

Keeping the Main Thing the Main Thing

“Keeping Christ in Christmas”

Texts: Matt. 2:1-2; Ps. 100:4-5; 1 Thess. 5:18

For some people, Christmas is that one day, December 25, a special day to do gift giving and have celebrations.

For others, Christmas is a season.

But for those who have truly received the coming of Christ, Christmas is not just a day to celebrate.

Christmas is not just a season to rejoice.

For those who have truly received Christ, every day is a day of generous giving. It is a day of celebration! Each day is a celebration because the Saviour has come.

He is called “**Immanuel**” – *God who is with us!*

Christ is what gives meaning to Christmas and without Him we are missing the true essence of what we are celebrating for.

As Christians, how do we make sure that we keep Christ in Christmas?

2 Key principles to “Keep the main thing, the main thing”

Keeping Christ in Christmas **starts with the right attitude.**

Attitude not aptitude determines our altitude.

1. Start with an attitude of worship.

Matt.2:1-2 – *After Jesus was born in Bethlehem in Judea, during the time of King Herod, Magi from the east came to Jerusalem and asked, "Where is the one who has been born king of the Jews? We saw his star when it rose and **have come to worship him.**"*

A large part of the story centres around the wise men who came from the east to worship Jesus.

Christmas is all about worshipping the Messiah, the Son of God, the King of all kings.

It's all about worshipping and adoring God, for the birth of the Saviour who has provided salvation to the world. Never forget that!

Christ is what gives meaning to Christmas!

Keeping Christ in Christmas is having the same attitude as the magi.

Worship is an attitude of the heart and because worship is an attitude of the heart therefore worship must be our lifestyle.

Ps. 113:3 – *From the rising of the sun to its going down, the name of Jesus needs to be praised (worshipped).*

1 Cor. 10:31b – *Whatever you do, do it all for the glory of God.*

We praise God for what He has done and for what He continues to do, but we worship Him for who He is!

Read *Heb. 11:6; Matt. 16: 14-15; John 4: 7-24*

The Magi knew exactly who Jesus was – the King, the reason they came to worship Him.

2. Have an attitude of gratitude.

There are more than 150 verses in the Bible about being thankful or grateful.

Ps. 147:7 – *Sing to the Lord with grateful praise...*

Ps. 100:4-5 – *Enter His gates with thanksgiving and His courts with praise; give thanks to Him and praise His name.*

1 Thess. 5:18 – *In everything give thanks: for this is the will of God concerning you.*

The Mosaic Law or the Bible teaches that whenever we come into the presence of God, we need to come with the right attitude.

The right attitude in approaching His presence is to have an attitude of gratitude.

God requires that we come to Him with an attitude of gratitude.

The Hebrew term for gratitude is '***hakarat hatov***' which literally means 'recognising the good'.

Practicing gratitude means recognising the good that is already yours.

When you build within you an attitude of gratitude, you see clearly and accurately how much good there is in your life.

Ex. Story of ***Itzhak Perlman*** and ***Annie Johnson Flint***.

Paul encourages us to always count our blessings and be grateful for God for anything and everything.

Thess. 5: 16-18 – *Rejoice always... in everything give thanks...*

Philippians 4: 4, 6-7 – *Rejoice in the Lord always... Be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer... with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known to God;*

When Paul wrote the book of Philippians, he was in prison. He was about to be put to death and

yet he encouraged the believers to... *REJOICE ALWAYS... NOT TO WORRY... AND TO GIVE THANKS TO EVERYTHING.*

That is what we call an “***attitude of gratitude***”.

Jesus practiced gratitude towards God His Father.

Jesus was ostracised, maligned, rejected and yet He remained having an attitude of gratitude even to the point of death.

1 Cor. 11:23-26 – ... *that the Lord Jesus on the same night in which He was betrayed took bread; and when He had given thanks...*

Jesus was thanking God for the opportunity to go to the cross to redeem mankind through His suffering and death.

Friends, that is an **attitude of gratitude**.

When we have the attitude of worship and attitude of gratitude, we don't have to worry about keeping Christ in Christmas because Christ is now at the centre of everything.

Let us keep the main thing, the main thing!