





Who do you
most enjoy
hearing
from at
Christmas?

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***A parent?
Your child?
A best friend?***

**What about a phone
call from God?**





A phone call
from **GOD?**

While presents are great, the greatest gift is surely love...

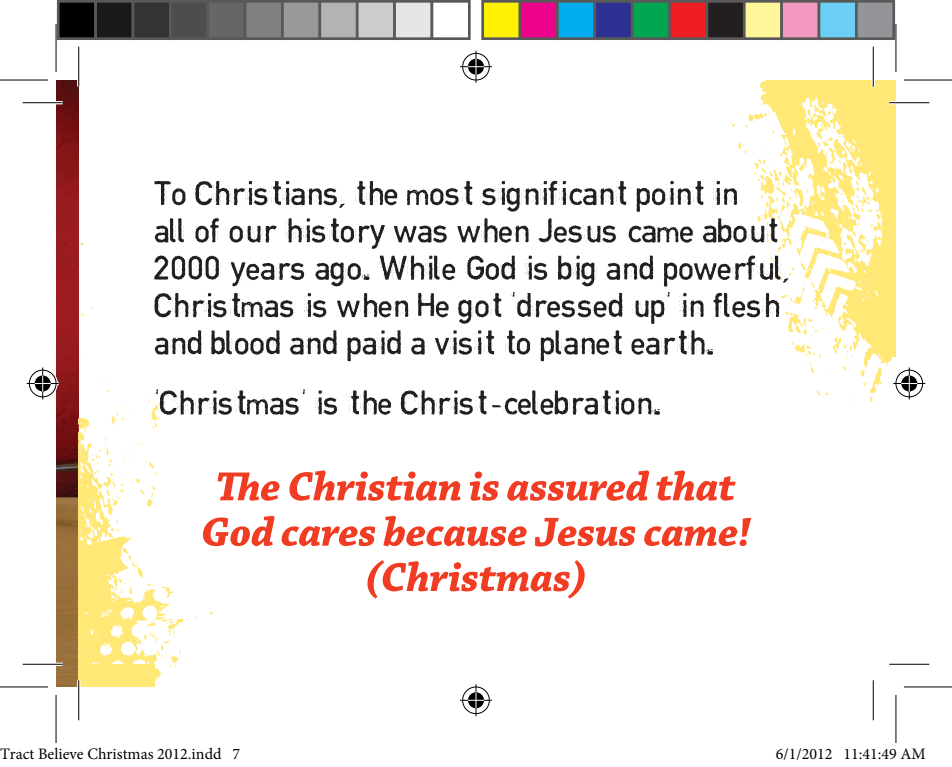
Some people think God has abandoned us - and looking at this world it's not hard to see why. Life has many challenges, and God can seem far away!

The Christmas story is the **hope-filled** account of a God who is involved with His Creation from its beginning... to its end!



When the phone rang
(What Christians believe about Christmas)



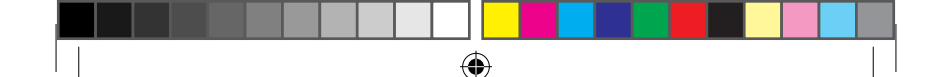
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To Christians, the most significant point in all of our history was when Jesus came about 2000 years ago. While God is big and powerful, Christmas is when He got 'dressed up' in flesh and blood and paid a visit to planet earth.

'Christmas' is the Christ-celebration.

***The Christian is assured that
God cares because Jesus came!
(Christmas)***





Would you arrive as an adult or baby? Would you meet with world leaders, or regular folk? Would you be born rich or poor?



And in your life, would heavenly angels guard you and knock over all your opponents, or would you let yourself be criticised, beaten and killed?

It doesn't take long to see how mind-blowing the arrival of Jesus was.



