

What if Jesus had not been born!

A Christmas Truth by Pastor Craig Ledbetter

It's a great question! *What if* Jesus never came? Would it make any difference to you? Would it make any difference to this world? What if we took away the Bethlehem star. And what if the wise men just didn't make an appearance in Bethlehem? And what if there were no manger?

Hey! What if we took Jesus out of the picture completely? ***Would it still be Christmas?*** Most people, if they were honest, would have to say it wouldn't make any difference at all. Christmas would just keep rolling along with the shopping, the cooking, the gift-getting, the lights, and the Santa. Nobody would miss the Baby in the manger, because basically, nobody thinks of Him anyway! Sadly, our modern society has very little idea just how much that little Jewish baby so changed our world!

And yet, if Jesus had indeed never come, it would make the biggest difference of all! The truth is, had Jesus never been born, this world would be far more miserable than it is already! Oh, yes, innumerable people have influenced human history; but usually for the worst. The Child of Bethlehem, on the other hand, changed virtually every aspect of human life for the better! From the way that we treat each other, to the way we care for the weak and infirm, to how we view and treat material possessions!

By just being born, Jesus Christ, who is God in the flesh, made an enormous impact on history – more than any one else has done! And yet, most people give little or no thought to how much of their life they owe to His coming!

One Solitary Life

By Dr. James Allen Francis (Modified)

This child was born in an obscure village, to a peasant woman. He worked in a carpenter shop until He was thirty, and then for three brief years as an itinerant preacher, proclaiming a message about a different life. He never wrote a book. He never held a political office. He never raised an army. He never had a family of his own. He never owned a home. He never went to college. He never travelled more than two hundred kilometres from the place where He was born. Yet He did gather a little group of friends about him and taught them His way of life. While still a young man, the tide of popularity turned against him. One of His friends denied knowing him; and another betrayed him. He was turned over to His enemies, where He went through the mockery of a false trial. Within hours, He was whipped, beaten and cruelly nailed to a cross between two thieves, and left to die. And when He died, He was hastily laid in a borrowed grave out of pity by a friend. Yet those are not all the facts about this life! Because, three days later He rose from the dead! And today, when we look back across two thousand years and ask, What kind of trail has this Christmas Baby left across the centuries? The answer comes back, ***“all the armies that ever marched, all the parliaments that ever sat, all the kings that ever reigned, put together, have not affected the life of mankind on this earth as much as this one solitary life!”***



Of all the things we take for granted in life, the Baby in the Manger is the most overlooked today!

Before Jesus, human life was cheap

- Children were easily abandoned, especially if they were weak or sickly.
- Women were slaves, both at home and society.
- African slaves (which at the time of the birth of Jesus amounted to over half of the Roman Empire) were only property with no rights or value except as sub-human workers.
- Cruel blood sports were rampant. Gladiators were the sport's stars of the day. Coliseum-style sports were very popular, where wild animals were turned loose on unlucky humans.
- Cannibalism and human sacrifice was rampant throughout the world, and much of it used in the worship of pagan gods, as in Druidism.
- Suicide was seen as a noble exit from this life.
- Drug induced abortions, and euthanasia were the norm in homes where there were too many mouths to feed.
- Violence filled every society with fear.
- And, a person's self-worth consisted only in the things and in the slaves that they owned.

Doesn't all that sound just like today?

The truth is, a world where Jesus is not Lord, is a very cruel world!

But Jesus Came!

Hospitals would not exist today were it not for the sacrificial desire of Christians to bring help to the sick and dying. There would be no democratic governments if it weren't for Jesus who taught all people (not just the rich) are of immense value, especially to God! It took a while, but women were made equal, and slaves were freed because of Christians; cruel sports were abandoned, and human sacrifices were stopped! Not because of religious institutions, but because of the affect of Jesus on human hearts! He still can affect the hardest of hearts today!

Jesus' Effect on Our World

More than all religions put together, Jesus changed our world! Our calendar is dated from His Virgin birth! It is 2,009 years since Bethlehem!

And we owe Him an eternal debt of gratitude, because only HE gave us the reason to resist Nazi Germany, the Khmer Rouge, Josef Stalin, and Mao Tse-Tung! Without Jesus, these men would be seen as history's heroes, and the "survival of the fittest" would still be known as the right way to view other nations! Without Jesus, our world just slips further and further back to how it was before He came!

Are you living like it never happened?

All of man's religious attempts have only added to the disasters of this life, because none of our problems are fixed by our feeble good works - only Jesus saves! Jesus came not to be just another man in a long line of religious teachers. He came to be *the Lamb of God*, for the salvation of sinners from a real place called hell! Without Him, none of us could be reconciled to an all holy and righteous God! *That's why the first Christmas happened!* And that's what our modern world is missing!

So, the reason why our society is in such a mess, is because we have moved away from the Lord of Christmas! We have our "religion" but we don't have Jesus! Yet, in the first century, the effect Jesus had on this dark world was dramatic! Listen to the words of an angry mob as the Apostle Paul and his helpers came into a town, ***“These that have turned the world upside down are come hither also!”*** (Acts 17:6). It was because ***“Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners”*** that this world was turned upside down (1 Timothy 1:15). Has Jesus come into *your* life?

Take a look at the way you are living

You probably live as though there is no tomorrow, watching and doing sinful things you thought you never would be doing; and yet there you are! You sin! And those sins separate you from the God who became a perfect Man to take away your sins! When the Messiah was born, they called ***“his name JESUS: for he shall save his people from their sins”*** (Matthew 1:21). We will never find forgiveness by doing good, or being religious, or going to church. We only find *eternal life* by placing our faith, not in a church, but in what Jesus has done for us on the cross of Calvary. ***“The gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord”*** (Romans 6:23). Have you received that gift?

So what should you do now?

Don't go through another Christmas without Jesus Christ! Talk to Him! Repent of your own sinfulness, and stop trying to be religious enough to earn God's forgiveness. Believe that Jesus did everything needed to give you forgiveness and save your soul. Then cry out and ask Him *to save you right now!* He will! ***“For whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved.”*** (Romans 10:13). You will never be the same! Admit to God you need more than “a little help” – you need His Son, Jesus! Believe that He died just for you, to take away your sins, and ask Him to give you the gift of eternal life! Choose to follow Him, and Him alone! Then start learning the Bible, and *start living for Jesus instead of the devil!* We would be delighted to help you!

From the people of Bible Baptist Church, of Ballincollig



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