

"Now there were in the same country shepherds living out in the fields, keeping watch over their flock by night. And behold, an angel of the Lord stood before them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were greatly afraid. Then the angel said to them, "Do not be afraid, for behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy which will be to all people. For there is born to you this day in the city of David a Savior, who is Christ the Lord. And this will be the sign to you: You will find a Babe wrapped in swaddling cloths, lying in a manger." And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host praising God and saying: "Glory to God in the highest, And on earth peace, goodwill toward men" (Luke 2:8-14).

*"For unto us a Child is born, Unto us
a Son is given; And the government
will be upon His shoulder.*

*And His name will be called
Wonderful, Counselor, Mighty God,
Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace"*

Isaiah 9:6



RE: CREATING CHRISTMAS

MAKING MORE OF LESS THIS HOLIDAY



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REMEMBERING

ACCEPTING

IMITATING

SERVING

*it's all about Jesus***RECREATE CHRISTMAS BY
REMEMBERING JESUS**

Jesus Christ was born into a world of violence—a world filled with poverty, slavery, and abuse of power. Bethlehem, Jesus' birthplace, was under the dominance of the Roman war machine, a cruel and powerful task-master that delighted in crucifying its enemies.

Into this world full of hate and cruelty, God sent his only Son to bring peace, hope, salvation, and light in the darkness. Jesus came to change the world and he succeeded. He succeeded because he came to change men from the inside out. This Christmas remember that Jesus, in the words of the Apostle John, *"became flesh and dwelt among us, and we beheld His glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth"* (John 1:14).

**RECREATE CHRISTMAS BY
ACCEPTING THE GIFT OF JESUS**

Jesus came into this broken world to give its inhabitants purpose and meaning—authentic life. Jesus said, *"I am come that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly"* (John 10:10).

He came to lift mankind out of darkness and into the marvelous light of God's love. The Apostle John summed it up this way in what many have called the gospel in a nutshell, *"For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life"* (John 3:16).

Jesus' mission was to replace our sinful, selfish, and prideful spirit with his loving, compassionate Spirit. Although we like to think differently, the world we live in today isn't much changed from the world of Jesus' day. We are still dominated by spiritual darkness. We still battle cruel tyrants that try to impose their will on the weak and less fortunate. Hatred still rules the day, and mankind continues to desperately need God's greatest gift—the gift of Jesus.

**RECREATE CHRISTMAS BY
IMITATING JESUS**

Into this world came Jesus Christ—God in the flesh with a servant's heart. He reached into the lives of those who were rejected by society and lovingly lifted them up by serving them. He granted them love, forgiveness, grace, healing, and friendship—and in the process changed them in remarkable ways. He poured his life into theirs because he was a servant.

What an amazing world this would be if our lives imitated Jesus' life. Can you envision how many more would be brought into a loving relationship with Jesus Christ if we showed them the gospel with our lives and shared the truth with our lips? Imagine our actions and our words matching up in such a way that others could see and feel the love of God flowing through our lives. This is exactly what Jesus meant when he said, *"A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another; as I have loved you, that you also love one another. By this all will know that you are My disciples: if you have love for one another"* (John 13:34-35).

**RECREATE CHRISTMAS BY
SERVING JESUS**

Think what it could mean to your life, to your family, and to your church if you took to the streets this Christmas to serve others. What if you served in a soup kitchen or went to your neighbors that have lost their job and gave them a food basket and bought gifts for their children this Christmas? Maybe you could clean out your closet and take your old coats and warm clothes to a homeless shelter.

Why not sit down with your family this year and explain to them the financial crisis that has hit the entire world? Help them understand how many people are hurting in your own community. People are out of work, without health care, and some are even homeless. Talk about how Jesus would serve the hurting, help the homeless, and care for the sick and dying. Read Matthew 25:31-40 with your loved ones and explain to them how much God loves "the least of these."

Remember this! When we show God's love to those in need, we are serving Jesus.

"When did we see You a stranger and take You in, or naked and clothe You? Or when did we see You sick, or in prison, and come to You? And the King will answer and say to them, Assuredly, I say to you, inasmuch as you did it to one of the least of these My brethren, you did it to Me" (Matthew 25:38-40).

