

# Home For Christmas

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[ 0 : 0 0 ] Well, thank you very much. That was incredible. What I'm going to do now is invite the children. If you want to do some puzzles, coloring and drawing, whatever, down there, you can go down there if you want. Feel free to meet yourself at home down there. There's some pens, there's some activities, there's some paper to draw on. You can make your own wee Christmas bobble if you want.

But feel free to move about. That's fine. Don't worry at all about moving about. And what we're going to do is we're just going to ponder on a little thing.

I know. Sorry. If you have a Bible, I'm just going to read two portions of John's gospel.

John chapter 1, and then followed by John 14. If you don't have a Bible, don't worry about it. There's some in the pews. Or you could just listen. I'll be reading it out anyway.

I've not... There we go. They're on it. On the ball. I've not told the folks at the back what these passages are, I don't think. You got it? All right. Okay. Okay.

[ 1 : 4 0 ] I wasn't wanting to put any pressure on you guys, but it'll be on the screen there. So, thinking with this manger in front of you, let's read two passages from John's gospel.

In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.

He was in the beginning with God. All things were made through Him, and without Him was not anything made that was made. In Him was life, and the life was the light of man. The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it. The true light, which gives light to everyone, was coming into the world. He was in the world, and the world was made through Him, yet the world did not know Him.

He came to His own, and His own people did not receive Him. But to all who did receive Him, those who believed in His name, He gave the right to become children of God, who were born not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, or the will of man, but of God.

And the Word became flesh, and dwelt among us, and we have seen His glory. Glory as of the only Son from the Father, full of grace and truth. Then if you flip over to John chapter 14, that person who was the Word, who was in the beginning, and who was with God, and who was God, the one who was the true light, and whom is life and light, the one who became flesh, said these words.

[ 3 : 5 8 ] When he had grown up, he said, In my Father's house are many rooms. If it were not so, would I have told you that I go to prepare a place for you? And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and I will take you to myself, that where I am, you may be also. And you know the way to where I am going.

Thomas said to him, Lord, we do not know where you are going. How can we know the way? And Jesus said to him, I am the way, and the truth, and the life.

No one comes to the Father except through me. These are the words of Jesus, the Christ. So I want to just focus on two things this morning. I want to ask a question.

Where will you be spending Christmas this year? Will you be spending it at home? For some, the answer to this question might mean that where you spend Christmas is enjoyable.

To some, it might mean that where you spend Christmas is not enjoyable, but it's difficult. And so two things I want to share to reflect on. Wherever you spend Christmas, whatever these things are like, firstly, Christmas adjusts our focus on the arrival of the Son of God, a past historical event.

[ 5 : 32 ] And secondly, it adjusts our focus on the promise of the Son of God, which is a sure and future hope. And so a past historical event, and a sure and future hope.

And so thinking about where you spend Christmas this year, whatever that will be like, whether it will be enjoyable, whether it will be difficult, firstly, let's adjust our focus on the arrival of the Son of God.

And so Jesus, Jesus was of the royal line of King David. He was born to rule. He was the long-awaited Messiah. The Jews had been looking towards this day for centuries, and it actually happened.

This day happened that the Jews had been looking forward to. It was a time and moment in history that a Messiah arrived as he had been predicted. And so the prophet Isaiah, 700 years before, prophesied that he would be born of a virgin.

Micah said that he would be born in Bethlehem. Numbers said that a star would rise out of Jacob. Daniel predicted the precise time when the Messiah would arrive.

[ 6 : 39 ] Jeremiah spoke of the lost children in Bethlehem. Hosea spoke of Jesus' time in Egypt. And there are so many more connections.

Jesus' birth and life fulfilled hundreds of prophecies. Yet when he was born, no one seemed to notice. His conception was a scandal.

His family were not wealthy. He wasn't anywhere near a palace. And when he was born, his family were far from home. Circumstances seemed so much out of their hands that the only accommodation they could find for this newborn king was in an animal's feeding trough.

But as we're thinking about where you will spend Christmas, the point is not simply, oh, Jesus and his family had it worse. Whatever your situation is, Jesus and his family had it worse.

That's not the point. That's not the point. The focus is not so much on the fact that they were far from Nazareth, struggling to find accommodation.

[ 7 : 47 ] The focus is that if this is the arrival of the Son of God, then Jesus' birth represents a much farther journey from home, a far greater descent, an unfathomable contrast, yet a completely willing choice.

And so it seemed like Mary and Joseph didn't have a choice, much less the baby at where they would spend Christmas. It seemed like they didn't have a choice. We've got to go down to Bethlehem because of this census.

We've got to go far from home because of this. How much less did it seem that this baby had a choice about any of this? Yet the truth is, the baby had more choice than we realize.

The Son of God chose to leave his home, his father's house. The Son of God chose to leave glory, his home to descend and come to our home.

