



What Christmas Means to Me

When I look back over my life, I can see how my experience of Christmas has changed and deepened with every season of it. As a kid, Christmas was all about the anticipation, looking forward to the fun, the lights, the traditions, and especially the thrill of waking up on Christmas morning to open presents. Those moments were genuinely joyful and have shaped some of my favorite memories.

But as I grew, what Christmas meant to me grew as well. Becoming a husband and father has reshaped the whole season for me. The excitement isn't so much about *what* I receive anymore, but about enjoying every part of Christmas with my family. There's something beautiful about seeing your family laugh, unwrap gifts, and soak in the wonder of the season. The joy becomes shared, multiplied, and somehow richer.

Yet even deeper than that, year by year, what Christmas means to me spiritually has taken on a profound significance. Each year, I feel like God pulls back one more layer of the wonder of Christmas, *that Jesus took on flesh and dwelt among us*. And the more I reflect on that truth, the more Christmas reshapes who I am: as a man, as a son of God, as a husband, a father, a friend. The incarnation speaks into every aspect of my identity and calling in Christ.

The older I get, the more I realize that Christmas isn't just an event on the calendar, it's more than a season, and it's far richer than traditions. Christmas reminds me of who God is, who I am in Him, and what kind of life He has called me to live. So when I ask myself, "What does Christmas mean to me?" the answer isn't static. It keeps growing, deepening, expanding. Maybe that's the invitation for all of us: to see Christmas not just as something we celebrate, but something that shapes us.

As we ask what Christmas means to us, we're going to take time to look at what that first Christmas meant to those who witnessed it. What did Christmas mean to Mary and Joseph? What did it mean to the shepherds and wise men? Why was it so meaningful to Simeon and Anna? Maybe what Christmas meant to them will shape what Christmas means to us as well.

Break the Ice

What is one part of the Christmas season that has become more meaningful to you in recent years?

Mary: “Christmas Means Trusting God When Life Doesn’t Make Sense”

Read Luke 1:26-38

The Christmas story begins with a young woman whose quiet trust made all the difference. When the angel appeared to Mary, God’s plan turned her world upside down. Nothing about it fit her expectations, and it certainly didn’t answer all her questions. But in the middle of her confusion, she trusted God instead of clinging to control. Her response, “*Let it be to me according to Your word,*” shows us that real faith isn’t about having everything figured out. It’s about trusting the God who is writing a bigger story than we can see.

1. When has God’s plan disrupted your plans?

2. What makes it hard to trust God when you don’t have all the answers?

3. What would it look like to say “Let it be to me according to Your word” in your life today?

Joseph: “Christmas Means Obeying Even When It’s Hard”

Read Matthew 1:18-25

God gave Joseph a unique place in the Christmas story. When Joseph learned Mary was pregnant, nothing about the situation made sense. Obeying God meant opening himself up to misunderstanding, judgment, and public shame. Yet Joseph chose obedience. His story reminds us that following God isn’t always easy or applauded and sometimes may lead us straight into hard conversations, confusing circumstances, or decisions that others won’t understand. But it also shows us that God often does His greatest work through people who are willing to obey Him, even when the cost is high.

4. Where have you experienced (or avoided) obedience that came with a cost?

5. What promises does God offer to those who walk in obedience to Him?

6. What step of obedience might God be inviting you into right now, even if it’s uncomfortable or costly?

The Wise Men: “Christmas Means Seeking and Surrendering”

Read Matthew 2:1-12

The Wise Men remind us that Christmas isn't just about receiving, it's really about seeking God. These travelers from the East set out on a long and uncertain journey, following nothing more than a distant light and a deep longing to find the promised King. Their part in the story shows that real “wisdom” isn't about how much we know but about Who we pursue. And when they finally found Jesus, they knelt before Him and offered their gifts. Their worship was an act of surrender, laying down their hearts and their treasures before the King.

7. How have you sought after God in recent days? What does it look like for you to seek Christ today?

8. How does Christmas move you to worship God in new or greater ways?

9. How do you make worship a central feature of your Christmas celebration?

The Shepherds: “Christmas Means I Matter to God”

Read Luke 2:8-20

The shepherds were ordinary people who were overlooked, underappreciated, and living on the margins of society. Yet on that quiet night, God chose them to receive the first announcement of the Savior’s birth. His glory broke into their ordinary world and reminded them that no one is too small or too insignificant for God’s notice. The shepherds’ story invites us to rediscover the wonder of the good news, to remember that “unto you a Savior is born,” and to embrace the truth that the gospel brings dignity, belonging, and joy to every person.

10. Why do you think God chose shepherds to receive the first announcement of Jesus’ birth?

11. The angels proclaimed “good news of great joy that will be for all people”. What response does the gospel (good news) stir in your heart?

12. Who is one person that needs to hear this “good news of great joy” in your life? How can you intentionally share it with them?

Simone & Anna: "Christmas Means God Keeps His Promises"

Read Luke 2:25-38

Simeon and Anna bring the Christmas story to a quiet, thoughtful close. These two faithful, aging servants of God had been waiting for what felt like a lifetime (ok, it was a lifetime), holding onto God's promises long after others might have given up. And then, in one beautiful moment, they saw the fulfillment of everything they had hoped for. Their story reminds us that God's timing is perfect and that every promise He makes is one He keeps. When God finally moved, their waiting turned into worship, their longing into joy. Christmas reminds us that the God who kept His word to them will keep His word to us as well.

13. How do God's promises instill hope in your heart and help you to persevere?
14. What makes waiting so challenging? How can we discipline ourselves to grow more patient?
15. What specific promises of God are you waiting on in recent days?
16. In what ways does the promise of Christ's return shape your hope, your priorities, and the way you live today?
17. At the beginning, I said, "But as I grew, what Christmas meant to me grew as well." What is one way you'd like to see Christmas grow for you this year?