

Christmas: How Do You Rejoice at His Birth?

Luke 1:14 — And thou shalt have joy and gladness; and many shall rejoice at his birth.

Introduction

How do you rejoice at His Birth? If you don't at all, you are missing out. The Holy Bible may not command a holiday to be made to the birth of Christ, but an event as wonderful as the first coming of Son of God has from the beginning inspired joy and cause for celebration.



Luke 2:8-14 And there were in the same country shepherds abiding in the field, keeping watch over their flock by night. 9 And, lo, the angel of the Lord came upon them, and the glory of the Lord shone round about them: and they were sore afraid. 10 And the angel said unto them, Fear not: for, behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people. 11 For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord. 12 And this shall be a sign unto you; Ye shall find the babe wrapped in swaddling clothes, lying in a manger. 13 And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host praising God, and saying, 14 Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men.

Not as a command but as a matter of personal, spontaneous worship, how do you rejoice at his birth?

1. I Rejoice at His Birth with the Word of God
2. I Rejoice at His Birth with Meaningful Traditions
3. I Rejoice at His Birth with Singing

1. I Rejoice at His Birth with the Word of God

A. I revel in reminding myself what the Bible does tell us, instead of brooding over what it does not say.

1. The Messiah would come from the **line of Abraham**. Prophecy: Genesis 12:3. Fulfilled: Matthew 1:1.
2. The Messiah's mother would be a **virgin**. Prophecy: Isaiah 7:14. Fulfilled: Matthew 1:18–23.

Matthew 1:18 — Now the birth of Jesus Christ was on this wise: When as his mother Mary was espoused to Joseph, before they came together, she was found with child of the Holy Ghost.

3. The Messiah would be a **descendent of Isaac and Jacob**. Prophecy: Genesis 17:19 and Numbers 24:17. Fulfilled: Matthew 1:2.
4. The Messiah would be born in the town **Bethlehem**. Prophecy: Micah 5:2. Fulfilled: Luke 2:1–7.
5. The Messiah would be called **out of Egypt**. Prophecy: Hosea 11:1. Fulfilled: Matthew 2:13–15.
6. The Messiah would be a member of the **tribe of Judah**. Prophecy: Genesis 49:10. Fulfilled: Luke 3:33.
7. Jesus will **enter the temple**. This is important because the temple was destroyed in A.D. 70 and was never rebuilt. Prophecy: Malachi 3:1. Fulfilled: Luke 2:25–27.
8. The Messiah would be from the lineage of **King David**. Prophecy: Jeremiah 23:5. Fulfilled: Matthew 1:6.
9. The Messiah's birth would be accompanied with **great suffering and sorrow**. Prophecy: Jeremiah 31:15. Fulfilled: Matthew 2:16.

Matthew 2:16 — Then Herod, when he saw that he was mocked of the wise men, was exceeding wroth, and sent forth, and slew all the children that were in Bethlehem, and in all the coasts thereof, from two years old and under, according to the time which he had diligently enquired of the wise men._

10. Jesus will live a **perfect life**, **die by crucifixion**, **resurrect from death**, **ascend** into heaven, and **sit** at the right hand of God. Prophecies: Psalm 22:16; Psalm 16:10; Isaiah 53:10–11; Psalm 68:18; Psalm 110:1. Fulfilled: 1 Peter 2:21–22; Luke 23:33; Acts 2:25–32; Acts 1:9; Hebrews 1:3.

B. I like to re-examine assumptions, presuppositions and separate the myths from the truths.

As a curiosity, there are some common misconceptions about Christ's birth that I like to review, and I'm always on the lookout for more!

1. "Were there Wisemen at the Stable?" The wisemen, it would seem, appear 2-3 years later AFTER the Nativity and were not present that night at all. The shepherds came to the manger (Luke 2:8-10), but not the wise men who came to Joseph's house.
2. Christmas on December 25th Jesus was almost definitely not born on December 25 and this glorious event may not have been associated with winter at all for hundreds of years following. (Christ's birth was celebrated about 250 AD in the Spring and on December about 325 AD) December 25th had importance to pagans, it has since been hijacked successfully and used to celebrate Christ's birth by many Christians.

What's in a day? It is great fun to consider all the different guesses and what possibilities lie behind each one.

- December 25, is used today by most people in the Western Hemisphere.
- Many Orthodox Christians celebrate Christmas on January 7.
- A deep dive the Biblical text has led some to conclude it was during September or October that Jesus was born.
- Some hypothesize it was in the Spring He was born.

