

The Greatest Commitment at Christmas Time

Introduction:

1. Every year people make commitments at Christmas time. They commit themselves to buying things or to charging things on a credit card (and hopefully to pay it back). They make commitments to going places (maybe on Christmas day) – trips to see family, to go to church services, etc.
2. But there is one commitment that every believer should make at Christmas time, above all other commitments, and that is a commitment to magnify and exalt Jesus Christ.
 - Christmas is supposed to be all about Christ, is it not?
3. Of course Christ has **already been** exalted in heaven by the Father. Philippians 2:9
4. But what about here on earth? Unfortunately, Satan has implemented his plan and policy of evil here on planet earth, and he doesn't simply want to remove Christ's name. However, he desires to demean and degrade the name of Christ.
5. But this is where believers comes in. If you have been saved from your sins, it was by the wonderful name of Jesus (**Acts 4:12**). Our mission is to magnify Christ, showing people how incredible and powerful, yet how gracious He is.
6. If the Father has highly exalted Christ above every other name, shouldn't our heart be to do the same? His heart ought to be our heart. That is why we're here on earth, and the apostle Paul understood this. Philippians 1:20-21
7. What an opportunity we have at Christmas time to exalt Jesus Christ. People are already thinking about Him (in some way), and there are so many opportunities to engage others in a discussion about Jesus Christ.
8. Here is the commitment I believe we should **all** make at Christmas time – commit to exalting Jesus Christ above all else (in our personal lives, at home with our families, and publicly in our community).
9. There is a great word for this in Colossians 1:18. It is the word “*preeminence*,” which simply means “first place.” Sometimes Christ may be high on our list and He may have **prominence**, but the Bible says “*in all things, Christ should have the preeminence.*” Will you make this your commitment?
10. Why should every believer make this commitment to exalt Christ?

First, because of who Christ is.

1. Jesus Christ is not simply a baby in a manger. He is not a feminine-looking, passivist, religious leader, as some people have portrayed Him. He is no longer hanging on a cross in pain and agony, as others have depicted Him.
2. The majority of the world is thinking about Jesus Christ during this time, but so many times their thinking is skewed. They don't have a biblical perspective about who Christ is.
3. Jesus asked the disciples at one point in His ministry, "*Whom do men say that I am?*" (Mark 8:27) The disciples were honest and told Him what they had heard from people, and of course, just like today, people had it all wrong. They said things like John the Baptist, Elijah, Jeremiah, one of the prophets. Mark 8:28
 - Then Jesus asked them a direct question, "*But who do you say that I am?*" Peter answered, "*Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God.*" **Matthew 16:13-16**
 - Ole' Peter said some mighty stupid things in his life, but he sure got that question right, didn't he?
4. Jesus is not a mere man or religious leader. He is not weak or passive. Christ is declared to **be** the power of God and the wisdom of God. 1 Corinthians 1:24
 - You want to see God's power? Look at Jesus. Do you want to see God's wisdom and knowledge? Look at Jesus.
5. To the apostle Paul was revealed even a greater understanding of the person of Jesus Christ – who Christ is.
6. The twelve understood who Christ was in relation to Israel's prophetic program and Christ being their King (the ruling and reigning Messiah). But God set that program aside, temporarily, and began to form a new organism called the church, the body of Christ.
7. To Paul was given an even deeper knowledge than the twelve disciples. To Paul was revealed who Christ is in relation to the church, the body of Christ. This text is a gold mine of insight into who Christ is, in relation to us today.

Christ is the Image of the invisible God. vs. 15

1. The invisible God wrapped Himself in human flesh and blood there in Bethlehem (John 1:1, 14). Therefore, Jesus could truthfully say, "*He that hath seen me hath seen the Father.*" **John 14:9**

2. We are made in His image, but we aren't **the** image of God. Since no mere creature can perfectly reveal God, Jesus Christ must be God! He is Immanuel – God with us. Christ is God in bodily form. Hebrews 1:3 declares, Christ is the express image of God's person.

Christ is the Firstborn of every creature. vs. 15

1. This doesn't mean that Christ was the first created being because that would contradict the next verse. Jesus Christ is the Creator.
2. The term "*firstborn*" has to do with Christ entering the world and taking on humanity. There was a day in time in history when Christ was begotten (born) into this world. He left the glories of heaven and stepped into time.
3. "*Firstborn*" is a title of preeminence. It means "of first importance, of first rank." Nobody that has been born in this world is above Him.
4. Millions were born into this world before Christ, but they were all marred by sin. But in Bethlehem the Father said, "*Thou art my Son, this day have I begotten thee.*" (**Hebrews 1:5-6**) What day? The day Christ entered the world.
5. Jesus was the first man ever to be born into this world of God's Spirit. The term "*firstborn*" has nothing to do with eternity past; it has to do with the eternal Son being born into this world and having first place and preeminence over anybody else ever born. He is firstborn (# 1 in rank).

Christ is the Creator of all things. vs. 16-17

1. Every form of matter and life owes its origin and existence to God the Son. Everything visible to the human eye and everything invisible (angelic host).
2. Ever look up in the sky and wonder why a star is located where it is? It is because that is exactly where Jesus wanted it to be. What holds the earth, the orbits, the galaxies, the moon, and the stars in place? Look at verse 17.
 - It was put together and is held together by Christ.
3. Everything was created by Him **and** for Him. The cause, effect, and purpose were all in Christ.

Christ is the Head of the body, the church. vs. 18

1. Christ is the originator of a brand new organism that never existed prior to His crosswork. He is the Head of the church. The church is His body, and it is composed of all true believers that have been saved and seated in heavenly places.
2. Are you part of this body? Do you know Jesus Christ as your personal Savior?
3. If you do, my prayer is that each of us will make a commitment to exalt Jesus Christ above all else this Christmas season. But if you don't, it begins with inviting Him into your heart and life as your Lord and Savior.