

The Focus of the Christmas Season

For there is born to you this day in the city of David a Savior, who is Christ the Lord (Luke 2:11).

In America, this time of year is called the "holiday season". Beginning with Thanksgiving and ending with New Year's Day, it is a time of hurried activity, family gatherings, lots of food, and decorations galore. Wedged in between Thanksgiving and New Year's Day is Christmas.

Thanksgiving is defined in its name. At the very least, during the huge Thanksgiving meal of turkey, dressing, sweet potatoes, cranberry sauce, green bean casserole or black-eyed peas and an array of desserts, each family usually pauses to give thanks for the blessings of the past year.

New Year's Eve is a grand celebration of the ending of one year and the beginning of another. There is something about turning over a page in our own personal history and putting up a new calendar on the wall that causes us to reflect on the past year and make plans for improvement in the next.

The significance of Christmas somehow gets lost in the busyness of the season itself. Late November to early January used to be known as the Christmas season. It has been redefined as the "holiday season" and Christmas itself, in many cases, has been swallowed up by the activities preceding and following Christmas day. That day of all days - when God sent His Son to wear our flesh and bear our sins - is lost in a world of secularism. So much so, in fact, that one institution tried to outlaw Christmas trees in its building because it puts too much emphasis on Christianity during Christmas time. ??? After protests, their solution was to allow the Christmas tree if there were also symbols for Hanukkah and Kwanzaa.

Satan tried to make Christ disappear when He was a small child and he is trying to make the celebration of His birth disappear. Although he will not win this war, he is winning small skirmishes. The changing of the Christmas season to the holiday season is symbolic of what is happening to American society. At the inception of this country, there was a strong focus on God and Christian principles. Today, that focus has become a political issue - some even denying that America was founded on Christian beliefs. As history books are being rewritten, the very character of this great nation is withering into a place where Christian principles are being challenged daily.

Rather than being swallowed up between Thanksgiving and the New Year, Christmas should be central in this season. Surprisingly many Americans do not feel this way. Although 90 percent of Americans celebrate Christmas, a LifeWay Research survey in 2010 revealed that, "Though a majority encourage belief in Christ at Christmastime, 67 percent of Americans say that, 'Many of the things I enjoy during the Christmas season have nothing to do with the birth of Jesus Christ.'

As Dr. David Jeremiah states, "The music, meals, and merriment are fine as long as we stay clearly focused on the object and purpose of Christmas: Jesus Christ.... It's all a matter of focus - and focus is a deliberate act. Don't let the world dictate your focus this Christmas."

We do not need to wait until Christmas to focus on Christ. Every day should be focused on Him and is the reason for the ONEFOCUSMINISTRIES website. These questions are on the home page:

ONE FOCUS – what does that mean to you? What do you think about most of the time?
What is your purpose in life? What catches your attention? Do your thoughts and goals revolve around one central theme?

Under YOUR ONE FOCUS tab,

Why is making God your one focus in life so important?

What or who you focus on determines your attitude here on earth and where you will spend eternity. When you focus on anything or anyone other than God, you can miss His great love and His will for your life.

Knowing God – really knowing Him, not just knowing about Him – and focusing on Him gives your life meaning and purpose.

You are God's creation and He loves you – so much that even before Adam and Eve chose to sin in the Garden of Eden, He provided a way back to Him through His only Son, Jesus Christ. If you recognize the reality of sin in your life, repent of that sin, and invite Jesus Christ to be your Savior and Lord, you become a child of God and will live with Him forever.

Resources on this website are:

- **Word Focus** - Bible studies with downloadable PDF files.
- **Reflective Focus** - monthly devotionals with downloadable PDF files.
- **One Focus Blog** - current posts on keeping one focus on God.

Focus is important. If you focus on God, you will see His loving hand every day.

For those who give thanks to God at the Thanksgiving table and pledge to serve Him better in the New Year, how we celebrate Christmas should be the ultimate expression of our thanks to God for His incredible gift. For Christmas marks the birth of our Savior who lived a sinless life, died a sacrificial death on the cross for our sins and was resurrected. Victorious over death, He gave us life.

At Christmas, we get gifts we do not pay for. We only have to receive them. We often do so with great gratitude. Christ's salvation is offered to us as a gift. That gift is like no other. We cannot earn it. We can only accept it. *For by grace you have been saved through faith, and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God* (Ephesians 2:8 NASB). That gift deserves our eternal gratitude. *Thanks be to God for His indescribable gift!* (2 Corinthians 9:15).

Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and comes down from the Father of lights... (James 1:17). Are you thankful for Christ, God's only begotten Son and the focus of Christmas?

Looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith (Hebrews 12:2 NKJV)

Seek first the Kingdom of God and His righteousness (Matthew 6:33 NKJV)

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