3. "Mary wanted to spend the night at an inn, but there were no "motel rooms" available because the inn was full." It was much more common for some homes to have a 'guest chamber' than it would be to find something akin to Motel 6. There was no space (room) in the "upper room" of a private house because other family members had got there first. The 'inn' in Luke 2:7 (as in Mark 14:14) was not a public inn, motel, hotel etc. but a 'guest chamber'.
4. "Mary remained a virgin until the day of her death." If Matthew 13:55,56, is to be understood as the literal "brothers" and "sisters" of Jesus, then Mary and Joseph had many other children.

5. "They spent the night in a separate building like a **barn** where the animals were kept." There was no room on the upper floor of the house so they spent the night on the main floor of the house where the animals were kept inside the house. Most ancient Jewish houses had a common area on the main floor, including a manger where animals ate and slept at night, and an upper room where everyone slept. It is possible that there was a separate barn, but this would often be attached to the house directly.
6. "There were **three** wise men." There were three gifts, gold frankincense and myrrh. There may have been 10 wise men, we don't know, but each of them likely brought some gold frankincense and myrrh. Since these were common currency items of value, each wise man, regardless of the actual number, may have brought a little of all three of these gifts.
7. "The star of Bethlehem shone over the manger only on the night Jesus was born." The wisemen were able to follow the star all the way to Jerusalem.

c. I read Matthew 1-2 and Luke 1-2 particularly with my family.

Reading the Scripture with others is an awesome way to witness to the testimony of Scripture. Reading together what the Scriptures say helps us to see among other things where our traditions may or may not harmonize with the Bible.

2. I Rejoice at His Birth with Meaningful Traditions

a. What the Bible says about Tradition

There are both negatives and positives when it comes to tradition. The Bible speaks to us on both fronts.

1. Negative Side

Matthew 15:3 But he answered and said unto them, Why do ye also transgress the commandment of God by your tradition? [**'when prioritized before the commands of God.'**]

Col 2:8 Beware lest any man spoil you through philosophy and vain deceit, after the tradition of men, after the rudiments of the world, and not after Christ. [**'when the only reason is everyone is doing it'**]

Some traditions are dangerous in a physical sense. Here are some examples of "**Dangerous Traditions**":

1. **New Year's Eve Dive** Each year, hundreds of Dutch make their way to the beach at Scheveningen, and charge into the freezing waters for the traditional New Year's Dive.
2. December is filled with occult practices across the world and history.
3. **Baby Dropping (Muslims in the India line up to drop their babies off a 15 meter tower in a shrine, catching them in a white sheet. The ritual, which has taken place for more than 500 years, is believed to make the children grow up healthy and strong. The Muslims claim there have never been any injuries during this ritual!)**
4. **Fireworks Battle** (In Greece in celebration of Easter, two Orthodox churches face each other, firing fireworks!)
5. **Christmas Trees** (During 2003-2006, 240 homes fires per year took place, all of which started due to a Christmas tree, according to the National Fire Protection Association. On average 16 people died because of the fire, and 25 were injured each year. Christmas tree fires are rare, but when they do happen, they are usually catastrophic.)

Some traditions are dangerous in a spiritual sense, as they are not grounded in a Scriptural precedent they may be misleading concerning Spiritual truths.

1 Peter 1:18 Forasmuch as ye know that ye were not redeemed with corruptible things, as silver and gold, from your vain conversation received by tradition from your fathers; [**when concerning matters of the soul, tradition is merely temporal, limited, (carnal)**]

2. Positive Side

There is a positive side to tradition as well and Christian history is rich with examples of these practices that howbeit are not essential to salvation but still are filled to the brim with meaning, value and sacredness to those who practice them.

2 Thessalonians 3:6 Now we command you, brethren, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye withdraw yourselves from every brother that walketh disorderly, and not after the tradition which he received of us. [“**A GODLY EXAMPLE**”]

Joshua 4:6 That this may be a sign among you, that when your children ask their fathers in time to come, saying, What mean ye by these stones? [“**A Memorial to all generations of the Grace and Glory of God!**”]

The traditions we keep, if done right, can serve as memorial stones and illustrations of the truths of God's Word. When it comes to tradition it is most effective when we can teach the next generation, "Why we do, what we do."

