

Is Christmas Really Over?

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[0 : 00] Good morning, everyone, and Merry Christmas. I hope I can still say Merry Christmas to you, even though we are on December 26.

Over the past few years of my experience in Canada, I noticed once we are over December 25, the atmosphere of Christmas seems all of a sudden over.

We stop greeting Merry Christmas. We stop pursuing happiness or joy with friends and family.

And many radio stations stop playing Christmas music. Of course, the atmosphere in public places such as shopping mall is also different.

I was surprised by the abrupt ending of Christmas every year in Canada. I'm not sure how you feel today.

[1 : 08] Do you feel Christmas is over today for this year? Or do you think Christmas is at least till the end of the month?

This morning, I gave the sermon title is, Is Christmas really over for this year? The scripture I'm choosing for today's sermon is Habakkuk 3, verses 18.

It said, Yet I will rejoice in the Lord. I will be joyful in the God of my salvation.

Of course, this scripture is not related to what Christmas is all about. I'm using this passage because I would like to invite you to reflect on the attitude of Habakkuk in terms of how he chose to rejoice in the Lord, regardless of what was happening to him or the people of Judah in general at the time.

Apparently, the people of Judah were facing violence, if he did ingest the wicked triumph, crop failure, the death of animals, in the whole book of Habakkuk.

[2 : 44] The prophet Habakkuk began this book with urgent cries. How long, O Lord, must I call for help?

But you do not listen. Violent is everywhere. I cry, but you do not come to save. Clearly, many complaint has been made to God.

While the people of Judah were in the dilemma of whether they should wait and trust God, Habakkuk put his faith in God's ability to give him strength or to deliver the people of Judah from their distress.

It was apparent that Habakkuk's feelings were not controlled by the circumstances around him.

Rather, he rejoiced in who God is and in what he will do.

Yet, I will rejoice in the Lord. I will be joyful in the God of my salvation. We all know that every year, Christmas becomes more and more commercialized.

[4 : 11] We don't need to be Christian to celebrate Christmas. I have seen in many different countries where Christianity is not the majority, their expression on Christmas event is unbelievable and beautiful.

They spend an incredible amount of money to decorate their cities and to attract travelers.

You couldn't tell if they are any different from cities where the majority of people call themselves Christian. Even in countries where the majority of people call themselves Christian, this time of the year become more about shopping than worshipping.

I don't think this pandemic could stop us from shopping. I see now more Amazon delivery costs than before.

Children expect gifts on Christmas Day. If they receive the gift that they want, the day would be wonderful. If they don't receive what they want, the day will be miserable.

[5 : 39] Even when we gather with family members and friends, most of the time the focus is not on the real meaning of Christmas.

We may be spending all day with family and friends, the discussion of Christmas is not on the table. The main discussion are usually on presents, games, or Christmas movie.

I'm not telling you this is what you do. But this is what I experienced over the course of my time in Canada. And I'm not saying this.

I'm not saying this isn't the right way to celebrate Christmas either. What I'm trying to say is we just don't celebrate Jesus' birth for a much deeper reason.

Our feeling depends on events around us, the people around us, the nature around us. That's why when Christmas is over, our spirit over joy and happiness cease.

[7 : 00] We feel exhausted, missing afterward. What is love, hope, peace, and joy that we have been discussing and exchanging with friends and family during Christmas time?

If we don't know the real reason of celebrating Christmas, everything else becomes temporary. Everything we talk about over Christmas, love, hope, peace, and joy become seasoner.

If they are seasoner, love, hope, peace, and joy cannot be called real or true love, hope, peace, and joy at all.

We all know that Christmas is essentially to commemorate the birth of Jesus, who is our Lord and Savior. We all know that Jesus Christ came into this world to save us and bring us back to God. Because of him, the Bible says, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ. There are many who have celebrated Christmas as the birthday of Jesus.

[8 : 28] They bring joy and happiness as they celebrate the birthday of Jesus. Like what we all do for the birthday of our family members and friends, most of us go back to normal life after the celebration of the birth of Jesus.

