

JESUS: THE INDESCRIBABLE GIFT

Jesus: The Gift of God's Truth

Twelve Daily Studies for Christmas

John 1:14–18; 8:31–32; 14:1–6

SEARCHING THE SCRIPTURES

STUDY

DAY 6

When people think of Christmas, they often picture a nativity set with carved figures of Mary and Joseph, shepherds, wise men, and a few farm animals serenely gazing at baby Jesus. For many folks, Christmas is about a baby in a manger, and that's as far as their spiritual understanding goes.

However, Christmas is much more than the birth of a baby. It's about *who* the baby is: the God of the universe in human flesh. And it's about *what* He did: proclaim the kingdom of God, die to bear the sins of the world, and rise again to offer eternal life. The splendor of His identity and the significance of His mission comprise the wonder of the baby Jesus, the *true* glory of Christmas.

In this study, we'll examine a statement Jesus made about His identity and mission, and we'll reflect on the spiritual impact of Jesus' life to add deeper meaning to Christmas.



PREPARE YOUR HEART

Take a few moments to look at a nativity scene in your home or a painting online, such as Caravaggio's *The Adoration of the Shepherds*. Notice how all the figures orient toward the baby who is the focal point of the scene. In the space below, express to the Lord your desire to make Jesus the focal point of your life, and ask God to help you find the deeper meaning of Christmas through His Word.

Quotable

Jesus was in a category by Himself. He never left a false impression. Never tried to appear as someone He wasn't. He was the personification of the truth.

— Charles R. Swindoll



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TURN TO THE SCRIPTURES

In the previous study, we read that Jesus was going to prepare a place for His followers in His “Father’s home” (John 14:2) and that He would return to take them there. Let’s pick up just after Jesus said, “When everything is ready, I will come and get you, so that you will always be with me where I am. And *you know the way to where I’m going*” (14:3–4, emphasis added):

“No, we don’t know, Lord,” Thomas said. “We have no idea where you are going, so how can we know the way?” Jesus told him, “I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one can come to the Father except through me.” (14:5–6)

Thomas was like a lost person in the woods who wandered off the trail. Reflect on Thomas’ question to Jesus for a moment. What does a lost person need most? What is a lost person’s greatest fear?

Now, let’s see what Jesus said to lost people like Thomas to meet their needs and calm their fears.



Observation: The Person and Work of Jesus

The *Searching the Scriptures* method of observation invites you to examine the text as a detective might look for clues. What stands out? Do you see any repeated words, contrasts, or comparisons? Can you find the key words? What are the action words and descriptors?



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Circle the key words *where* and *how* in Thomas' question (John 14:5). Thomas wanted to know where Jesus was going and how he could get there. Jesus' answer wasn't what Thomas expected to hear. How did Jesus shift the focus of Thomas' question (14:6)?

What did Jesus say about His identity using "I am" statements?

What did Jesus say about His mission? A clue to spotting His mission is the sentence, "No one can come to the Father except through me" (14:6). Compare this verse with Paul's statement in 1 Timothy 1:15.

From a human perspective, Thomas' question made sense. He couldn't go to the place Jesus described unless he knew where it was and how to get there. Lost and confused, Thomas strained to find the way to the Father's home. Jesus, however, shifted Thomas' mind-set from human effort to faith, from trying to find his own way to, instead, trusting a Person to lead him. Jesus answered Thomas' *where* and *how* question with a *who* answer: Jesus, Himself! Thomas really did "know the Way" after all!



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Interpretation and Correlation: The Uniqueness of Jesus

Let's take a closer look at what Jesus meant as we interpret the passage. What is the significance of the definite article in Jesus' statements, "I am *the* way, *the* truth, and *the* life" (John 14:6, emphasis added)?

Second, what crucial truth about Jesus do the words *no one* and *except* reveal (14:6)?

Correlation is a method of interpreting a passage by comparing it to another passage. How does Paul's teaching in Romans 10:8–13 help us understand Jesus as the *way*?

How does John 1:9, 14 (NASB) and 8:31–32 help us understand Jesus as the *truth*?

How does John 6:40, 53–54 and 11:25–26 help us understand Jesus as the *life*?



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Jesus doesn't just point the way to God, He personally ushers us into God's presence through His mediating sacrifice for our sins. Because we know the Way (Jesus), we are *never* lost. Because we know the Truth (Jesus), we are *never* in the dark. And because we know the Life (Jesus), we will *never* die!



Application: Trusting in Jesus

In his message, Chuck Swindoll described his view of the baby in the manger:

I love the baby in the manger, but that's not all. When Jesus was born, deity became humanity. He grew up, He called disciples, and they followed Him. He taught the truth and lived the truth and died for the truth. And He said in His dying, "If you will trust in Me, I will take over the controls of your life and I will lead you in a way that you could never find on your own. And when I get you to the Father's home, you'll be safe forever."

Close this three-part study of Jesus as God's gift of truth by inviting Jesus to "take the controls of your life and lead you." In what area, specifically, do you need Him to take control?

Thank the Lord for His gift of Jesus, who is the truth in bodily form. When He said that He was the way to eternal life, He was not lying. He could not lie! Now that you know more about the true meaning of Christmas, express your gratitude in a prayer of thanksgiving for the baby in the manger.



A FINAL PRAYER

Father, I acknowledge that Your Son is the way, the truth, and the life. Christmas is about more than a baby in a manger; it's about me accepting Your gift of Jesus into my heart and following Him. He offers me what I could never earn. He leads me to my heavenly home on a path I could never find on my own. Thank You for Your precious gift of Jesus! Amen.



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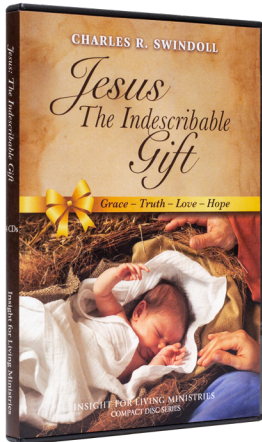
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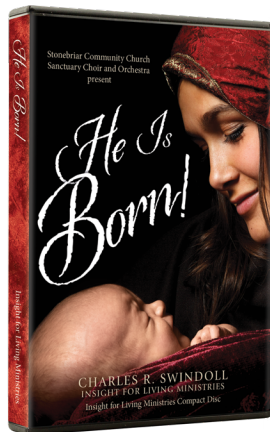
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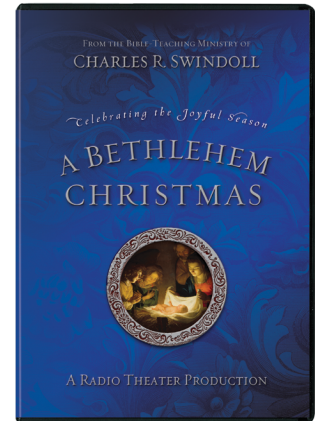
Tools for Digging Deeper



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For the 2018 broadcast, this *Searching the Scriptures* study was developed by Bryce Klabunde, executive vice president of *Searching the Scriptures* Ministries, based upon the original outlines, charts, and sermon transcripts of Charles R. Swindoll's messages.



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