

1. Wonderful Christmas

1. Christmas: The annual holiday that celebrates the birth of Jesus Christ, encompassing many and varied traditions and expressions. Christmas is about all these good things we enjoy that go along with the celebration, remembering the foundational truth and focus is God and the birth of His Son Jesus.
2. 'Merry Christmas' – a familiar greeting expressing 'happy, joyful, pleasant' Christ-mass; also a spiritual word meaning 'blessed.'
3. The story of Jesus Christ's birth is detailed in the Bible in the gospel of Luke chapters 1 & 2.

2. There can be Various Christmases going on at the same time

1. One that happens *around us* with all the trappings of the season and the burdens of life... and...
2. The one that happens *in us*, as we by faith embrace and live in the truth and joy of 'Immanuel' – God with us. (Isa. 7:14; Mat 1:23 - *Behold, the virgin shall be with child, and bear a Son, and they shall call His name Immanuel, which is translated, "God with us."*)

3. The Christmas happening *around us*...

1. Ignorance of the origin: Simply 'not knowing' anything other than Santa Claus: Secular
2. Those who 'know,' but reject - The attempts to X-out Jesus: Xmas... with political correctness; the careful use of words to (supposedly) minimize offense. Ignoring and rejection of anything 'sacred.'
3. Commercialization... ... focus on presents, parties and time off.
4. Religious legalists and heretics on their annual rant...

4. The Christmas happening *within us*...

1. With Jesus Christ as the foundation, center point and focus of our lives, then, Christmas can be...
 - a. A time of joy and 'good news' - "*Do not be afraid, for behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy which will be to all people (Luke 2:10,14)*"
 - b. A time of thankfulness, giving and receiving gifts, which is a reflection of God's greatest gift of His Son Jesus Christ:
 - 1) *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).*
 - c. A time of blessed greeting, sharing and proclaiming: Christmas gatherings, cards and letters...
 - d. A time of special decorations and lights – Jesus said, *I am the light of the world (John 9:5).*
2. The true meaning of Christmas...
 - a. The true meaning of Christmas is revealed in the truth that God knows us, God cares about us, that God came to us, that God reconciles us to Himself, that God has redeemed us, that God is all powerful and that His love and power in heaven and earth is revealed to us in the Christmas story, in the Person of His Son Jesus.
 - b. Receiving and celebrating the love of God for mankind in the Person of Jesus Christ, God's Son – by loving God and loving others.

5. The Christmas Challenges...

1. That the Christmas that is happening *within us* gives life and meaning to the one happening *around us*.
2. That our lives touch & influence & impact those around us who may only be aware of the Christmas that is happening around them, and help them discover the true meaning of Christmas – **the love of God in Jesus Christ.**