The 'touch-down'

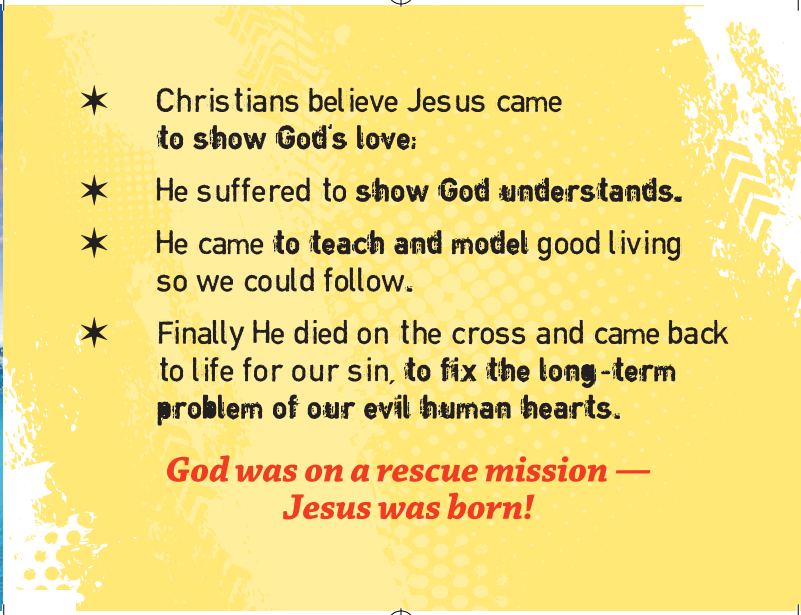




Caught out with nowhere to stay, He ended up being born in a **stable** in Bethlehem (4B.C.). God's Son was born **poor** instead of rich; and into **obscurity** instead of fame.

There were no fireworks. No important people - just a big star and a few shepherds. Yet He was the **most important visitor** in our history - and His short life made a **bigger impact** on our history than any other person who has ever lived!



- 
- ★ Christians believe Jesus came **to show God's love:**
 - ★ He suffered to **show God understands.**
 - ★ He came **to teach and model** good living so we could follow.
 - ★ Finally He died on the cross and came back to life for our sin, **to fix the long-term problem of our evil human hearts.**

***God was on a rescue mission —
Jesus was born!***



Do we **need** God?

Look at history. We're
all a bit selfish, lustful,
greedy...



Based on our track record the long term outlook for our planet isn't looking very hopeful.

The problem is our wrong -doing, but the solution isn't easy.

You see, contrary to popular opinion, God **can't** do everything! He **can't** lie. He **can't** be selfish. And He **can't be unjust**. So He couldn't just let us off for our wrongs... unless someone perfect took the punishment for us...

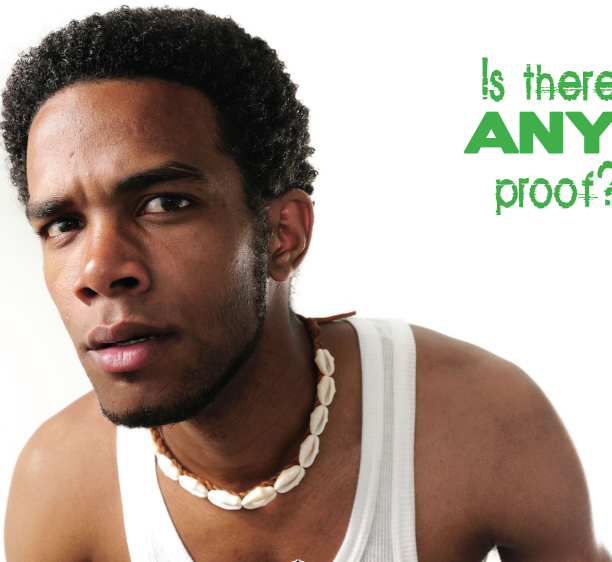
We needed God's help, and God had a plan!

What was the plan? God came in Jesus to die for our wrongs!





Is there
ANY
proof?

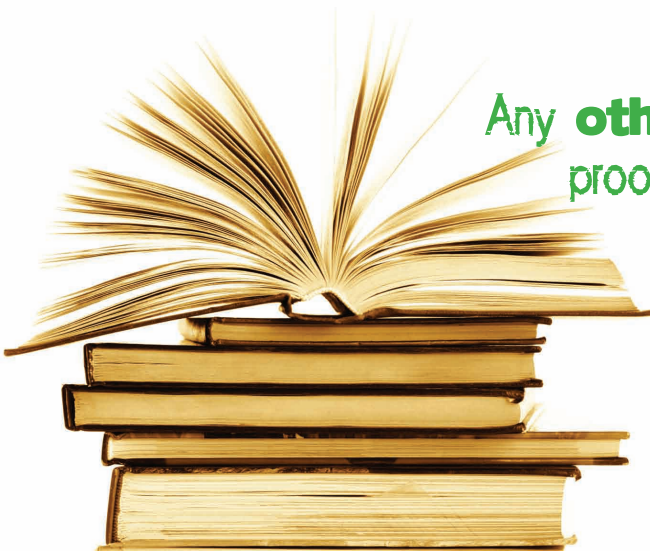




Consider the miracles.

