

## CHRISTMAS – CULTURE & JESUS



It seems that the most awesome event of human history, the coming of God to earth as a babe in a manger, has been forever obscured by Santa, shopping, and merrymaking. So, is it really “the most wonderful time of the year”? Only in relatively recent times, the past 200 years, has Christmas even been celebrated by most Christians. Up until the 1800’s, the day recognized as Christ’s birthday was largely a pagan celebration. In most of the world, especially in England and America, Christmas was not a time of worship, prayer, and reflection; rather, it was a day set aside to sing bawdy songs, drink rum, and riot in the streets. In this study, we will consider Christmas and Culture in how we came to celebrate the birth of Jesus as we do today. The hope is that we will find ourselves in awe of Emmanuel – God with us!

Emmanuel – God with us!

Highland Colony Men’s Roundtable  
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### CHRISTMAS – CULTURE & JESUS Part III

December 22, 2022

Finding the Real Jesus of Christmas can be a fight through culture

**Bible Verses:** John 1:12-14; Philippians 2:1-11; II Corinthians 1:3-7; Ezekiel 36:24-28

**Music:** Christmas Carols - 12 Days of Christmas: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2cjFgtgi9UQ>

**Video:** How The Grinch Stole Christmas: His heart grows! <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1aSBrmQaL88>

**Resources: Book:** *Stories behind the Great Traditions* of Christmas by Ace Collins

#### BIRTH OF JESUS - What Is the Incarnation? – John 1:12-14

- THE WORD BECAME FLESH** → The *incarnation* refers literally to the *in-fleshing* of the eternal Son of God — Jesus “putting on our flesh and blood” and becoming fully human. The doctrine of the incarnation claims that the eternal second person of the Trinity took on humanity in the person of Jesus of Nazareth. The incarnation is not only the way in which Jesus became Immanuel — God *with us* — but it’s an eternal testimony that he and his Father are unswervingly *for us*.
- THE WORD** → *The Word* refers to the eternal divine Son who was “in the beginning with God” and who himself is God (John 1:1). From eternity past until he took on humanity, the Son of God existed in perfect love, joy, and harmony in the fellowship of the Trinity. Like the Father and the Spirit, he was spirit and had no material substance. But at the incarnation, the eternal Word entered creation as human. He became a first-century Jew.
- BECAME** → *Became* does not mean that he ceased to be God. In becoming man, he did not forsake his divine nature, as if that were even an option. Rather, he became man by taking on human nature in addition to his divine nature. It is essential to the incarnation — and very helpful throughout all theology — to recognize that divinity and humanity are not mutually exclusive. The Son of God didn’t have to pick between being God and being man. He could be both at the same time. The eternal Word became human.
- FLESH** → *Flesh* isn’t merely a reference to the human body but the entirety of what makes up humanity — body, mind, emotions, and will. Hebrews 2:17 and 4:15 teach that to save human beings Jesus had to be made like us “in every respect” except our sin. In the incarnation, everything proper to humanity was united to the Son of God. The Son of God did not only become like man; he became truly and fully human.

#### THE TWELVE DAYS OF CHRISTMAS

- TEACHING TOOL** → “The Twelve Days of Christmas” is more than a novelty song. It was once one of the most important teaching tools of the Catholic church. Beginning in the 16<sup>th</sup> century, British Catholics were forbidden by law to practice their faith. The only legal Christian denomination in the British Empire was the Church of England. Those Catholics who spoke or wrote of their faith were arrested and tried under the laws of the time. If their violation was considered severe enough, they were hung.
- TEACH CHILDREN** → In the face of persecution and death, millions refused to abandon the religion of their ancestors. So, much like the early Christians in Rome, Catholics in England went underground. They held secret masses, studied their doctrine behind closed doors, and hid all signs of their faith at home. They were an almost secret society. One of the most severe problems the Catholic underground faced was in teaching their children the doctrine of the church.

#### THE TWELVE DAYS OF CHRISTMAS

- |          |                               |           |                             |
|----------|-------------------------------|-----------|-----------------------------|
| 1. _____ | → A Partridge in a Pear Tree. | 7. _____  | → Seven Swans a-swimming.   |
| 2. _____ | → Two Turtle Doves.           | 8. _____  | → Eight Maids a-milking.    |
| 3. _____ | → Three French Hens.          | 9. _____  | → Nine Ladies Dancing.      |
| 4. _____ | → Four Calling Birds.         | 10. _____ | → Ten Lords a-leaping.      |
| 5. _____ | → Five Gold Rings.            | 11. _____ | → Eleven Pipers Piping.     |
| 6. _____ | → Six Geese a-laying.         | 12. _____ | → Twelve Drummers Drumming. |

#### ACTION: Journal This!

- What is the meaning of each of the “Twelve Days of Christmas” images?
- What is the true meaning of Christmas?
- What is the Gospel?



