

If Christ Had Not Come

John 15:22 - *If I had not come and spoken to them, they would have no sin, but now they have no excuse for their sin.*

We live in an age in which only ***one prejudice is tolerated – anti-Christian bigotry.***

- ***Christians***, you can make a *public mockery* without penalty.

Attacks on the church and Christianity are common

- In the media, and ***less conspicuously*** -
- In our schools, universities, and governments. ***Wittenberg example***
- As was once said, ***“Christian-bashing is a popular indoor sport.”***

But the truth is this:

Had Jesus never been born; this world would be far **more miserable** than it is.

Had the church never existed, some of *earth’s greatest accomplishments* would never have graced the pages of history.

In fact, ***many of man’s noblest and kindest deeds*** find their motivation *in simple love* and *willing service* for the humble Carpenter of Nazareth ***named Jesus*** Christ.

Each person’s life has impact on everybody else’s life.

- Had they **never been born**, there would be gaping holes ***left by their absence.***
- If this is **true** for *every human being*, it’s immeasurably **true for Jesus.**
- ***He had more impact*** than *anyone else who ever lived* on human history!

Although **the greatest man who ever lived** *changed virtually every aspect of human life*, most people don’t realize *His contribution.*

The greatest tragedy of the Christmas holiday each year is not so much its **commercialization**, but its **trivialization.**

- People have **forgotten Him** to whom ***they owe so very much.***
- **Much of what we take for granted** finds its roots **in Christ and His teachings.**
- **Christianity** is *ridiculed as a hinderance* to progress, *an annoyance* on humanity, and remains today the *one safe target* of **contempt and prejudice.**

Everything that Jesus touched, He utterly transformed.

- ***He touched time*** when He was born into this world; He had a birthday,
- That birthday utterly **altered the way we measure time**.

Now, the whole world counts time as “Before Christ” (BC) and - “In the Year Of Our Lord” (AD). Formal – used before a year to say that it is after the birth of Jesus Christ

It’s ironic that **the most arrogant atheist** writing a letter to a friend **must acknowledge Christ** when he dates that letter!

The salvation of eternal souls is obviously the primary goal of Christianity - BUT

- There are many other benefits brought by Jesus and His church to our world.
- They are simply by-products of Christ’s teaching, ***applied to daily living***.

In 1926, in a sermon to young people, Rev. James A. Francis powerfully summed up the contribution of Jesus in a piece that has become known over the years as,

“One Solitary Life.”

He was born in an obscure village, the child of a peasant woman. He grew up in another village, where He worked in a carpenter shop until **He was thirty**. Then for **three years** He was an evangelist preacher. He **never** wrote a book. He **never held an office**.

He **never** had a family or owned a home. He **didn’t** go to college. He **never** visited a big city. He **never** traveled two hundred miles from the place where He was born. **He did none of the things** that usually accompany greatness. **He had no credentials but Himself**.

He was only thirty-three when the tide of popular opinion turned against Him. His friends ran away. One of them denied Him. He was turned over to His enemies and went through the mockery of a trial. He was nailed to a cross between two thieves.

While He was dying, His executioners gambled for the only piece of property He had on earth – **His coat**. When **He was dead**, He was laid in a borrowed grave through the pity of a friend.

The Contribution of Jesus!!! “One Solitary Life”...

Nineteen wide centuries have come and gone and today in the 21st Century –

- He is ***the central figure*** of the human race and the leader of progress.
- All **the armies** that ever marched, all **the navies** that ever sailed, all **the kings** that ever reigned, **put together**,

Have not affected the life of man on this earth as much as that One Solitary Life.

Consider the impact of Jesus Christ in just five areas:

1. The Value of Human Life

Genesis 1:27 - *So God created man in His own image; in the image of God, He created him; male and female He created them.*

Prior to the coming of Christ, human life on this planet was expendable and exceedingly cheap, *as it still is today*** in parts of the world ***where Christianity has not penetrated***.**

And as we in North America abandon our Judeo-Christian heritage and values, ***you will see life become increasing cheap*** once again!

In the ancient world, child sacrifice was a common phenomenon. It was a dangerous thing for a baby to be conceived in classical Rome or Greece; ***abortion was rampant***, and ***abandonment*** of infants was commonplace.

