

What is After Christmas?

The Season of Christmas is a busy time. It is filled with celebrations, carols, feasting, shopping, travelling, holidays and family gatherings. It is a time of hard work for the shopkeepers, especially those who sell Christmas trees. It's also a busy time for security people who work day and night in order to prevent any accidents and crimes.

It is indeed a time full of movement and business. This is all fine but it is important for us not to forget that this time of Christmas is a time when God decided to come to our world and become flesh like us and be with us. This is why one of the names of Jesus is Immanuel, which means, God with us. This was mentioned in the prophecy about the birth of Jesus Christ, **“Behold, the virgin shall be with child, and bear a Son, and they shall call His name Immanuel,”** which is translated, **“God with us.”** Matthew 1:23 (NKJV) and John said, in the Gospel we read today, **“¹⁴ And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we beheld His glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth.”** John 1:14 (NKJV).

We may ask why God would be incarnated. Why He would come to the human world. The answer to this is found in different parts of the Scripture.

1. Christ was incarnated to tell us about God the Father's love. John wrote **“¹⁸ No one has seen God at any time. The only begotten Son, who is in the bosom of the Father, He has declared Him.”** John 1:18 (NKJV). It means that Christ came to incarnate God's love to us.
2. Christ was incarnated to enlighten every darkness in our hearts. John described this in his words, **“⁹ That was the true Light which gives light to every man coming into the world.”** John 1:9 (NKJV)
3. Christ was incarnated to give us God's grace which we don't deserve. As it is written, **“¹⁶ And of His fullness we have all received, and grace for grace.”** John 1:16 (NKJV)
4. Christ became flesh like us to adopt us as children of God. **“¹² But as many as received Him, to them He gave the right to become children of God, to those who believe in His name:”** John 1:12 (NKJV)
5. Christ was incarnated to pay the wage of our sins through His death on the Cross when we fail to save ourselves by our own deeds. Paul described this **“⁶ who, being in the form of God, did not consider it robbery to be equal with God, ⁷ but made Himself of no reputation, taking the form of a bondservant, and coming in the likeness of men. ⁸ And being found in appearance as a man, He humbled Himself and became obedient to the point of death, even the death of the cross.”** Philippians 2:6-8 (NKJV)

My beloved, Jesus Christ (Immanuel, God with us), was born to share with us our worries, pains, and dreams. He is with us to feed, to heal and to liberate us. The Incarnation of Christ and His presence with us empowers us and gives us the ability to incarnate His love, His grace, His salvation and His light to everyone around us.

This means that Christmas is the beginning of a year full of works and efforts. I invite you, my beloved, to begin working once we finish celebrating Christmas. Maybe in the new year, put on your heart to incarnate God's love, His grace, His salvation, His light and His forgiveness to everyone around us. If we did that, the light of Christ will shine in a world that is full of darkness.

Finally, I would like to share with you a poem by Howard Thurman called "The Work of Christmas":

*When the song of the angels is stilled,
when the star in the sky is gone,
when the kings and princes are home,
when the shepherds are back with their flocks,
the work of Christmas begins:
to find the lost,
to heal the broken,
to feed the hungry,
to release the prisoner,
to rebuild the nations,
to bring peace among the people,
to make music in the heart.*

Have a Blessed Christmas all the year round!