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The Point of Christmas: Revelation of God

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Christmas. What's the point? Maybe that sounds like a line from Ebenezer Scrooge, but it expresses the feelings of many people. Is Christmas nothing more than an opportunity for corporations to cash in on consumers' pent-up greed?

Regardless of religious backgrounds, most Americans recognize Jesus is the "reason for the season." This acknowledgment, though, signals a massive disconnect in individuals' awareness and appropriation of those facts. People may admit Jesus is the reason for the season, but they don't comprehend the point of Christmas: why Jesus came and Christmas happened.

Over the next five weeks, we will be asking, '*Christmas: What's the point?*' in a quest to understand, not just the basic fact of the birth of the Son of God, but the reason why He was born and came into this world.

Jesus' life solved a profound human problem, namely, that as sinners, we had no access to God in any meaningful way. Even our methods for trying to reach God and to understand Him were altogether wrong. While creation declares God's glory, our sinful minds pervert it.

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God resolved our problem, of being unable to know or understand Him, by sending His Son into the world as a human. This child, stunningly, would soon reveal God's glory in the clearest possible way to a lost and sinful world. In fact, in [John 1:14-18](#)^L, we find one reason why the Son of God came into the world was to reveal the glory of God. One point of Christmas is to reveal who God is and to explain Him to us.

To see this in the text, we need to start at the end in verse 18. John writes, **“No one has seen God at any time; the only begotten God who is in the bosom of the Father, He has explained Him.”**

As sinners, we have not seen God or known Him directly, and anything we do know about Him from nature is corrupted. God remains veiled, out of our reach. There is Someone, though, who has an intimate knowledge of the Father, and that is the Son. Jesus can explain the Father to us. That, in fact, is the point of Christmas: To reveal the glory of God to us and to show us God as He really is.

How then does Jesus make known the glory of God, and how does He explain God? In verses 14-17, John gives us three ways.

First, Jesus revealed the glory of God to us *in His humanity.*

“And the Word became flesh, and dwelt among us, and we saw His glory, glory as of the only begotten from the Father, full of grace and truth.”

When God the Son became flesh in the person of Jesus of Nazareth, He revealed to us the true nature and glory of God.

The Word arrived in the world as a concrete and visible person, bringing the reality of who God is to bear on those around Him. We see through Jesus' many conflicts with people, that sinful creatures did not know or understand God because of serious misperceptions exposed by Christ. Unbelievers called Jesus a *liar*, a *blasphemer*, and *demon possessed* because He brought the reality of God to bear on them in a way they had never experienced.

Others, too, had an inaccurate perception of God, thinking He would never accept them since they weren't the 'spiritual, religious' people. They were just 'commoners and sinners.' Jesus shattered their misperceptions, when these people realized that God does not play favorites and receives all who come to Him in faith.

When we see how Jesus acted in the Gospels, we see how God acts toward us. When we see Jesus' works in the Gospels, we see God's power toward us. When we see Jesus' death and resurrection, we see God's gift of salvation, and His righteousness, justice, mercy,

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and love. In everything Jesus said and did in His life, He explained who God is for us. When we see Jesus, we see the Father and God's character and nature. Jesus revealed the glory of God in His humanity.

Second, Jesus revealed the glory of God *in His supremacy.*

“John testified about Him and cried out, saying, ‘This was He of whom I said, He who comes after me has a higher rank than I, for He existed before Me.’”

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As we read the Gospel accounts of Jesus' life, death, and resurrection, we learn that His glory was veiled to most people. When some did see Christ's glory, however, they turned it against Jesus as a reason to kill Him. For example, after Jesus raised Lazarus, the Jewish leaders decided He had to die because of the signs He had performed to reveal God's glory to them.

God's hidden glory in Christ is what makes John the Baptist's testimony here so critical. John had come to realize and rejoice in something that enraged others: Jesus is the embodiment of God and His glory. Jesus was the eternal Word of God in human flesh. He revealed God's glory for those who wanted to see it.

When God's truth confronted people in the person of Jesus, it demanded absolute allegiance. It demanded of some that they sell all and follow Him. It demanded of others that they let an inheritance go and follow Jesus. It demanded of others great suffering at the hands of sinners. It demanded of still others forsaking the family business to follow Jesus. It demanded of others putting aside the business of life and just sitting at Jesus' feet. It demanded of everyone absolute trust in Him as both Savior and Lord. The question we all must face is this: Will we recognize in Jesus the glory of God, or will we deny the reality that stares us in the face in the person of Jesus?

John the Baptist came face to face with the glory of God in Christ, and he recognized that Jesus was supreme. Even though John was older in earthly years, Jesus was the eternal Word made flesh, and the glorious One, worthy of worship, honor, and praise. Jesus revealed the glory of God in His supremacy.

Finally, Jesus revealed the glory of God *in His generosity.*

“For of His fullness we have all received, and grace upon grace. For the Law was given through Moses; grace and truth were realized through Jesus Christ.”

The generosity of God on display in Jesus Christ is experienced in the rich and profound grace He bestows on us as believers. Jesus is the fountain that overflows continually and never runs dry. He is the Giver who keeps on giving from an inexhaustible storehouse.

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We are merely recipients who always and will only receive from Jesus, who manifests the glory of God by His infinite generosity of grace toward His people.

Grace and truth were not given through Christ, as though He were merely the instrument in the hand of God to get us grace and truth. No, grace and truth were brought into being by Jesus Christ. The reason our Savior is so full of grace and truth is because He is the author of grace and truth. Jesus stands as the giver *par excellence* because He is the very author of what it means to give. He is the definition of generosity. In His generosity, we see the grace and truth of God the Father.

Jesus came to reveal the glory of God. In Christ's human life, His works and words showed us clearly who God is. He confronts all our misconceptions about God, shatters them into a million pieces, and then replaces them with a true picture of the Father. His supremacy confronts us, calling for submission to Him as our Lord and our God, as Thomas confessed in [John 20:28](#)^L. His generosity overwhelms us with the goodness of God, who defines generosity and giving. Jesus is the fullness of God, full of grace and truth, giving grace after grace.

Christmas: What's the point? The point is the revelation of the glory of God. May our Christmas season be spent looking for God's purpose at Christmas, seeking Him out in the pages of Scripture, and beholding there the glory of Jesus, the only begotten Son of the Father.



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