It was common for handicapped, or unwanted, or female babies to be taken out into the forest or the mountainside and left to be consumed by wild animals...

But then Jesus came!

Since that time, Christians have cherished life as sacred, even the life of the unborn.

- In ancient Rome, **Christians saved many of these abandoned babies** and **brought them up in the faith**.
- **Abortion absolutely disappeared** in the early church, and ***their higher view of the value of life created the foundation of modern civilization***!

2. The Worth of Women – John 8:11 - *She said, “No one, Lord.” And Jesus said to her, “Neither do I condemn you; go and sin no more.”*

Before Jesus came, a woman's life was also very cheap.

In ancient cultures, the wife was the property of the husband and **women were generally declared not able or competent to be independent.**

In ancient religions like Hinduism, **widows were voluntarily or involuntarily burned** on their husbands' funeral pyres, and many young girls were dedicated from birth to be temple prostitutes.

But then Jesus came!

He elevated women by treating them as equals.

- How ironic that feminists today do not give any credit to Christianity;
- in fact, they say it has oppressed women.
- In reality, the reverse is true.
- **Had Jesus never come, the feminists who curse Him might not have lived more than a few weeks!**

3. Compassion For the Poor - Proverbs 14:21 - *He who despises his neighbor sins; But he who has mercy on the poor, happy is he.*

The world before Christianity was cold and unkind toward the underprivileged.

People who had problems were thought to have brought their circumstances upon themselves.

But then Jesus came!

He set the great example of helping the poor and caring for the downtrodden, even when they were strangers.

While poverty has always been part of life on earth, **the church has done more** to alleviate it than any other institution in history.

The early church attracted many of their converts because their kindness was such a contrast to Rome's harshness.

Most today's charitable organizations had their start within the confines of the church.

4. Moral Absolutes - Hebrews 13:4 - Marriage is honorable among all, and the bed undefiled; but fornicators and adulterers God will judge.

Fornication, adultery, group sex, homosexuality, lesbianism, sodomy, bestiality and ***every conceivable kind of immorality and perversion*** were rampant in the ancient world.

Many of these vices were practiced by the ancient Canaanites; ***that's why God instructed Israel to drive them out of the Promised Land!***

Historians tell us that every great civilization throughout history has gone through two phases:

- The **phase of ascendancy** until it reaches the pinnacle of its power
- And **the period of descent** until it finally plunges into oblivion.

Historians also declare that, **without exception, every one** of these kingdoms and nations

- **Adhered to a strict moral code** during their rise, then once they prospered
- They entered into promiscuity and sexual expression
- **Which resulted in their ultimate downfall. Without exception!**

But then Jesus came!

He was born into this defiled world and taught that sex was sanctified by God, but only when expressed in a marriage according to His Word.

As a result, His church stood out like a beacon of light in a dark world.

Christianity has helped preserve the family as the basic unit of society!

Today, ***the popular idea is*** that ***biblical teachings lead to frustration and inhibitions***, but the evidence doesn't back that up.

The American Psychiatric Association and The American Journal of Psychiatry wrote, "***Premarital sex relations growing out of the so-called new morality have significantly increased the number of young people in mental hospitals.***"

People have been led to believe that the biblical teaching on sex is not going to make them happy.

For forty years, we have been hearing from all kinds of “**experts**” who tell us that **permissiveness** is the name of the game.

We have produced a whole generation of permissive little monsters who have succeeded in causing our nation to cringe behind triple-locked doors and locked windows.

Many are afraid to go out in big cities at night, because some people lurking in the shadows **just can't control their urges**. **But we taught them not to!**

5. Personal Freedom - 2 Corinthians 3:17 - Now the Lord is the Spirit, and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is freedom (or Liberty).

- ***Wherever the Word of the Lord has been preached, tyrants have trembled, rulers have been cast from the throne, and people have become free.***
- ***The tremendous liberties we enjoy in North America we owe primarily to the Bible.***
- ***Liberty is a constant theme in the Word of God!***

Such liberties are **only** found in countries that began with a **Judeo-Christian base**.

Free speech is a gift from the church, founded by Jesus Christ!

- You'll never hear a talk show in a **Muslim country** discussing whether Mohammed was really a prophet of Allah.
- **Muslim converts to Christianity** are executed in Islamic states!

You'll never head a talk show in **China** discussing whether citizens should be allowed to leave China at will. **Chinese converts to Christianity** are persecuted!