Completely unique in history: the lame walked; the blind saw; the sick were healed; and dead people were raised. Jesus walked on water, turned water to wine, and fed 5000 people from just 5 loaves and 2 fish...

There is no parallel in history to the types of miracles that Jesus performed, and numbers of them!



Any **other**
proofs?



Jesus' life fulfilled more than 100 predictions written hundreds of years earlier. The texts are all there to prove it. Those who look usually find themselves surprised!

For example: The Messiah had to be

- | | |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| (1) born of a virgin; | (2) descended from King David; |
| (3) of the tribe of Judah; | (4) born in Bethlehem; |
| (5) with a birth marred by the slaughter of children; | |
| (6) to live in Egypt; and | |
| (7) grow in 'lowly' circumstances (He grew up in despised Nazareth)... | |

And to be the Messiah He couldn't just fulfil a few - He had to fulfil them **ALL!**



Did people
in His day
believe?





Absolutely!

Especially the hundreds who saw Him alive after being genuinely dead! The number of believers exploded, and they were convinced enough to die for their beliefs too!

People don't die for lies. One way or another these people were totally convinced of His resurrection and who He was.





***Well over 1 billion on our planet
believe that it is!***



Many Christians claim a life-changing experience - that it's not just 'religion', but is real and a personal relationship with the Creator and owner of the universe.

If this is true, then discovering Jesus could be the very purpose for which we were born!




The **Miracle** of Christmas...






To the Christian, the miracle of Christmas is that God loved us so much that He came to earth as a human! It's incomprehensible!



How can we know that we are not alone?
How can we know life has purpose?
How can we know human lives matter, or that there is hope?



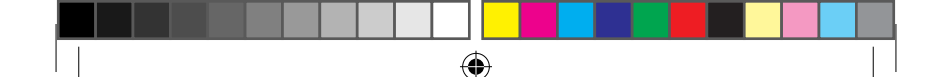
The Bible gives this answer:

It's because Jesus came!





**Merry
Christmas!**




We hope you have a great Christmas, enjoying time with family and friends!

But, most of all, that you consider the message of Christmas. God loved us enough to come down here to earth - and He came for a reason!

It's a mind-blowing idea... God isn't just some powerful being who is far away...

***He is personal, loving, involved, and
He's offering a solution.***





Christmas is like a phone call from God to you. Christians believe God is offering complete forgiveness, restored purpose and eternal hope - but they aren't ours until we receive them.

God is waiting for us to respond!

Why not get down to a Church this Christmas, or say 'hi' to God in a prayer?


There is a suggested prayer on the next page.

Merry Christmas!



A Christmas **prayer**





Dear God. Thanks for caring so much for us that you were willing to leave the comfort of heaven to come here as a baby. Thanks for the example of your life; the clarity of your teachings; and the eternal forgiveness your death made possible for us. You really saved us!

I choose to put my faith and trust in you. Please forgive me, because I know I've done wrong. Please help me be selfless like you were. Help me live the things you teach through the Bible! Thanks again for coming because you loved me!

Amen.



Things that **strengthen**



Christian faith





To strengthen faith, Christians practice three key habits:

1. They read the Bible to understand what Jesus was like and how God wants them to live.
2. They talk to God in prayer, asking His blessing for others and His help in their lives to live selflessly.
3. They attend a Church to learn about God from others and to have a few Christian friends, so that they can encourage each other in living God's way, including helping those in need and sharing God's hope.

These habits recognise that spiritual life is like physical life - it needs feeding if it's to stay strong.



Web links...



Check out Christianity at...

www.jesus.net

or www.lookingforgod.com

Why He came (video)

www.passageway.org

A Shining Lights resource www.shininglights.co

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Written by Dave Mann

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