

“The Heart of Christmas”

Luke 2:28-35

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December 18, 2011

At the heart of the Christmas story is...

1. A fulfillment of a promise. (Luke 2:29)

“...more than four dozen major predictions in all. Isaiah revealed the manner of the Messiah’s birth (of a virgin); Micah pinpointed the place of his birth (Bethlehem); Genesis and Jeremiah specified his ancestry (a descendant of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, from the tribe of Judah, the house of David); the Psalms foretold his betrayal, his accusation by false witnesses, his manner of death (pierced in the hands and feet, although crucifixion hadn’t been invented yet), and his resurrection (he would not decay but would ascend on high); and on and on.”

Lee Strobel, *The Case for Christmas*,
Zondervan, Grand Rapids, MI, 1998, p. 77.

2. Salvation for all people. (Luke 2:30-32)

3. A choice. (Luke 2:33-35)

“The ‘stumbling stone’ was Jesus. The Jews did not believe in him, because he didn't meet their expectations for the Messiah. Some people still stumble over Christ because salvation by faith doesn't make sense to them. They would rather try to earn their way to God, or else they expect God simply to overlook their sins. Others stumble over Christ because his values are the opposite of the world's. He asks for humility, and many are unwilling to humble themselves before him. He requires obedience, and many refuse to put their wills at his disposal.”

Life Application Study Bible, Tyndale House Publishers,
Wheaton, IL, 1988, p. 2045.

“Sometimes we are like these people, trying to get right with God by keeping his laws. We may think that attending church, doing church work, giving offerings, and being nice will be enough. After all, we've played by the rules, haven't we? But Paul's words sting—this approach never succeeds. Paul explains that God's plan is not for those who try to earn his favor by being good; it is for those who realize that they can never be good enough and so must depend on Christ. We can be saved only by putting our faith in what Jesus Christ has done.”

Life Application Study Bible, Tyndale House Publishers,
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“That if you confess with your mouth, ‘Jesus is Lord,’ and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved.”

Romans 10:9