

## Christmas Future

Christmas is about hope, peace, and joy. The future is bright and full of hope, peace, and joy for those who have trusted Christ as their Savior. Colossians 1:5 reads, “For the **hope** which is laid up for you in Heaven.” Romans 5:1 teaches us, “Therefore being justified [declared righteous] by faith, we have **peace** with God, through our Lord Jesus Christ.” Where once our status was to “come short of the glory of God,” having trusted Christ as our Savior, we now “**rejoice** in hope [certain expectation] of the glory of God” (Romans 5:2).

Christmas is a time for being with family and loved ones. Our future will be spent with the family of God, and the One “Who loved me, and gave Himself for me” (Galatians 2:20). 1 Thessalonians 5:10 says that Christ “died for us, that...we should live together with Him.” For eternity, we who have trusted the gospel have a safe home in Heaven, dwelling in the presence of our Savior. Psalm 16:11 says, “In Thy presence is fulness of joy; at Thy right hand there are pleasures for evermore.”

If you’ve trusted Christ as your Savior, then you can say with all believers, “*God has blessed us, every one!*”

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Christmas  
Times

The Charles Dickens novel, *A Christmas Carol*, begins with the words, “Marley was dead: to begin with. There is no doubt whatever about that.” According to the Bible in Ephesians Chapter 2, verses 1-5, apart from Christ, mankind is “dead in trespasses and sins” to begin with. There is no doubt about that. We need the forgiveness of sins and the eternal life that only God can give in order to be sure of our future in Heaven.

## Christmas Past

The Christmas season brings to mind fond memories from Christmases past: good food, laughter, excitement, the spirit of giving, enjoyable times spent with family and friends, and the warmth and tenderness we’ve felt. As we consider Christmas past, we should also remember the reason for the season, which is the birth of Jesus Christ. His birth is significant above all others because His birth was prophesied 700 years before it took place, a Bible prophecy that tells us that Jesus Christ is “Emmanuel” (Isaiah 7:14; Matthew 1:23). The title Emmanuel means *God with us*. It means that the birth of Christ was God the Son coming from Heaven and becoming a man (John 1:14).

The Bible tells us, in 1 Timothy 1:15, why He came to the world: “Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners.” In this verse, you have Christ’s birth at Bethlehem: “Christ Jesus came into the world”; and you have His purpose: “to save sinners.” *Christ was born to die on the Cross, taking the penalty for our sins in our place, because that was the only sacrifice which would satisfy God’s justice against our sins.* God’s judgment against sinners is Hell. Because Jesus Christ bore God’s judgment on us, He “saves” us from an eternity of conscious torment. In 2 Corinthians 5:21, we read, “For He [God the Father] hath made Him [God the Son] to be sin for us, Who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in Him.” On the Cross, Christ was made to be our sin and, when we trust Christ as our Savior, we are made to be His righteousness. He came “to save sinners,” and each and every one of us is a sinner in need of the Savior. Romans 3:23 says, “For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God.”

So when we look at Christmas past, we need to look at Christ, the eternal Son of God, becoming a man while remaining fully God, coming to this world to be our Substitute and Savior by His death for our sins at the Cross and then rising again the third day.

## Christmas Present

Christmas is celebrated with lights, and we remember the coming of the Light of the world (John 1:9; 8:12; 12:46) to deliver us from the darkness of sin and death and give us the light of life. We sing the carols out of joy for the Infant Who was born and placed in a manger in Bethlehem, Who came to save us from all our sins and the Hell we deserve. As we sing in *Hark! the Herald Angels Sing*, “Mild He lays His glory by, Born that man no more may die; Born to raise the sons of earth; Born to give them second birth.”

As we celebrate Christmas today, we give and receive gifts, but we should do so remembering that Christ is the perfect Gift, Who willingly gave Himself to die for us so we can have eternal life. Christ came to this world to provide us with the free gift of salvation and eternal life. Ephesians 2:8-9 confirms that it is a gift from God: “For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is *the gift of God*: Not of works, lest any man should boast.” Romans 6:23 also says, “For the wages of sin is death; but *the gift of God* is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.”

*Have you accepted God’s gift of salvation?* All that is required to have eternal life in Heaven is faith in what Christ did for us: “that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures; and that He was buried, and that He rose again the third day” (1 Corinthians 15:3,4).