And so we were born into this world. We don't get a choice. If we had a choice, we might not choose to come into this world with all its troubles. But he did have a choice, and he existed before his earthly birth, being the Son of God.

[ 9 : 01 ] As John's Gospel says, he was the Word who was in the beginning, who was with God, and who was God. All things were created through him. The Son of God chose to leave his glorious home and come to our home.

And he made that choice knowing that it would kill him. Knowing that it would kill him. And so as we're thinking about where we will spend Christmas, let Christmas adjust your focus to see that at the heart of Christmas, the Son of God is leaving his home to come to our home.

Leaving a glorious position to come into a difficult place. Our home. And would he be welcome in our home?

No, he would not. He came here knowing that he would not be welcome. He came here knowing that he would be killed. He came here for us, for a specific purpose, despite all of that.

And so secondly, let this adjust our focus on the promise of the Son of God, because he came to tell us a promise, and he came to make this promise achievable, possible, for every one of us.

[ 10 : 11 ] Why would the Son of God leave his glorious home to come here, knowing that he would not be received, that he would suffer at the hands of the people he made, and that it would kill him?

Why would he do that? Well, simply put, he came to our home in order to make a way for us to go to his home. He came to our home to show us a way to his home.

So John 1 starts talking about the Son of God in his own home. The God and Creator of all things, the source of light and life, with God in the beginning and was God, shared glory from all eternity past.

And then he came and put on flesh, coming to our home and dwelling among us. In John 14, Jesus himself talks about going away again, back to his Father's house.

Yet his time on earth wasn't just a wee drop-in visit, a wee fly-by. I'm coming down to see how you are now, and I'm away again. See you later. Good riddance to you. It wasn't just a visit.

[ 11 : 15 ] When he left his home to come to ours, he came to show us the way to his home. And after talking about going back to his Father's house, he said, guys, you know where I'm going.

You know the way. And Thomas says, we don't even know where you're going. How can we know the way? And Jesus says, Thomas, I am the way.

I am the way. Me. No one else. Look at me. This is why I came. This is why I dwelled among you. This is why I walked about and hung about you.

Despite being rejected, despite being suffering, despite being killed, as he was about to be, this is why I came. To show you that I am the way. No one comes to the Father except through me.

And yet there are, there's a room in the Father's house for you. You see, his arrival, his arrival was a real historical event.

[ 12 : 21 ] It cannot be undone. The Son of God came to our home and he made that plain by many witnesses. History has been set. Can't undo it. We can be confident that he is the Son of God and that there is more than just this earth, more than what we can just see.

And when we think about where we will spend Christmas, think about how far the Son of God has come from his own home to be with us and think about where he chose to be, the situation he chose to come into for our sake.

Yet reflecting on that isn't to make us think that someone had it worse. It's actually to help us understand his purpose. It's not to make us think, oh, Jesus had it worse.

It's to help us see he had a purpose for coming. If there was no purpose, he wouldn't have come into this world. Before he went back home, he left an incredible promise. In my Father's house, there's many rooms.

Now, stop for a moment. Just think about the Christmas story. We are all familiar with the Christmas story. Mary and Joseph, Mary heavily pregnant, going into Bethlehem, census time.

[ 13 : 32 ] It's absolutely bustling. So much so, they can't get a room anywhere. There is no room when Jesus came to our home, yet what does he say about his home?

In my Father's house, there are many rooms. And yet, I came to earth, the Son of God, the Creator of all things, and you had no room for me. Yet guess what?

I've got room for you. I've got room for you, and you, and you, and you. In my Father's house, there are many rooms. And he goes on with this promise.

I am going to prepare a place for you, for you, for you. And if I go and prepare a place, I will come again.

Folks, as certain as the coming of Jesus was the first time, it is certain that he is coming back. And yet, in this promise, he finishes by saying, I will come again, and I will take you.

[ 14 : 38 ] We can't get there on our own. But he says, I will come back, and I will take you to be where I am. And it's a far better place than this. Far better world, far better kingdom.

Oh, what a glorious and hopeful future there is in Christ. And there is no other way. There is no other person. And so, wherever you're spending Christmas, remember that the Son of God left his home to come to our home to show us the way to his home.

He is the way. And there are three promises the Son of God gave that give us a sure and future hope if we trust him and if we follow him.

And it is this. He is preparing a place for you. Secondly, he is coming back. And thirdly, he will take you to be with him in his home.

So, let me pray, and we're going to sing a song. Lord, what an incredible thing it is that you would come to this world as dark and desperate and diseased as it is.

[ 15 : 44 ] Yet you came into this to rescue us from ourselves, from our sin, from death and darkness. You came to show us the way and you are the way.

Please help us to see the glorious light that you are, that we might be guided out of darkness and be confident in the promises you made. Lord, what an amazing thing it is.

Please give us hope. In your name. Amen. Amen.