

DON'T MISS CHRISTMAS

Luke 2:1-20

Introduction: Christmas is getting to be quite hectic! Full of non Biblical tradition, publicity, just plain hysteria. It's sad when a store advertises "Our of Christmas cards, only religious ones left..." Christmas, to many is sentimental, family time, children's time, a time to celebrate love for one another and all in the spirit of giving. It has become so complex that most people miss the true meaning of Christmas. Sadly there were some who missed that first Christmas, too.

I. THE INKEEPER MISSED THE FIRST CHRISTMAS (*Luke 2:7*)

1. Nobody was there when the Messiah was born except Mary and Joseph. Nobody to help.
2. Caesar had ordered everyone back to their hometown for a census and Bethlehem was already packed with people by the time Mary and Joseph got there.
3. The Inkeeper had no room for this couple expecting a child at any moment and turned them away. He missed Christmas because of his business. He was just too busy to care.
4. That has not changed for there are millions just like him, just too busy. Lives are crammed with busy "Christmas" things. Places to go, shopping to do, activities to attend, company coming, so, millions miss Christmas as did the Inkeeper.

II. THE NATION'S LEADER, HEROD, MISSED THE FIRST CHRISTMAS (*Matthew 2:1-8*)

1. Herod "pretended" that he wanted to worship the Messiah when the three wise men came to him asking directions, but actually he was afraid. He was afraid that this little child would some day threaten his authority and throne.
2. Herod had already killed everyone of his descendants, even his wife. He feared that one of them would try to take away his Kingship. He then ordered the death of every male child under the age of two years, however God had already sent Joseph, Mary and the child away.
3. There are people like Herod, afraid. They are afraid for their careers, positions, power they have, ambitions, plans, lifestyle. Afraid that their own ideas and goals might be changed if they let Jesus come into their lives.
4. People don't mind taking time off for Christmas and they even pray, call upon Jesus when in trouble, and they add Him to their list of influential friends and also call themselves "christians." People, like Herod, don't want to acknowledge or call Jesus "King" for the same reason Herod didn't. They don't want to yield anything to Him and will guard their way of life to keep Jesus from threatening any change.
5. They, too, like Herod, miss Christmas.

III. RELIGIOUS LEADERS ALSO MISSED THE FIRST CHRISTMAS (*Matthew 2:4-6*)

1. It is quite a shock to know that the religious leaders of that day knew all about the Messiah, even where He was to be born, yet they missed Christmas.
2. They didn't need Him and besides the Messiah they wanted was not a baby but a conqueror. They also already had their rituals, ceremonies and traditions. Besides, they were God's "chosen." They were proud and indifferent.
3. Many today are like those religious leaders, they don't believe that they need a Savior. Therefore since they don't need a Messiah or Savior, they also miss Christmas.

IV. THE LOCAL TOWNSPEOPLE MISSED CHRISTMAS (*Luke 2:8-20; 4:16-30*)

1. The Shepherds went all over the countryside telling what they had heard and seen, the good news that the Messiah had been born in Bethlehem. Why didn't the people listen?
2. Even later on when Jesus was a lad and visited the temple, everyone was caught up in all the religious activities, the feasts, ceremonies, preparation, the cleansings, and all the religious legal matters necessary. What did they need Jesus for, they were already worshipping God.
3. Like those good, religious people of long ago, people are also busy with their religious activities which look religious, sounds religious and therefore must be religious that they also miss Christmas.

CONCLUSION:

1. NO ONE has to miss Christmas! Not the real Christmas. For the real Christmas is not presents, dinners, trees, Santa, good will, or all the glitter and decorations that we always see.
2. Christmas is having the Christ Child, Jesus living within you! That's the reason He came in the first place.
3. NOBODY really celebrates the REAL Christmas who is not a believer in Jesus, the Christ Child, who has never welcomed the Son of God, Savior into his/her heart and life. (*John 1:11-12*)
4. Are you going to miss Christmas this year? The REAL Christmas?