

## Christmas- God's Love for You and Me – 05 Dec 2004

- Joshua Daniel

The first thing that we should know about Christmas is, that God loves you and me. Whether we ever felt unworthy of this love, I do not know! But this is how John, the beloved disciple puts it. Behold, look! What manner of love the father has bestowed upon us that we should be called the sons of God. Therefore the world knoweth us not because it knew him not.

You know we are all for recognition, big pay checks and you know in some way or other all of us love to be recognized and if possible flattered if not by our friends by at least our own feelings. But my dear friends, the world knew him not. So should you be surprised if the world does not recognize you or me? Is it not enough if Jesus Christ recognizes us? Is it not enough that God should call us his sons or daughters? You know folks; we have to look up higher than we do look. And I think our focus is very much upon our pocket books and we seem to imagine, well, if my pocket book is fine, I am fine. No, that's not how you should evaluate things. Now if Mary had evaluated things in that light she would have said "oh no, I cannot think of having a baby in a manger". I would rather live an ordinary life and have it a little more comfortable than that. First thing that we should recognize is, God in his mercy loving even wretches like me and you and what are we in his sight and as he looks upon our hearts, our thoughts, our aims, our goals. You know we have only a short spell and some of you, who are far younger than I am, imagine possibly that life is so long and you can afford to squander any number of years. But let me tell you friends, we dare not squander a single day or hour. You know our present way of life is such that, even Christmas cannot be a time, a family time. You know we are so wrapped up in the things which are just material things. Just think of the mad rush in our malls and supermarkets. My wife had to go a couple of days ago before closing time to the post office and she said "oh one should not be out on the street on a day like this because people have such short fuses; they are ready to blow up". Nobody has any patience; at the traffic or at somebody else and so on. I don't know if any of you stopped to speak a kind word to the person behind the counter. As I am a travelling man, at the end of a long flight like 11hours or 9 hours, I thank those airhostesses with a real sense of; hey you served us all with a smile through the night. No easy job, walking up and down. You know friends, I don't know if at this time and everybody is in a rush, whether you showed any kindness to someone on the other side of the counter. Love, what manner of love? And we seem to be incapable of even small loving touches. We have no time, all we fancy, we are just too busy. And yet we talk of the love of God at Christmas. How many people today have no love given to them. If you turn to Luke the first chapter you will find rejoicing in the heart of Mary and this is what she says, from the 46<sup>th</sup> verse, Mary said, my soul doeth magnify the lord and my spirit has rejoiced in God my savior. What do we really magnify at Christmas time? You know I see that some of the people in my sub divisions are buying with each other over the decorations. It's quite obvious; you know which fellow has the best lights. All right, if you have little children and children will say "hey Dad let's have the best lights in this community", ok. But as I go past the lights, I say, is there peace inside? Is there love? Is there a restful atmosphere? We are missing out of these things and running after sheer vanity. You know that wonderful house of yours can get burnt down by the time you go to the mall and return and I would like to ask people, what in that house is irreplaceable? Practically nothing. Or the insurance kicks in may be or whatever it is. But what in it is irreplaceable? If you tell me there is nothing in it which is irreplaceable, well, you know my dear friends, wherever we go, we should leave memories behind. You know if your house burns down, there can be memories which say; what peace we enjoyed there. What love as the children were growing up or whatever, how we could worship the lord together and enjoy his presence? You know; enjoying chairs, enjoying the stuff in the fridge is kind of very low level you know. Low level, that never builds life. Never builds a home and you know how some people say, the only way by which I know my daughter or son is

home ,is when I hear the fridge door open in the middle of the night. The quality of life today is such. My soul doeth magnify the lord. Can you really say that? Is the lord Jesus your greatest possession? If he is not, let me tell you, you have no Christmas. Simply no Christmas. It's just some kind of balloon which bursts. My soul doth magnify the lord, that's the heart of Christmas. And if the heart is missing, what have you got? Nothing. And we make sure that at Christmas time, we are so hassled with this or that and so much in a huff about something, we allow our relationships to deteriorate so badly, our choices to stoop so low and become so selfish. And we talk about Christmas. That's no Christmas. When you can only think of yourself and your own, that's no Christmas, certainly not. And here we see in the 47<sup>th</sup> verse, and my spirit has rejoiced in God my savior. That's it. Above everything, our rejoicing should focus upon the freedom from sin. My religion is no longer big talk, it is peace and love. You know religion today is big talk, big talk. I don't like such a thing. It should be seen in your actions. It should be seen in your reaction. It should be seen in your motivation, your goal, your drive. What are you driving at? The companies say today, all you need to do is to serve the company well. Our product should sell. All right, I believe a Christian wherever he works, he does his very best. He is not one of those fellows who loiters around and spends long time over tea breaks and cheats; No. That's not possible. A Christian conscience does not allow that. But we owe our lord the best. He gave us the best and shall we dither about giving him the best. You know we hardly know what we have received. Here is Mary, a virgin girl, she doesn't know her future, there is nothing assured, there is no economic prosperity assured for her and perhaps some sneers and even the danger of being stoned. And yet she can say, before the birth of the babe my soul doth magnify the lord and my spirit has rejoiced in God my savior.