But in every nation where Christianity first set people free from the shackles of sin, the great irony today is that many people use their civil liberties to **rail against Christianity!**

The list could go on and on, ***because the followers of Jesus Christ have brought to the world many benefits such as*** hospitals, universities, capitalism, representative government, the abolition of slavery, much of modern science, higher standards of justice, and the inspiration for our greatest works of art.

If Jesus had never been born, we would undoubtedly wish that we had never been born either!

Although this list of contributions is staggering to the mind, it does not even begin to touch what Jesus really accomplished for humanity....

He came to establish a SPIRITUAL kingdom!

John 18:36 - Jesus answered, "My kingdom is not of this world. If My kingdom were of this world, My servants would fight, so that I should not be delivered to the Jews; but now My kingdom is not from here."

It truly took an amazing man to bring to the world ***what Jesus gave us***, the baby born in Bethlehem was more than a mere human being!

Most of what Jesus does for humanity happens on a much deeper level than just making changes in their society.

He comes to change HEARTS!

(Society changes only when hearts change anyway!)

Isaiah 7:14 - Therefore the Lord Himself will give you a sign: Behold, the virgin shall conceive and bear a Son, and shall call His name Immanuel.

Isaiah 9:6 - ⁶ For unto us a Child is born, Unto us a Son is given; And the government will be upon His shoulder. And His name will be called Wonderful, Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.

Matthew 1:20-23 - But while he thought about these things, behold, an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream, saying, "Joseph, son of David, do not be afraid to take to you Mary your wife, for that which is conceived in her is of the Holy Spirit. ²¹ And she will bring forth a Son, and you shall call His name Jesus, for He will save His people from their sins."

²² So all this was done that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the Lord through the prophet, saying: ²³ "Behold, the virgin shall be with child, and bear a Son, and they shall call His name Immanuel," which is translated, "**God with us.**"

If Mary's son was to be called "Immanuel", why did she name Him "Jesus"?

Because they mean the same thing!

- Immanuel means “GOD WITH US”
- Jesus means “YAHWEH SAVES.”

God didn't come to dwell among us so we could build hospitals or colleges or have better human rights,

He came to save our souls. AND WHERE GOD DWELLS, GOD SAVES!

Wherever He dwells, He will bring salvation!

The list will be endless: Zacchaeus, Bartimaeus, Lazarus, Mary Magdalene, the demoniac from Gadara, the Samaritan woman at the well, Matthew the tax collector, the widow's son from Nain, the servant of a Roman Centurion, the woman with the issue of blood, the ten lepers, the daughter of Jairus, the blind, the deaf and the lame! An endless list!

Imagine a world into which Christ had not come!

- No Christmas! No Christians! No hope!

Imagine a world without a Bible!

- Think of pastors trying to counsel, minister to the sick, and conduct funerals ***without the comfort of God's Word!***

Imagine a world without the church!

- No wonderful worship, no joyous songs, no powerful prayers, no life-changing altar calls!

Imagine your life without His blood to cleanse you from sin -

- Without His Spirit to lead you -
- Without His name to call upon in times of trouble!

No wonder Paul said - 1 Corinthians 15:19 - *If in this life only we have hope in Christ, we are of all men the most pitiable (or miserable).*

***We live in* what scholars are calling the “Post Christian Era.”**

The world for the most part has rejected Jesus Christ, little realizing that they simultaneously have rejected nearly all the advances of society upon which we build our modern civilization!

But even more important, they have rejected their eternal salvation!

CLOSE:

There are only two choices with Jesus Christ, because He as God has set the boundaries.

1. So, when you **do not** actively **obey the Word of God**, you automatically ally yourself with those who are “anti-God.”

WHEREVER JESUS DWELLS, HE BRINGS SALVATION!

Romans 8:8-9 - So then, those *who are in the flesh* cannot please God.

⁹ But **you are not in the flesh** but in the Spirit, if indeed **the Spirit of God dwells in you**. Now if anyone does not have the Spirit of Christ, he is not His.

2. You must receive His Spirit to receive salvation – **Jesus must dwell IN YOU!**

The Bible teaches us that **salvation is God's free gift**, but like all gifts we must receive it in order to enjoy it!

Romans 6:23 - ²³ *For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.*