



WHO COULD HAVE IMAGINED?

Christmas 2024

Dear Reader,

It never fails to amaze me every year to see people from around the world coming together with family and friends to celebrate Christmas. While our reasons may differ, for true believers and followers of Jesus, Christmas is the holiday that is specifically dedicated to celebrate His birth. Without a doubt, His presence on earth had a profound impact on human life. But who could have imagined that this newborn baby boy would grow up to change the entire world?

Were we to have gone inside the stable in Bethlehem and looked into the manger, nothing in that little baby would have revealed that He was the Son of God made flesh... Were we to have lived in a village called Nazareth, and to have known a carpenter named Joseph, his wife Mary and their son Jesus, nothing would have indicated that He was the Light of the world, coming down from heaven to give sight to the spiritually blind... Were we to have been on those hillsides, and along those dusty paths in Galilee or down in Judea when Jesus was ministering as an adult, nothing would have demonstrated that He was both our Creator and the Creator of the universe... Were we to have heard Him teaching, no matter how profound His words may have been, nothing would have suggested that He was the King of heaven and earth... Were we to have stood on a hillside called Golgotha, and watched Him being nailed to a cross, nothing would have indicated that He was the Savior, willingly giving His life to reconcile humanity to God... Were we to have stood at the empty tomb after His death and burial, nothing would have shown that He was the immortal God, bringing hope of an everlasting life to those who believe... But He is all of that and so much more. His character and attributes are truly immeasurable.

In His infinite wisdom, God planned for His Son, Jesus, to come on this earth as a man, thereby revealing His divine plan of salvation to mankind. He sent angels to announce His birth to the shepherds tending their flocks in a nearby field, while wise men from the East followed a bright shining star to come and worship Christ Jesus, the newborn King. Without the miraculous signs of God, the birth of the long-awaited Messiah and Savior of the world may have gone unnoticed...

This holds true for those of us who have come to believe in Jesus. If no one had shared with us the good news about Him, we wouldn't have known about God's unconditional and boundless love for us. Without God opening our spiritual eyes, hearts, and minds, we wouldn't have been able to comprehend the magnitude of His love, as stated in the following scriptures. "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.”¹ And, "God did not send His Son into the world to condemn the world, but that the world through Him might be saved.”² In His teachings, Jesus also made it clear that He is the only mediator between God and mankind when He declared, “I am the way, the truth, and the life.’ No one comes to the Father except through me.”³

Forty-seven years ago, my husband and I heard and believed in the gospel message of salvation through Christ Jesus. Our hearts and minds were opened to God’s amazing love and grace, completely transforming our lives. We received forgiveness for our sins and were given the precious gift of a new life in Jesus. Through reading, studying, and meditating on His Word, we began a personal relationship with our Savior. By inviting Him into our hearts through prayer and including Him into our daily lives, this relationship now continues to grow stronger every day. We couldn’t have achieved any of this through our own efforts or good deeds, but rather solely through God’s grace and faith... The point is, regardless of our actions or beliefs to reach God, His way is the only one that truly matters, and it is through His Son, Jesus. The following scripture clearly states, “It is by grace you are saved, through faith -- and this is not from yourselves, it is the gift of God -- not by works so that no one can boast.”⁴

We are forever grateful for God’s greatest gift of His Son, Jesus. We are thankful for His boundless love and unwavering presence in our lives, abundant blessings and the promise of eternal life. But, God doesn’t favor one person over another. These precious gifts are for everyone who comes to Him with a sincere heart, believes in Him, receives Him as Savior and follows Him as Lord. In a chaotic world, it’s so comforting to know that God’s love is unconditional and never changes; that He is trustworthy and blesses us with peace and joy even in the face of challenging circumstances in our lives... Jesus is truly the reason for our celebrations during this holiday season, and our greatest desire is to share His wonderful and life-changing message not just on Christmas Day, but throughout the year.

Christmas is such a special time when we gather with family and friends, and enjoy each other’s company. However, I understand that this holiday season might be difficult for you. If so, I pray that you find comfort and peace in both God and the love and support of your loved ones. May God show you His presence in a way that is especially meaningful to you, and may He give you hope for brighter days ahead.

And as I reflect on the upcoming year, I wish to conclude this letter with a beautiful prayer from the Bible for you and your loved ones. “May the Lord bless you and keep you. May the Lord make His face shine upon you, and be kind to you. May the Lord show favor toward you, and give you peace.”⁴

Wishing you and your family a wonderful and blessed Christmas!

With love,
Beth ☺

¹John 3:16

²John 3:17

³John 14:6

⁴Ephesians 2:8-9

⁵Numbers 6:24-26