

Christmas Eve, 12/ 24/ 2025

1. What is it about Christmas that is so beautiful?
 - A) We hear the same story, yet it touches us deeply every year
 - B) The music seem more poignant, more joyous, even though it is perhaps more familiar
 - C) Maybe it is the lights and decorations. The celebrations that enhance our experience of the Nativity narrative.
 - D) Perhaps just the innocence of it all. There is a purity in the story. Inspires us to better things.
2. It is all of the above and so much more.
3. Of course the heart of the nativity story is giving,
 - A) it is really about that thing that matters most – love.
4. Let us not confuse real love with the feelings.
 - A) The feelings, no doubt, are real, but they are not in themselves love.

5. Love is the sacrificing of the self for the benefit of another.
 - A) Not dependent upon the outcome.
 - B) Not dependent upon the reward.
 - C) Not dependent upon the recognition.
 - D) It is an un-selfconscious gift.
6. The purity of the story → the complete offering up of the self, yielding the self, to another.
7. God, in Christ, gave Himself to us without reservation. This is the core of the Christmas story. This is true love.
8. Yet there is something more than this that resonates with us.
9. The nativity story shows us a world in chaos, an oppressed world, an hopeless world. God enters into that hopelessness, not as a wrecking ball, but as a small, minuscule, insignificant, point of hope.
10. God here begins to reorder the cosmos through the birth of a baby.

11. Mary and Joseph and the Newborn Jesus are poor, cold, hungry, dirty, but because of their love for God and His love for them, for us, these things don't matter.

12. Love brings hope. In the Nativity, we see

- A) that the insignificant things are really the most significant.
- B) We see the cosmos reordered by God's love which shows us how we are to love.
- C) We see that our actions in the small things have cosmic consequences.
- D) And we comprehend in the story of Christmas, that there is a purpose to it all.
- E) The love of God revealed for us in Christ leads us to understand that we are headed for complete joy. This is our Eternal destiny.

13. The temptation for us is, that when we turn away from this season, when we turn back away from the manger and return to the "normal" 51 weeks of the year, that we forget the significance of every moment.

14. This then is the challenge of Christmas for us.
That we would perpetually, always, remember
the love God shows us in this incomprehensible
gift.
15. His gift of love gives us hope
16. His hope assures us that the struggles and pain
we endure are not pointless. They will bring us
to everlasting joy and unspeakable glory.
17. Therefore, let us resolve to embrace the Love,
Hope, and Eternal Purpose of Christmas every
day and moment of our lives
18. The Baby who was born for us grew to be the
man who sacrificed Himself for us on the Cross.
19. Let us Honor God's gift to us, by always giving
all that we are and all that we have back to God.
20. In the Name of the Father, and the Son and the
Holy Ghost, AMEN.