

Subject: *The High Cost of Christmas*

Scripture: *2 Corinthians 8:9*

In the rush of Christmas shopping a lady bought a big box of Christmas cards to send her family and friends. She went home and without bothering to read what was on the inside of the card, she signed them and put them in the mail. A few days later she thought of someone she had left off the list and she had one card left over...perfect. As she signed the card she finally read the message inside. Here's what it said: "This card is just to say, a little gift is on the way!" Christmas costs a lot more than we think.

In this one simple verse we learn the true meaning of Christmas. We have somehow taken Christmas and made it something it was never meant to be. It should be a simple time, but we have complicated it. It should be a sacred time, but we have corrupted it. It should be a spiritual time, but we have commercialized it.

Many people think of Christmas only in terms of money. The day after Thanksgiving is now called Black Monday because of the profits it brings. People are obsessed with buying and selling and giving and receiving.

While some people look to get rich at the expense of other people, the birth and life of Christ is just the opposite. It is the story of how Christ gave up His riches and became poor, so that He might make us truly rich.

THE PERSON OF CHRISTMAS – our Lord Jesus Christ

Christmas is all about Christ. Leaving Christ out of Christmas is like taking notes out of music, like taking numbers out of mathematics, like taking letters out of language. Jesus is the reason for the season. As we celebrate His birth wouldn't it be a good idea to ask, "Lord, how can we honor you on your birthday?" I believe He would say, "Remember Me." That's exactly what we are going to do.

- Christ's eternal glory – He was rich

What does that mean? It takes us back to the time before Bethlehem. The Bible tells us about Christ before Christmas.

Micah 5:2 *But thou, Bethlehem Ephratah, though thou be little among the thousands of Judah, yet out of thee shall he come forth unto me that is to be ruler in Israel; whose goings forth have been from of old, from everlasting.*

This OT prophecy speaks of Christ's birthplace. It is the only prophecy about the actual place where Christ would be born. It speaks of His sovereignty (ruler in Israel) and His eternity.

John 8:56-58 ⁵⁶ *Your father Abraham rejoiced to see my day: and he saw it, and was glad.* ⁵⁷ *Then said the Jews unto him, Thou art not yet fifty years old, and hast thou seen Abraham?* ⁵⁸ *Jesus said unto them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, Before Abraham was, I am.*

John 17:5 *And now, O Father, glorify thou me with thine own self with the glory which I had with thee before the world was.*

We will never know what that glory was like until we get to heaven, but then we will see His glory for ourselves.

John 17:24 *Father, I will that they also, whom thou hast given me, be with me where I am; that they may behold my glory, which thou hast given me: for thou lovedst me before the foundation of the world.*

What does it mean that He was rich?

- He was Creator, Owner, and Sustainer of all things

Colossians 1:15-17 ¹⁵ *Who is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of every creature: ¹⁶ For by him were all things created, that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers: all things were created by him, and for him: ¹⁷ And he is before all things, and by him all things consist.*

- He had all the attributes of God

John 1:1 *In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was eternal, independent, self-existent, all-powerful, all-knowing, unlimited, sovereign, supreme, holy, and perfectly good and righteous. He lived in perfect love and harmony with the Father and the Holy Spirit in heaven. One writer said that Christ enjoyed “the immunity of a heavenly life.” There was no sin, no weakness, no need, no sickness, no pain, and no sorrow. Everything was perfect. Countless angels adored and worshiped Him.*

THE PRICE OF CHRISTMAS - though He was rich, yet for your sakes He became poor

This refers to His coming to earth as a baby and His life on earth. Think of what He gave up. The all-powerful God became a weak, dependent baby. The all-knowing God became a child who increased in wisdom. The eternal Son left the heavenly Father and entered time to become the son of Joseph and Mary and live in a poor family. The omnipresent God who inhabited the universe became limited to one place a time.

Philippians 2:5-8 ⁵ *Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus: ⁶ Who, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God: ⁷ But made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men: ⁸ And being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross.*

He was in the form (inward nature) of God and equal with God. He made Himself of no reputation (emptied Himself of the outward majesty of God and the constant use of His divine power). He put His own interests aside. He left heaven where He had everything and came to earth where He had nothing. Coming to earth literally put Jesus in the poor house.

Matthew 8:20 *And Jesus saith unto him, The foxes have holes, and the birds of the air have nests; but the Son of man hath not where to lay his head.*

In heaven Christ owned all things, but on earth He owned nothing. He had to borrow what He had: He was laid in a borrowed stable, He preached from a borrowed boat, fed the multitude with a borrowed lunch, taught from a borrowed Bible, slept in a borrowed bed, rode into

Jerusalem on a borrowed donkey, ate the last supper in a borrowed room, was nailed to a borrowed cross, and was buried in a borrowed tomb. For your sakes He became poor.

THE PURPOSE OF CHRISTMAS – that you through His poverty might be rich

He gave up everything so we might inherit everything. He came to earth so we might go to heaven. He left the Father so we might come to the Father. He died so we might live. He came to give us true riches, the things that money can't buy and death can't take away. He came to give us fellowship with God, love, peace, joy, forgiveness of sins, and a perfect righteousness to stand before God.

Why would Jesus do all this for us? Grace. "Ye know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ."
GRACE – God's Riches At Christ's Expense

Ephesians 1:3 *Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ.*

Romans 8:17 *And if children, then heirs; heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ; if so be that we suffer with him, that we may be also glorified together.*

Romans 8:32 *He that spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, how shall he not with him also freely give us all things?*

2 Corinthians 6:9-10 ⁹ *As unknown, and yet well known; as dying, and, behold, we live; as chastened, and not killed; ¹⁰ As sorrowful, yet always rejoicing; as poor, yet making many rich; as having nothing, and yet possessing all things.*

It was through Christ's poverty that He made us rich. It's amazing how this works:

Jesus was hungry, and yet He fed the multitudes.

He was thirsty, and yet He is the water of life.

He was weary, and yet He gives us rest.

He prayed, and yet He hears our prayers.

He wept, and yet He dries our tears.

He was sold for 30 pieces of silver, and yet He redeems us with His blood.

He was taken as a lamb to the slaughter, and yet He is the Shepherd who cares for the flock.

Amazing grace, how sweet the sound that saved a wretch like me. You know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that, though He was rich, yet for your sakes He became poor, that you through His poverty might be rich.

Jesus paid such a high price to come and be our Savior. Just think about the high cost of Christmas, and what does it mean to you? How does it affect your life?