

# Christmas Eve

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[ 0 : 00 ] Well, good evening and Merry Christmas to everyone. Well, there is not another holiday like that of Christmas. Nothing quite as spectacular as Christmas.

There is this heightened awareness of all the senses, isn't there? I mean, think about it, children. The smells of Christmas, the tastes of Christmas, the sounds of Christmas, even the sights of Christmas.

There is this escalated heightened awareness of Christmas. It seems with all of this that there is this sensory overload.

With all this sensory overload, it might seem very hard to be desensitized about Christmas. It's hard actually to be numb about Christmas.

And most of us, we're not numb. We're not numb about Christmas. We post our pictures of our Christmas tree, our favorite Christmas poems, and even that tacky Christmas sweater.

[ 1 : 06 ] We post these on our social media page. Christmas cheer is actually very easy. We love Christmas, don't we? But the crucial question is not so much whether or not we have a Christmas cheer, but it is what bit of Christmas do we choose to celebrate?

You see, maybe rather than asking ourselves whether or not we have Christmas cheer this season, maybe we should be asking ourselves, what are we cheering for? Why do we celebrate it anyway? In other words, what are we glorifying at Christmas? What are the good things during this Christmas season that are good that we've made to become ultimate things?

Is it the glossy Christmas cards? The glitter, the tinsel on the Christmas tree? The relationships that we love celebrating here together?

All good things, but have they become ultimate things? You see, if we make good things and ultimate things, and circumvent the very thing that this season is all about, then tragically, we'll only leave wanting.

[ 2 : 27 ] And actually, it won't be Christmas at all. It'll be like what Lewis wrote. It'll always be winter and never Christmas.

Think of that. And Lucy replies, how awful. This evening, may we be reminded and leave out saying, no, it would be awful.

Not to look at the manger and to celebrate the one of whom Christmas is all about, Jesus. So how should we recapture our feelings about Christmas?

How do we restore the wonder and awe of Christmas? Well, the simple antidote is that we must look back and read at what happened then in order for us to wonder, to have this wonder and awe for us today.

I believe that once we encounter this wonder and glory of God, this child in a manger, it will lead us into public declaration.

[ 3 : 37 ] You see, it is true that our personal experience, the things that move us inwardly, they move us to a public expression.

That's why we post things on our Facebook accounts. The things that we just experienced, we want to publicly display them. The gifts that we will receive tomorrow will be news for our coworkers the following week.

Our personal experiences move us to have this public expression. And we see that principle embodied here in the shepherds, here in Luke chapter 2.

The shepherds' personal experience leads them to a public, public expression. Listen to how Luke puts it in Luke chapter 2, verses 8 to 20.

And again, if you have a Bible, I want to just encourage you to follow along or unlock your phones and open that Bible app and follow along with me. Luke chapter 2, verses 8 to 20. And in the same

region, there were shepherds out in the fields keeping watch over their flock by night.  
[ 4 : 48 ] And an angel of the Lord appeared to them and the glory of the Lord shone around them. And they were filled with great fear. And the angel said to them, Fear not, for behold, I bring you good news of great joy that will be for all the people.

For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Savior who is Christ the Lord. And this will be a sign for you. You will find a baby wrapped in swaddling cloth and lying in a manger. And suddenly, there was with an angel a multitude of heavenly hosts praising God and saying, Glory to God in the highest and on earth peace among those with whom he is pleased. And when the angels went away from them into heaven, the shepherds said to one another, Let us go over to Bethlehem and see the thing that has happened which the Lord has made known to us. And they went with haste and found Mary and Joseph and the baby lying in a manger. And when they saw it, they made known the saying that had been told them concerning this child.  
[ 5 : 56 ] And all who heard it wondered at what the shepherds told them. So why is this Christmas story needed for us today?

Why was there this angelic message given to the shepherds? This multitude of angels declaring the glories, this glorious revelation about Christ, this Christ child. It's here in order for us to see the glory of God. that the glory of God was infused into this world and that we might, like the shepherds then, like the shepherds then, go out and be compelled to declare the wonders of Christ.

You see, God, he gave us this story in the Bible to remind us about his glory in rich beauty. It was a divine infusion with this disruptive nature, the angels coming with multitudes that declares the dependable message about Jesus being the Savior and Lord for all that is intended to be declared publicly to all, declared in that way.

It might be winter with 60 degree weather, but it is Christmas. It is Christmas because Christ has come to give us life and to adore him.

[ 7 : 42 ] When we look to the one who is the Savior, we can celebrate and rejoice with the good things that all of Christmas has to offer.

Celebrate in your new gadgets. Celebrate in the celebration of being with family and food. Good things, but may we make the ultimate thing, Jesus, ultimate in our lives.

It was C.S. Lewis who wrote this in *The Weight of Glory*. If we consider the unblemishing promises of the reward, promise in the gospel, it would seem that our Lord finds our desires not too strong, but too weak.

We are half-hearted creatures fooling about with drink and sex and ambition when infinite joy is offered us.

like an ignorant child who wants to go on making mud pies in a slum because he cannot imagine what is meant by an offer of a holiday at the sea.

[ 9 : 00 ] We are far too easily pleased. End of quote. May we not be far too easily pleased playing with our mud pies in the slums.

May we, with great and expectant hope, look to the one, to the one who allows us to revel in the beauty at this holiday by the seaside with him forever.

It is Jesus that we celebrate. Let us pray. our Father, we are so thankful that you remind us of the wonder and beauty of this child who came destined for the cross in order to redeem a people in order to extend mercy and grace.

Lord, I pray that you would continue to teach us to have that wonder and to be to be completely affixed upon you this season.

It's in Christ's name that we pray. Amen.