



A Step Above

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ENHANCING THE COMPONENTS OF FITNESS FOR THE GENERAL, HEALTHY POPULATION



Merry Christmas

CHRISTMAS: A LOVE STORY!

Christmas! A time of year that can be very stressful and exciting all at the same time. Families come together that have been apart. Loads of rich foods and desserts we are not use to eating. A time of year we spend a great deal of money we don't have, sing songs and show some kindness to our fellowman. What is the meaning and

purpose of Christmas? CHRISTMAS is truly **God's love letter** to the world. A story which took place over 2000 years ago; some of us know about baby Jesus, but what does it all mean to you and I? Here is a brief summation of why the story of Jesus began.

In the beginning God created us,

the human race. Adam and Eve the first people were happy and everything was great. God and man were connected. God gave man the world, with only one commandment. God told Adam not to eat from the tree of "**knowledge of good and evil**" or they would die. Adam and Eve never knowing what

a consequence was, betrayed God, and from that point on OUR direct connection to God was lost. The human race inherited that betrayal, which means we were born sinners, lost people, separated from our creator, God. Our history is a tragic story of violence and pain. God had a plan to restore our connection with Him. He knew we could not pay the price of our sin debt, our betrayal. What was that plan? **He would pay the debt Himself.**

First, God gave the law (10 commandments) through Moses. The purpose of the law was to show man's sinful condition. The Law exposed us to our guilt, but no matter how hard we tried to live up to that Law, we were never good enough. The Law says that whoever falls short in only one portion is guilty of the whole Law and it is punishable by death. When the law was broken the priest had to perform the ceremonies and sacrifices for sin offerings. The law required the shedding of blood for forgiveness and covering of sin. **Hebrews 9:21-22: "In the same way, he sprinkled with blood both the tabernacle and everything used in its ceremonies. In fact, the law requires that nearly everything be cleansed with blood and without the shedding of blood there is no forgiveness."** That is pretty depressing. There was never a way out!

Second God, thru His prophets in the Holy Bible, spoke of ONE that would come to take our place and be punished, pay the debt we owed for our betrayal. A virgin would be with child, who would be born in the town of Bethlehem and His name is Immanuel, which means God with us. **Isaiah 7:14: "Therefore the Lord himself will give you a sign; the virgin will be**

with child and will give birth to a son, and will call him Immanuel." Micah 5:2: **"But you, Bethlehem Ephrathah, though you are small among the clans of Judah, out of you will come for me one who will be ruler over Israel, whose origins are from of old from ancient times."** He would not just take my debt and yours, but the sin of the whole world. He, God, would come and live as a man and live a perfect life, **(John 8:58: Jesus said to them, "Truly, truly, I say to you, before Abraham was born, I am.")** John 10:30: **"I and the Father are one."**) then die a cruel death in our place. Our punishment which we deserve would be place on God Himself. **Isaiah 53:5: "But He was pierced for our transgressions, He was crushed for our iniquities; the punishment that brought us peace was upon Him, and by his wounds we are healed."** The prophet Isaiah prophesied this event 700 years before it happened. Our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ came and fulfilled the law giving us the ability to become directly connected with God once again. **Romans 10:4: "Christ is the end of the law so that there may be righteousness for everyone who believes."**

Mary was that virgin who God spoke of thru his prophets. She became the mother of Jesus the Messiah, the Christ. He, Jesus, is the gift of Christmas to the world. He came and lived among us, and with his blood paid our debt owed to God for our betrayal. **John 3:16: "For God so loved the world that He gave His one and only son that whoever believes in Him shall not perish but have eternal life."** The purpose and meaning of Christmas is Jesus Christ, God's FREE gift to the world! Anyone (that means you, me and the whole world) that believes and confesses that Jesus Christ came, and

died personally for them, and rose from the dead for their justification is saved. This restores our relationship with God thru believing on Jesus Christ. **Romans 10:12-13: "For there is no difference between Jew and Gentile the same Lord is Lord of all and richly blesses all who call on him, for, Everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved."**

In closing, receiving Jesus Christ is not for behavior modification but when you receive HIM your heart is transformed and you become a new creation in Christ. **Born again!** My Christmas prayer is "Salvation for the Nation!" No matter what you have done or how bad you think you are? It is NEVER TOO LATE TO RECEIVE OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST. In Christ, I hold up everyone's pain and suffering; mentally, physically, emotionally, and spiritually and call out to you. **"YOU ARE HEALED"** by what Jesus Christ did for YOU AND ME on the cross. **By HIS WOUNDS YOU ARE HEALED NO MATTER WHAT!** May you receive that today and allow Him to show you His miracles and His abundant blessing this Christmas year. Through the blood of Jesus Christ, your sins ARE FORGIVEN AND REMEMBERED NO MORE! He loves you and will walk with you through anything. This Christmas season and the upcoming New Year, 2014, let Jesus Christ reign in your life! Jehovah Shalom (God is peace) AMEN!

Best Wishes,

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