

Christmas is a time of great expectations and great disappointments as well.

- Have you ever gotten something for Christmas that was a wonderful surprise?
 - A special gift, a visit from someone special?
- Have you ever gotten something for Christmas that was unexpected and unwanted?
 - A gift that you have no idea what it is or what you would possibly do with it?
 - Maybe underwear in front of all your family and friends, or toothpaste and mouthwash?
 - An unexpected visit from “*that family member*”, and they never know when to leave.
 - Maybe you got laid off, or a bad doctor’s report, or news of a tragic accident.

Some Christmases are so predictable and normal. Other Christmases may be so unforeseen they leave you shaking your head and saying, “I never saw that coming.”

This is what I love about the Christmas story. It’s the story of God doing things His way and according to His plan, even if it wasn’t how others saw it going.

In real time the events that transpired on that first Christmas were totally unforeseen by those involved.

- Did God know what He was doing? Yes.
- Did He foretell of Christmas and the coming of the Messiah in His word and prophecies? Sure.
- Did some wise men from the east follow signs in the heavens to the new born King? Yes, they did.
- But the average person was, at least at first, taken a bit off guard with God’s unforeseen way of bringing a savior into the world. For most of them it was an... Unforeseen Christmas.

A Bad Reaction to An Unforeseen Christmas

The Christmas story teaches us how to react to those unforeseen moments in our lives. It gives us some good examples and a few bad examples as well. For example, one of the great unforeseen moments is in Matthew Chapter 2 when King Herod, at the top of his world, kingdom, and authority suddenly is struck with fear and insecurity when Magi show up from the East in search of the King of the Jews, the prophesied ruler, the Messiah and savior of the world.

Matthew 2:1-3 After Jesus was born in Bethlehem in Judea, during the time of King Herod, Magi from the east came to Jerusalem ² 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.” ³ When King Herod heard this he was disturbed, and all Jerusalem with him

His reaction was to divert our advisory’s tactics to kill, steal, and destroy. He tried to stop the Messiah from growing up and fulfilling His mission, but God always brings about His purposes, His way and Jesus was, is, and will always be the King of all Kings!

On that very first Christmas the King didn’t come as anyone would have seen Him coming.

- We would expect that a King would come riding into town as a mighty warrior, bringing sudden punishment and deliverance to His people who were under a Roman occupation,
- We would think that if this King were to be born, he would be born in a palace, not a manger.
- You would expect that a King would be born to a noble, rich, and powerful family instead of a poor couple living under occupation. Yes, they were in the royal lineage, but the parents of the King Eternal? They never saw that coming.

A baby is not what the world saw coming. No one foresaw a deliverer coming this way.

Our King Coming as a Child...

- **Assures us that Jesus understands our weaknesses.**

Hebrews 4:15-16 For we do not have a high priest who is unable to empathize with our weaknesses, but we have one who has been tempted in every way, just as we are--yet he did not sin.

(Jesus experienced all human weaknesses and limitations that come with having a human body, mind, soul, and emotions; yet He was without sin.)

Let us therefore come boldly to the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need.

There is something so wonderful and special about our King and Savior wanting to become one of us for our sake. Not a God in a distant heaven demanding that we become as good as He is to earn ourselves His love and presence.

- **Shows us God’s glory and brings us grace and truth.**

John 1:14 The Word became flesh and made his dwelling among us. We have seen his glory, the glory of the one and only Son, who came from the Father, full of grace and truth. (also see John 1:1-5)

- **Was the only way we could receive the gift of righteousness.**

Romans 5:18-19 Consequently, just as one trespass resulted in condemnation for all people, so also one righteous act resulted in justification and life for all people. ¹⁹ For just as through the disobedience of the one man (Adam) the many were made sinners, so also through the obedience of the one man (Jesus) the many will be made righteous. Only a divine human could be our substitute to stand in our place to pay the price for our sins.

1 Timothy 2:5 For there is one God and one Mediator between God and men, the Man Christ Jesus, ⁶ who gave Himself a ransom for all, to be testified in due time,

- **Reminds us that this baby paves the way for us to be adopted into God's family.**

Christ's virgin birth shows salvation comes from the Lord, His way, not our way.

This was the uniting of full deity and humanity in one person, allowing Jesus to be born as the spotless Lamb of God to bring us redemption and forgiveness of our sins and brings us into God's divine family.

Galatians 4:4-5 But when the set time had fully come, God sent his Son, born of a woman, born under the law, ⁵ to redeem those under the law, that we might receive adoption to sonship.

- **Foreshadows our path to the Kingdom of God.**

Mark 10:14-16 When Jesus saw this, he was indignant. He said to them, "Let the little children come to me, and do not hinder them, for the kingdom of God belongs to such as these. ¹⁵ Truly I tell you, anyone who will not receive the kingdom of God like a little child will never enter it." ¹⁶ And he took the children in his arms, placed his hands on them and blessed them.

The question we have to ask ourselves today and as we move forward is:

1. "Do I have room in my heart for Jesus?"
2. What if my King looks like a child? Will I receive Him?

Our King Coming as a Child...

- Assures us that Jesus understands our weaknesses.
- Shows us God's glory and brings us grace and truth.
- Was the only way we could receive the gift of righteousness.
- Reminds us that this baby paves the way for us to be adopted into God's family.
- Foreshadows our path to the Kingdom of God.
- **Our King coming as a Child reminds us that "Whoever receives one little child like this in My name receives Me."**

Matthew 18:1-6 At that time the disciples came to Jesus and asked, "Who, then, is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven?" ² He called a little child to him, and placed the child among them. ³ And he said: "Truly I tell you, unless you change and become like little children, you will never enter the kingdom of heaven. ⁴ Therefore, whoever takes the lowly position of this child is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven. ⁵ And whoever welcomes one such child in my name welcomes me. ⁶ "If anyone causes one of these little ones—those who believe in me—to stumble, it would be better for them to have a large millstone hung around their neck and to be drowned in the depths of the sea.

- Receiving a child in Jesus' name is receiving Jesus.
- Ministering to a child is ministering to Jesus.
- Loving a child is loving Jesus.
- Taking time for children is taking time for Jesus.
- Using your resources for children is using your resources for Jesus.

Upon this exhortation from Christ Jesus, we put a high value on our ministry to children here at Believers Church because to minister to them is to minister to Jesus.

Let's ask ourselves some more questions today:

- A. Will I see children, as I see King Jesus?
- B. Will I do for children what I would gladly do for Jesus?
 - What about our Children here at Believers Church? As we move forward with Build a Building; Build a Child? Will we provide for them like we would provide for Jesus?
 - What about the Omo Children that are asking us for \$10,000 today to build a permanent children's home? Will we provide for them like we would provide for Jesus?

Next Life Transformation Step: Today I will give an offering above my tithe to build a children's home in Ethiopia.