- Gift giving. Do you know what the greatest gift ever given was?
- What is the tradition of your 'vocabulary' during this season? "Season's Greetings", "Happy Holidays", "Merry Christmas"? "X-Mass" (The "X" comes from the Greek letter Chi, which is the first letter of the Greek word Christós (Greek: ??????), which became Christ in English.) etc.
- What in the world is a "Yuletide"? Yule or Yuletide ("Yule time") (pre-christian) is a pagan religious festival observed by the historical Germanic peoples, later undergoing christianization, is now better known as, "Christmastide". "The Yule log", "Yule goat", "Yule boar", "Yule singing", etc. The Yule log was originally an entire tree, that was carefully chosen and brought into the house with great ceremony with the purpose of providing maximum warmth and endurance.
- Do you or do you not "go caroling"? About 16% of Americans say they go caroling, (32% said they did as children).
- Do you decorate your home? What kind of decorations do you use and why? Do you wear any special clothes at this time? Do you set up a tree? Do you hang lights?
- Do you attend or participate in a "Christmas Play", "Living Nativity", "Christmas Concert" or something similar? I read a study once that illustrated a correlation between successful people and having participated in Christmas plays as children. Maybe there was something to that.

3. I Rejoice at His Birth with Singing

Isa 44:23 Sing, O ye heavens*; for the LORD hath done it*: shout, ye lower parts of the earth: break forth into singing, ye mountains, O forest, and every tree therein: for the LORD hath redeemed Jacob, and glorified himself in Israel. <<HE’S DONE IT!!!>>

Eph 5:19 **Speaking** to yourselves in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody in your heart to the Lord;

Col 3:16 Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom; **teaching** and **admonishing** one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord.

a. Psalms -

Literally, a psalm is a poem written to be sung to the accompaniment of stringed instruments. Sing the words of Scripture and take them as our pattern for other lyrics.

b. Hymns – (Carols) - Carol “dance in a ring” “song of joy” (around 1500) “Christmas Hymn of Joy”

In the Greek and Roman empires leading up to the time of the New Testament, hymns were sung in praise of heroes and gods. Hymns would not be foreign to these gentiles who were in the habit of celebrating the victories of their generals or exalting their false gods with "hymns".

Christians purposed the hymn for sacred use, and used them as songs of praise to one God of the Bible. The character of these "Christian hymns" puzzled the Romans. In 112 AD, when Pliny, a governor in Bythinia, wrote to Emperor Trajan, asking for advice on how to handle the rising number of Christians in the realm, he commented that the Christians were observed singing “a hymn to Christ as to a god.” In his mind hymns were songs for heroes and champions, not for one shamefully crucified on a cross! GLORY TO GOD!

In our modern time, I tend to think of "the classics" when I talk about Hymns. Some of my favorites are:

- [O Come, All Ye Faithful](#)
- [Joy to the World](#)
- [Hark the Herald Angels Sing](#)
- [I Heard the Bells on Christmas Day](#)
- [The First Noel](#)

If you like good hymn stories, check this article out: [Beloved Christmas Carols and the True Stories Behind Them](#)

c. Spiritual Songs —

The term "song" is a generic term in Greek meaning all kinds of songs. Paul added the descriptive "spiritual" to narrow its meaning. Not all music is composed for worship or should be used for worship. I think of spiritual songs as being personal, testimonial, and maybe even simple songs whose object is the glory of God.

Psalm 95:1 *O come, let us sing unto the LORD: let us make a joyful noise to the rock of our salvation.*

One of my great joys of the Christmas season is learning about a song I've never heard of before. Sometimes when so inspired, I like to put to pen an original poem and song about my Savior who died for me. Maybe you could write a spiritual song memorializing Jesus Christ and sing it!

Conclusion

How about you? How do you, if at all, rejoice at His Birth?

For More Information

- The Holy Bible, King James Version
- <https://www.pewresearch.org/religion/2013/12/18/celebrating-christmas-and-the-holidays-then-and-now/>
- https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Baba_Umer_Dargah
- "Singing Psalms, Hymns and Spiritual Songs", KEN PULS, <https://founders.org/articles/singing-psalms-hymns-and-spiritual-songs/>
- [Beloved Christmas Carols and the True Stories Behind Them](#)
- <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Rouketopolemos>
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- <https://www.timeanddate.com/holidays/common/orthodox-christmas-day#:~:text=Orthodox%20Christmas%20Day%202024&text=Many%20Orthodox%20Christians%20annually%20celebrate,calendar%2C%20which%20is%20commonly%20observed.>
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