 "In Him was *life*, and that *Life* was the *Light* of all mankind.")

-Does anyone know what the definition of life is? (breathing, heartbeats, living, experiencing moments with others whether they be joy, laughter, adventures, dreams or even pain or sorrow, etc.)

-There are actually two kinds of life, the physical life (when we are created and born) and the spiritual life (when we are born again, saved from our sins, we receive a new spiritual life in Christ).

-Who created both of these? (Jesus, The Word)

-Jesus created all of life. He created us to breathe, to eat and at the end of the day to sleep and He also created the spiritual life that we need to live lives full of His forgiveness, and His power and presence for all eternity. That is why it says "in Him was life".

-In John 10:10b Jesus says that He came so that we could "have life, and that we may have it more abundantly". Because He created all life, He understands what we need to live abundantly. The life He intended for us is one full of peace to face

whatever challenges may come our way. A life full of contentment with what we are given, and a life full of daily hope that will last until we return to His side.

-God created us to crave these basic needs for our souls (peace, joy, hope, comfort, love, contentment, truth and salvation) so that we will look to Him and His Son to fulfill that and not the world.

-Acts 17:27 actually says “God did this so that men would seek Him and perhaps reach out for Him and find Him, though He is not far from each one of us” Nothing is more satisfying in this world than finding Christ Himself. Do you believe this to be true? (...)

-The second part of this verse says that the same Jesus who supplied us with life is also the “light of men”.

-How many of you have ever used a flashlight at night to guide you somewhere? (...)

-How did it make you feel having that light in the darkness? (Safe, comforting, guiding, etc.)

-Jesus is that same guiding light shining in a darkened world. He is that flashlight that lights up our own souls and then uses that light in us (His light) to shine so others around us may see Him too.

-Let's read #4 on our Verse Sheet: (John 1:5 “The light shines in the darkness, and *the darkness has not overcome it.*”)

-What brought darkness into the world? (Sin)

-Sin brought darkness into the world. The minds of mankind became dark with sin. Man either did not know God or they did not want to know of Him.

-Do you see this in our world today? (...)

-But what does the last half of the verse say? (“...and the darkness has not overcome it!”)

-The darkness of sin has not overcome the light of Jesus!

-This is hope, this tells us that Jesus can and is overcoming the darkness! So don't give up if you are praying for a loved one or friend who is lost, Jesus overcomes the darkness!

-Let's read #5 on our Verse Sheet: (John 1:9 “The true Light that gives light to *everyone* was coming into the world.”)

-According to this verse, whom does He give this light to? (Everyone!)

-Does that mean everyone is automatically saved and able to see the Light? (No)

-Let's read our next set of verses together to help us with this, #6 on our Verse Sheet: (John 1:10-12 “He was in the world, and though the world was *made through Him*, the world did not recognize Him. He came to that which was His own, but *His own did not receive Him*. Yet to all who did receive Him, to those who believed in His name, He gave the right to become *children of God.*”)

-So according to these verses, did everyone just receive Him right away? (No)

-Do you see that today in our society? (...)

-Do you think God's heart hurts when He sees that the ones He created do not receive the message of His Son and His love for them? (...)
-Let's put it into perspective. What if you had an only child and you sent him/her to a group of people to tell them about how much God loves them and they killed your only child because they just didn't want to hear it. How would you feel? (Angry? Revengeful? Want to give them up to their reprobate minds?)
-But is God like us? (No)
-Thank goodness God is a loving and merciful God that He doesn't do that to us!
-According to Lamentations 3:22-23, His mercies toward us are new everyday!!!

-Let's look back at the end of John 1:10-12 on our Verse Sheet. According to the very end of these verses, to those who *do believe* in Jesus and what He did for them, what do we become? (God's children!)

-Can you think of a better Christmas gift than that?!
-What gifts/presents come with being God's child? (Eternal life with Him in Heaven; Peace, joy, hope, comfort, love, contentment while here on life's journey with Him.)

-Our last verse tells us the true Christmas Story. It is where John tells us of the divine Jesus becoming a man, a gift from God for all humanity if we choose to believe it.

-Let's read it together, #7 on our Verse Sheet: (John 1:14 "The *Word became flesh* and made *His dwelling among us*. We have seen His glory, the glory of the one and only Son, Who came from the Father, full of grace and truth.")

-What do you think it must have been like for God the Son to come from His divine throne and put on human flesh for 33 years and dwell with sinful mankind? (...)

-Let's see if we can put it into perspective. Have any of you tried to fill a water balloon with water for a water balloon fight? (...)

-It usually slips off the water faucet and spews water everywhere before you can even get a little water in it!

-Imagine trying to fill a water balloon with the planet earth and all its glory and beauty? Impossible isn't it?

-Now imagine the Creator of the Universe cramming the deity of His son into a human body to live on this earth to die for our sins! Can we even comprehend it?

-That is why the gift of His Son is the greatest gift of all!

-So, as we celebrate the Christmas season and all its traditions, let's remember what we should really celebrate it for.

-The gift of God's Son for you and I to have life, joy, peace and hope because of the forgiveness of our sins when we believe in Him.

-And as we celebrate with others during this time, let us be that light (Jesus' flashlight) so they too may see this wonderful gift of Jesus that was so freely given to them as well if they so choose.

JESUS IS THE REASON FOR THE SEASON VERSE SHEET

1. **John 1:1-2** “In the beginning was the *Word* and the *Word was with God* and the *Word was God*. He was with God *in the beginning.*”
2. **John 1:3** “Through Him *all things* were made: without Him nothing was made that has been made.”
3. **John 1:4** “In Him was *life*, and that *Life was the Light of all mankind.*”
4. **John 1:5** “The light shines in the darkness, and *the darkness has not overcome it.*”
5. **John 1:9** “The true Light that gives light to *everyone* was coming into the world.”
6. **John 1:10-12** “He was in the world, and though the world was *made through Him*, the world did not recognize Him. He came to that which was His own, but *His own did not receive Him*. Yet to all who did receive Him, to those who believed in His name, He gave the right to become *children of God.*”
7. **John 1:14** “The *Word became flesh* and made *His dwelling among us*. We have seen His glory, the glory of the one and only Son, Who came from the Father, full of grace and truth.”