

Please Don't Come For Christmas – Part 4

4 reasons why Jesus shouldn't have come

Celebration Church – December 20, 2009

Reason #1 - He wasn't **wanted** by the ruling authorities

Reason #2 – He wasn't **welcomed** by His own

Reason #3 – He wasn't **worshipped** by the people

Reason #4 – We're not **worthy**

Prov 16:25 (NIV) *"There is a way that seems right to a man, but in the end it leads to death."*

Humans judge worth by externals:

Appearance - They ask: "How do I look? The better I look, the more I am worth in people's eyes."

Achievement - They ask: What have I accomplished? "If I am successful, then others will accept me."

Approval - They ask: "How well am I liked? If people like me, I must be okay."

Affluence They ask: "Do I have enough toys?"

Prov 16:2 (NIV) *"All a man's ways seem innocent to him, but motives are weighed by the LORD."*

GOD LOOKS AT THE HEART

God is not impressed by externals, God is impressed by internals

1 Sam 16:7(NIV) *"... The LORD does not look at the things man looks at. Man looks at the outward appearance, but the LORD looks at the heart."*

Luke 1:46-48 (NIV) *"And Mary said: "My soul glorifies the Lord and my spirit rejoices in God my Savior, for he has been mindful of the humble state of his servant..."*

Mary was unworthy but used of God!

TO FOLLOW THE EXAMPLE OF MARY I MUST:

Choose to:

OBEY

Luke 1:38b (NIV) (Mary) *"... May it be to me as you have said."*

Psalms 40:8 (David) *"I desire to do your will, O my God..."*

SURRENDER

Luke 1:38a (NIV) *"I am the Lord's servant, Mary answered..."*

Luke 14:27-28 (NIV) *"And anyone who does not carry his cross and follow me cannot be my disciple... first sit down and estimate the cost to see if he has enough money to complete it?"*

TRUST

Luke 1:45 (LB) (Elizabeth to Mary) *"You believed that God would do what He said, **THAT IS WHY** he has given you this wonderful blessing."*

PRAISE

Luke 1:49-50 (NIV) *"... the Mighty One has done great things for me-- holy is his name. His mercy extends to those who fear him, from generation to generation."*

1 John 5:20 (LB) *"Christ, God's Son, has come to help us understand and find the true God."*

SMALL GROUP GUIDE

Welcome

Have you ever received a reward or recognition because of your achievements (Eagle Scout, Employee of the Month, Top Salesman...etc)? If so, what did you have to do to earn it?

On the flip side...Have you ever gotten something that you didn't deserve? *This could be good or bad.*

Share with the group your feelings of "luck", "blessings", or even "guilt" associated with getting something you didn't deserve.

Worship

Read I Peter 2:24-25 (NIV)

"²⁴ He himself bore our sins in his body on the tree, so that we might die to sins and live for righteousness; by his wounds you have been healed. ²⁵ For you were like sheep going astray, but now you have returned to the Shepherd and Overseer of your souls."

In this passage of scripture, we read of God's love for us by the act of Jesus Christ taking our place on the cross and paying for our sins. Jesus lowered himself to human form as well as taking the punishment reserved for criminals. Take a few moments to think about that. Then, exalt Him and lift Him up in your prayers of praise (you can do this as a group or individually).

Word

Luke 1:39-45 (NIV)

³⁹ At that time Mary got ready and hurried to a town in the hill country of Judea, ⁴⁰ where she entered Zechariah's home and greeted Elizabeth. ⁴¹ When Elizabeth heard Mary's greeting, the baby leaped in her womb, and Elizabeth was filled with the Holy Spirit. ⁴² In a loud voice she exclaimed: "Blessed are you among

women, and blessed is the child you will bear! ⁴³ But why am I so favored, that the mother of my Lord should come to me? ⁴⁴ As soon as the sound of your greeting reached my ears, the baby in my womb leaped for joy. ⁴⁵ Blessed is she who has believed that what the Lord has said to her will be accomplished!"

In this passage, we read about Mary visiting her cousin Elizabeth after becoming pregnant. Is there anything in this passage that relays the idea of "worthiness" for Mary to be carrying the Son of God?

What about Elizabeth, she remarks about being "favored". Did she do anything to earn favor among men (or God)?

In verse 45, what is it that Mary did to be blessed?

What makes you worthy of God's blessing? Is there anything you've done on your own to earn that, or can it really be just as simple as what Mary did...*believing?*

Walk

As you celebrate the Christmas season, take time to read the account in Luke 2:1-11. Many families will use this as part of their Christmas Eve or morning tradition.

Memory Verse

Prov 16:2 (NIV) *"All a man's ways seem innocent to him, but motives are weighed by the LORD."*