

Gift giving, chestnuts roasting on an open fire and Jack Frost nipping at your nose are nice things to experience during this Christmas season. Nobody can have too much hope, peace, joy and love. While all these things are blessings from God, we need to go deeper to experience the meaning, the heart of Christmas.

So let's start which was written approximately 700 years B.C.

**“For to us a child is born, to us a son is given” Isaiah 9:6a**

Now we are getting somewhere. If you understand the true meaning of Christmas, you might not be able to afford a gift or even receive one, you may not feel warm or cozy and you may be utterly alone and still experience the very heart of Christmas.

Let's not forget what big news this is. It's such a big deal that over 300 prophecies would foretell it, a host of angels would come down to announce it, kings would travel from afar to worship Him, Herod would take lives to destroy Him and John the Baptist would come before Him.

There is something much bigger going on than sugar plums, sleigh rides and presents- much, much bigger.

Experiencing the heart, the hope, the joy, the peace and the love of Christmas is yours to have now. Let's make sure we are in the right place to receive this amazing gift. It all starts with a prerequisite.

1) **PREREQUISITE OF CHRISTMAS** (Isaiah 53:6)

While living in Chicago I was driving northbound on I-94, flowing with traffic at a high rate of speed. Suddenly, I saw a car in front of me, and for a moment I was confused. When I realized that the car was heading the wrong way in my lane, I jerked my wheel and missed the car- barely saving our lives. This driver of this vehicle didn't seem to care he was heading the wrong way. He was going the way he wanted to go as if he was waiting for his life to end.

We have all gone our own way.

**All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned—every one—to his own way;  
and the LORD has laid on him the iniquity of us all. Isaiah 53:6**

In order for us to get in the right lane to experience the heart of Christmas, there is something we need to know about ourselves. In, fact, the last thing most of us want to admit about ourselves is the very thing we need to admit.

**There is no one righteous, not even one;  
11 there is no one who understands;  
there is no one who seeks God.  
12 All have turned away,  
they have together become worthless;  
there is no one who does good, not even one.”  
Romans 3:10**

Just like the car going against traffic on the express way, which is going against reality, when we can't admit our faults we are going against reality. When we don't align with reality, life is going to hit us "head on". Not admitting our selfishness or our self-centeredness will affect the most important relationships of our lives.

Without the prerequisite of knowing that you are a sinner in desperate need of a savior, you won't experience the heart, hope, peace, joy or love of Christmas. If you get this, if you really see that you are your own worst enemy, that you are a sinner in need of mercy, Christmas will be the most valuable gift you could ever receive.

## 2) REQUIREMENTS OF CHRISTMAS

*“For to us a child is born, to us a son is given;  
and the government shall be upon his shoulder,  
and his name shall be called  
Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God,  
Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.” Isaiah 9:6*

The biggest misunderstanding of the true meaning of Christmas could be manifested when someone says something like this: I'm a good Christian, I go to church, I tithe, I serve and I do more for others than anyone I know. I'm really a pretty good person. Jesus died for me, but I do the rest.

That belief system is a salvation by works system. Though it may be popular, it stands in opposition to the Christmas message and the message of the Bible. This kind of belief system can lead one to be a toxic, judgmental and/or self-righteous person.

Please understand this, Jesus isn't helping you to find eternal life, He is eternal life. Our salvation is by grace alone through faith alone in Christ alone.

*“However, to the one who does not work but trusts God who justifies the ungodly, their faith is credited as righteousness”. Romans 4:5*

Once we realize that without Christ we are headed the wrong way on a road to destruction, we can begin to comprehend the true meaning of Christmas. For unto us a Son is given, it is a free gift from God. He is the Mighty God, Prince of Peace and Everlasting Father. All of the credit and the glory goes to God. And you and I, well we just receive it. To have faith in Christ means we trust Him as our salvation. He paid our price and redeemed us. Once we make Him our Savior, it is our desire to please Him and serve Him as our King.

God became a child and did for us what we could never do for ourselves. Once we accept that what Jesus did for us on the cross is our only way to receive salvation, then we have aligned with reality. The reality is, we have a loving God that has opened His arms wide for us and for humankind. That is the true meaning of Christmas.

*“Glory to God in the highest,  
and on earth peace among those with whom he is pleased!”*

*Luke 2:14*