We stop reflecting on the reason of Jesus coming to this earth. We stop reflecting on the nature of Jesus Christ as wonderful counselor, mighty God, everlasting, fathers, prince of peace, and Emmanuel.

My point here is that our attitude toward Christmas is very similar to what we treat it as someone else's birthday.

It is like a seasonal reflection on Christ. It is like we make Christ the center and the foundation of our life once a year.

Is Christmas really over? Technically, I would say yes, but for us as believers, Christmas shouldn't be seasonal.

[9 : 57] It is important we make Christ the center and the foundation of our life, not just once a year, but every day. The promise we have love, hope, peace, and joy aren't supposed to be just for Christmas time.

They are promised. We are given once for all and everlasting. Sin after Christ was born over 2,000 years ago.

I am not encouraging you to celebrate Christmas in summer or any month of the year for presents, cookies, or any events or parties, but I am encouraging you to celebrate as a daily reminder reminder of why and how Christ has been born for us.

We all know that light is essential and necessary for us as we are in the dark. We won't be able to do anything in the dark without the light.

We know that just a small light can be very helpful in the dark. The light certainly help us to see through in the dark.

[11 : 25] There are a few scripture verses that refer Jesus as a great light. Jesus as the true light. Jesus as the light of the world.

First, the prophet Isaiah talked about Jesus as a great light in Isaiah chapter 9 verses 2. It said, the people who walk in the darkness will see a great light.

For those who live in the land of deep darkness, a light will shine. In time of great darkness, God promised to send a light who would shine on everyone living in the shadow of death.

light. About 700 years later, the great light was born for us. John also referred to Jesus as the true light.

John chapter 1 verses 6 to 9 said, God sent a man, John the Baptist, to tell about the light so that everyone might believe because of his testimony.

[12 : 47] John himself was not the light. He was simply a witness to tell about the light. The one who is the true light, who give light to everyone who is coming into this world.

dear friends, we won't be able to see who we are without the true light. With Jesus, who is the true light, we will be able to see ourselves as we really are.

We are sinners in need of Savior. When we follow Jesus, the true light, we can avoid falling into sin. The true light make the path ahead of us so we can see how to live. He removed the darkness of sin from our life.

Jesus referred himself as the light of the war. In John 8, 12, it said, Jesus spoke to the people once more and said, I'm the light of the war.

[14 : 01] if you follow me, you won't have to walk in darkness because you will have the light that lead to life.

Jesus is the light of the war. He is encouraging us to follow him. Christmas is about Jesus Christ, who is a great light, the true light, the light of the war, the light we need physical light.

We need him daily. We can't accept him or celebrate with him just seasoner. We need him every day.

We need him in every activity we do. Unless this great light, the true light, the light of the war, we won't be able to extinguish ourselves, and we won't be able to know the path we are supposed to take.

We will all be in the great darkness. Dear friends, the joy we have at Christmas time is also available for all year long.

[15 : 15] Chosing to have joy is really optional. During Christmas time, we chose to have joy with friends and families.

Sometimes we find joy and happiness in activity we do at Christmas time. If we make Christ the center and the foundation of our life, not just seasoner, but every day, we will surely have or receive love, hope, peace, and joy daily.

We can learn from the attitude of Habakkuk in Tamahau who chose in the Lord. Why the people of Judah were facing violence, evil deeds, injustice, the wicked triumph, crop failure, and the death of animals.

The situation around us, the event around us, and the people around us shouldn't be the hindrance for us to remind ourselves why and how Jesus was born for us.

Let's pray. Oh, Lord Father, thank you for the fact that you are a reason for us to celebrate in this time of the year, Lord.

[16 : 39] Lord, help us to celebrate with you daily. Help us to see you as a great life, a true life, the life of the world daily.

Lord, thank you for the attitude of Habakkuk. Help us to be able to reflect his attitude daily, and help us to be able to choose joy, and help us to be able to trust you, regardless of what's happening around us.

Lord, thank you for this message. I pray all this thing in your precious Jesus' name. Amen.