

Personal/ Small Group Sermon Study

It's the Christmas Season: Shine, Christian, Shine

Week of December 19, 2021 A.D.

Jesus said, "Let your light shine before men, that they may see your good deeds and praise your Father in heaven." Matthew 5:16

Read Genesis 1:26 – 28; 2:15 – 17; 3:8 – 11; 3:21 – 24

1. Refer to Genesis 1:26 – 28. Please describe "the image of God" which exists in all humans. Now refer to the other verses mentioned above. Was it the desire and intention of God that Adam and Eve would live forever in the physical presence of God? Why were Adam and Eve banished from Eden? What would the world be like today if all humans had eternal life plus the ability to do evil? Is it still the desire and intention of God for all humans to live forever in His physical presence? Please explain your answers.
2. Why was it absolutely necessary for Adam and Eve to die? Why does God allow death to continue on planet earth? Please explain your answers.

Read John 3:16 – 21

3. Has God made it possible for every human to live in the presence of God forever? If so, how has God done so? Will any humans perish? If so, why, when, and how? Please explain your answers.

Read Genesis 3:11 – 15

4. Many scholars state that verse 15 is a statement which prophesies the birth of Jesus as the Messiah. Do you agree with them? If not, why not? If so, why? In your answer, please explain the meaning of each statement which is found in verse 15.

Read 1 John 5:18 – 20

5. Please analyze and discuss each of these verses one at a time and in the order in which they are written.
6. Who are the "we" in verse 19. In your opinion, what percentage of the people who live in our country would agree with what verse 19 says? In your opinion, what percentage of the Christians who live in our country would agree with what verse 19 says? Please explain the reasons for your answers.

Read Luke 22:13 – 19

7. Jesus told his disciples (and us) to celebrate communion as a remembrance of Jesus and his death. Did Jesus tell any of His disciples (or us) to celebrate and/or remember His birth? In your opinion, should American Christians celebrate Christmas? If not, why not? If so, how and why? Please explain the reasons for your answers.

Read Matthew 2:1 – 2; 9 – 18

8. Read verse 11. Please analyze, critique, and discuss this statement: “God inspired the Magi to present to Mary and Joseph “treasures” of gold, incense, and myrrh to be a symbolic, prophetic statement of Jesus’ royalty (gold), Jesus’ priesthood (incense), and the burial of Jesus’ body (myrrh).”

Read Matthew 2:19 – 20

9. Please analyze, critique, and discuss this statement: “God inspired the Magi to present gifts of great value to Jesus so that Mary and Joseph would have the resources to travel to Egypt and to stay there until it was safe to return to Israel.”

Read Philippians 2:3 – 11

10. Why was Jesus born as a human? What type of life did Jesus live? Why did Jesus die on a cross? Where is Jesus now? How did Jesus get there? Will every person who ever lived on earth (a) enter the eternal kingdom of God and/or (b) bow on their knees before Jesus? Please explain the reasons for your answers.

Read Philippians 2:12 – 16

11. The word “therefore” indicates that these verses (and the verses which follow them) tell us what we are to do in response to verses 3 – 11. So, based on verses 12 – 16, in your opinion, how should a follower of Christ celebrate the birth of Christ and the Christmas season? Please explain your answers.

Read 1 Peter 3:15

12. What are some practical steps which you can take between now and Christmas to prompt other people to “ask you to give the reason for the hope you have”? (Consider visits, phone calls, cards, and so on.) Are you going to do them? If not, why not? If so, when? Please explain the reasons for your answers.

Consider: For many people, Christmas has become a secular holiday. Yet, for the church, Christmas is still about Christ, His first coming, His second coming, and God’s only provision to rescue mankind from the punishment of hell. As a church family, let us prayerfully seek God’s guidance on how we can best use the Christmas season to introduce our families, friends, and others to the gift of eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord. “You think about that.” Amen.