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**"Twelve Days of Christmas"**

<p>On the first day of Christmas My true love sent to me A partridge in a pear tree On the second day of Christmas My true love sent to me Two turtle-doves And a partridge in a pear tree On the third day of Christmas My true love sent to me Three French hens Two turtle-doves And a partridge in a pear tree On the fourth day of Christmas My true love sent to me Four calling birds Three French hens Two turtle-doves And a partridge in a pear tree On the fifth day of Christmas My true love sent to me Five golden rings (five golden rings) Four calling birds Three French hens Two turtle-doves And a partridge in a pear tree On the sixth day of Christmas My true love sent to me Six geese a laying Five golden rings (five golden rings) Four calling birds Three French hens Two turtle-doves And a partridge in a pear tree On the seventh day of Christmas My true love sent to me</p>	<p>Seven swans a swimming Six geese a-laying Five golden rings (five golden rings) Four calling birds Three French hens Two turtle-doves And a partridge in a pear tree On the eighth day of Christmas My true love sent to me Eight maids a milking Seven swans a swimming Six geese a-laying Five golden rings (five golden rings) Four calling birds Three French hens Two turtle-doves And a partridge in a pear tree On the ninth day of Christmas My true love sent to me Nine ladies dancing Eight maids a-milking Seven swans a-swimming Six geese a-laying Five golden rings (five golden rings) Four calling birds Three French hens Two turtle-doves And a partridge in a pear tree On the tenth day of Christmas My true love sent to me Ten lords a-leaping Nine ladies dancing Eight maids a-milking Seven swans a-swimming</p>	<p>Six geese a-laying Five golden rings (five golden rings) Four calling birds Three French hens Two turtle-doves And a partridge in a pear tree On the 11th day of Christmas My true love sent to me I sent 11 pipers piping Ten lords a-leaping Nine ladies dancing Eight maids a-milking Seven swans a-swimming Six geese a-laying Five golden rings (five golden rings) Four calling birds Three French hens Two turtle-doves And a partridge in a pear tree On the 12th day of Christmas My true love sent to me 12 drummers drumming Eleven pipers piping Ten lords a-leaping Nine ladies dancing Eight maids a-milking Seven swans a-swimming Six geese a-laying Five golden rings (five golden rings) Four calling birds Three French hens Two turtle-doves And a partridge in a pear tree And a partridge in a pear tree</p>
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**Bible Verses – The Message**

<p><b>John 1:12-14 - 12</b> But whoever did want him, who believed he was who he claimed and would do what he said, He made to be their true selves, their child-of-God selves. <b>13</b> These are the God-begotten, not blood-begotten, not flesh-begotten, not sex-begotten. <b>14</b> The Word became flesh and blood, and moved into the neighborhood. We saw the glory with our own eyes, the one-of-a-kind glory, like Father, like Son, Generous inside and out, true from start to finish.</p> <p><b>Philippians 2:1-11 - 1</b> If you've gotten anything at all out of following Christ, if his love has made any difference in your life, if being in a community of the Spirit means anything to you, if you have a heart, if you care - <b>2</b> then do me a favor: Agree with each other, love each other, be deep-spirited friends. <b>3</b> Don't push your way to the front; don't sweet-talk your way to the top. Put yourself aside, and help others get ahead. <b>4</b> Don't be obsessed with getting your own advantage. Forget yourselves long enough to lend a helping hand. <b>5</b> Think of yourselves the way Christ Jesus thought of himself. <b>6</b> He had equal status with God but didn't think so much of himself that he had to cling to the advantages of that status no matter what. <b>7</b> Not at all. When the time came, he set aside the privileges of deity and took on the status of a slave, became human! <b>8</b> Having become human, he stayed human. It was an incredibly humbling process. He didn't claim special privileges. Instead, he lived a selfless, obedient life and then died a selfless, obedient death - and the worst kind of death at</p>	<p>that: a crucifixion. <b>9</b> Because of that obedience, God lifted him high and honored him far beyond anyone or anything, ever. <b>10</b> so that all created beings in heaven and on earth - even those long ago dead and buried - will bow in worship before this Jesus Christ, <b>11</b> and call out in praise that he is the Master of all, to the glorious honor of God the Father.</p> <p><b>II Corinthians 1:3-7 - 3</b> May all the gifts and benefits that come from God our Father, and the Master, Jesus Christ, be yours. <b>4</b> Every time I think of you - and I think of you often! - I thank God for your lives of free and open access to God, given by Jesus. <b>5</b> There's no end to what has happened in you - it's beyond speech, beyond knowledge. <b>6</b> The evidence of Christ has been clearly verified in your lives. <b>7</b> Just think - you don't need a thing, you've got it all! All God's gifts are right in front of you as you wait expectantly for our Master Jesus to arrive on the scene for the Finale.</p> <p><b>Ezekiel 36:24-28 - 24</b> "For here's what I'm going to do: I'm going to take you out of these countries, gather you from all over, and bring you back to your own land. <b>25</b> I'll pour pure water over you and scrub you clean. <b>26</b> I'll give you a new heart, put a new spirit in you. I'll remove the stone heart from your body and replace it with a heart that's God-willed, not self-willed. <b>27</b> I'll put my Spirit in you and make it possible for you to do what I tell you and live by my commands. <b>28</b> You'll once again live in the land I gave your ancestors. You'll be my people! I'll be your God!</p>
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