

“Had Jesus Not Come to Bethlehem There Would Be No Clear Picture of God”

John 1:14,18; 14:7-9

Sunday Morning, December 15, 2019

Introduction: The Bible is very clear that Jesus was born in Bethlehem (Matthew 2:1; Luke 2:4). What makes this important is that the Prophet Micah said over 700 years before His birth that the Messiah would be born in Bethlehem (Micah 5:2).

Bethlehem---the little town on the outskirts of Jerusalem where Jesus was born.

- Not Jerusalem
- Not Rome
- But Bethlehem
- One of my favorite places in the Holy Land
- One of my favorite Christmas carols is about Bethlehem.

“O little town of Bethlehem
How still we see the lie
Above thy deep and dreamless sleep
The silent stars go by
Yet in thy dark streets shineth
The everlasting light
The hopes and fears of all the years
Are met in thee tonight.”

What a difference it would make had Jesus **NOT** come to Bethlehem.

1. There would be no solution to our sin problem.
2. There would be no clear picture of God.
3. There would be no guidance of the Holy Spirit.
4. There would be no source of peace.

Today: Had Jesus not come to Bethlehem there would be no clear picture of God.

Text: John 1:14 (John’s record of the Christmas story is in one verse. Luke’s record of the Christmas story is 20 verses.

1. “The Word became flesh.”

- God took on humanity.
- The invisible became visible.
- God wrapped Himself in human flesh.

2. “And dwelt among us.”

- The word translated “dwelt’ means literally “pitched a tent.”
- OT tabernacle was where God met with the Hebrew people.
- Called the tabernacle of meeting (Exodus 33:7).

3. “We beheld His glory.”

- The disciples saw glimpses of His glory.
- Example: In Matthew 17 at the transfiguration of Jesus.
- “His face shined like the sun, and His clothes became as white as the light” (Matthew 17:2).

4. “Only begotten of the Father”

- The word translated “begotten” refers to prominence not origin.
- The same word is used in Hebrews 11:17 where the Bible says that Isaac was Abrahams only begotten.
- Isaac was Abrahams second son—Ishmael was Abrahams first son.
- Isaac was loved like no other.
- Isaac was the son of promise.

Had Jesus not come to Bethlehem there would be no clear picture of God.

- Why?
- Because no one has seen God at any time (John 1:18).

Illustration: In the Bible, we read about people saying they have seen God. Jacob said, “I have seen God face to face” (Genesis 32:30). In Exodus 33:20, we read that Moses wanted to see God. John 1:18 says, that no one has seen God at any time.” What is the answer? The answer is that no one has seen God in all His glory.

- People had a “spiritual seeing of God’s face, but not in all His glory.

Because no one has seen God at any time, the Bible says that Jesus “declared” Him (John 1:18).

- The word transferred “declared” means interprets and explains who God is and what He does.
- The NIV translates it “Has made Him known.”
- Had Jesus not come to Bethlehem we would not have a clear picture of God.

1. Had Jesus not come to Bethlehem we would not have a clear picture of God’s (attributes) or His (characteristics).

- The Bible says, “He (Jesus) is the image of the invisible God” (Colossians 1:15).
- The Greek word translated “image” is *eikon* which means the exact likeness.
- Jesus is both the representation and manifestation of God.

Application: When you read the gospels, you see qualities in the life of Jesus that are an exact copy of God the Father.

T.S. Look at the life of Jesus and you have a clear picture of God.

2. When people look at (our) (life), they should have a clear picture of God.

- The Bible says that God’s purpose for the saved is to be conformed to the image of His Son (Romans 8:29).
- People should look at our lives and see a likeness to Jesus.
 1. A likeness to what He taught
 2. A likeness to how He lived.
- 3. People should look at our lives and see a clear picture of God.

Application: This should be the goal of every believer. We will not achieve the goal until Christ comes for us (Phil. 1:6), BUT we can work at getting closer to the goal. It is a process—it is a process/little by little (2 Cor. 3:17-18).

Illustration: We are His body (1 Cor. 12). Some are the hands, some the feet, some the eyes, etc.

Conclusion: The only picture of God many people may see is you. That is a serious truth.

What changes in your life do you need to make to be a better picture of God?

