

THE MIRACLE OF
CHRISTMAS !

We are all aware of this time of the year when there is much activity around the giving of gifts. Christmas is a worldwide event and has become very commercialized in the United States. It is the time that businesses try to finish the year with a profit rather than a loss. Thus, what is called "Black Friday" when the push is on to attract buyers with many special offers. There is much rushing around to get in on the special offers and even getting up early or staying up late to be there when the store opens that has an attractive offer that one wants to get in on.

However, many do not even know why we have Christmas or about the Miracle that caused Christmas to come into existence. Do you know about the Miracle?

A miracle is a supernatural event that is difficult or even impossible to explain. We may know the events surrounding the miracle but to explain the miracle is often impossible. When a true miracle occurs people may shake their heads in wonder or marvel at what has taken place. Some believe but many do not accept the miracle. They try to explain it away.

The true Miracle of Christmas occurred over 2,000 years ago and even affected the calendar. It took place in an obscure village called Bethlehem, the city of David who had been the great king of Israel many years before this time. It took place in a stable where animals were kept. A young couple named Joseph and Mary had come to the village because Caesar Augustus, the ruler of the Roman Empire, which ruled the then known world, had sent out a decree that all the world under his rule should go back to the city of their heritage to pay taxes. Thus, Joseph and Mary had traveled from Nazareth, where they lived, to Bethlehem to pay their taxes.

Mary was pregnant and the time of the birth was near. Her pregnancy is explained in the Bible in the book of Luke chapter 1 verses 26-38. An angel named "Gabriel" had appeared to Mary, who was a virgin and had never know a man intimately like married couples know each other physically. She was engaged to be married to Joseph but was pure sexually. Mary was frightened at Gabriel's sudden appearance and he told her not to be afraid because he had a message for her from the Eternal God. He told her she was "highly favored" and that "the Lord is with thee". He told her that she "had found favor with God" and that she would conceive a son whom she would call "JESUS". He would be great, called "the Son of the Highest" and that the "Lord God" would give Him the throne of his ancestor King David. (This will occur yet in the future the Bible states in Revelation 19:11-16; 20:4-6; plus numerous other scriptures.) Mary asked how this could be since she was a virgin! And next came the amazing part which the angel explained in verse 35 "The Holy Ghost (Spirit)

shall come upon thee (you) and the power of the Highest (Almighty God) shall over shadow thee (you)....that holy thing (one) which shall be born shall be called the SON OF GOD (Jesus)." Verse 37 "For with God nothing shall be impossible!" KJV

This Miracle was predicted or foretold under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit of God to Isaiah, an Old Testament prophet, almost 800 years before it came to pass. The prophecy is found in the book of Isaiah (in the Bible) chapter 7 verse 14 "...Behold a virgin shall conceive, and bear a son and shall call His name Immanuel" and in the New Testament book of Mathew 1:22-23 we learn "Now all this was done, that it might be fulfilled which was spoken of the Lord by the prophet saying, Behold a virgin shall be with child, and shall bring forth a son, and they shall call His name Emmanuel, which being interpreted is God with us."

This MIRACLE of the Eternal God taking on human form to reveal the Almighty God to humanity in a way we could understand who God is. When I was a boy I grew up in West Texas where we had red ant beds. I would walk up to one of their holes where they were coming and going and my foot steps would cause vibrations which caused the ants to scurry around. I would tell them "it's OK. I am not going to hurt you." But my voice sounded like thunder to them. They did not understand. The only way I could communicate with them was if I could become an ant, then I could explain to them that I only wanted to watch what they were doing. Thus Almighty God took on human form to reveal Himself to us in a way we could understand His Love, Power, Holiness, and desire to fellowship with humanity.

He was born of a virgin (which was a MIRACLE BIRTH), in a stable because He would later be called "The LAMB OF GOD which taketh away the sin of the world" (John 1:29) pointing forward to His death on Calvary for the sins of humanity.

God has chosen the small nation of Israel through history to reveal Himself to us. He revealed the 10 Commandments for us through this nation (Exodus chapter 20). These are moral commandments to help man to understand sin, what is right and wrong. The first four of the commandments reveal what man's relationship with God should be and the last six reveal what man's relationship with man should be. The purpose of these commandments is to help us realize that "all have sinned and come short" of measuring up to God's holy standard of righteousness. Thus in the Old Testament God revealed to Israel that a Lamb was to be sacrificed and its' blood offered for their sin. When Jesus was spoken of as the "Lamb of God" it was to help man understand that His death on the cross was for the sin of the world (John 1:29, 3:16-18; Romans 10:9-10,13;) Consider The Following:

In the Old Testament of the Bible God promised Abraham, the father of the nation of Israel, to take the miracle son, Isaac, who was born when Sarah his mother, was 90 years old and Abraham was 100 years old to a special place and offer him in sacrifice to God (Genesis 22)! Now Isaac was a very special son because God had promised Abraham that through him all the nations of the earth would be blessed (Genesis 12:1-3). However, Abraham believed God was able to even raise Isaac from the dead (Hebrews 11:17-19). As he was ready to plunge the knife in to Isaac, God spoke to Him not to do it but to offer a ram that was caught by its horns in a bush nearby in Isaac's place, which he did.

Later in Israel's history, God had Israel, when in Egyptian bondage, to offer lamb's blood spread over the doors of their houses to protect them from the death angel that passed over Egypt resulting in Israel's deliverance from bondage (Exodus 12). Thus the nation began to offer many lambs in sacrifice for their sins which was pointing to God's Lamb, The Lord Jesus Christ (John 1:29, 36) who would be sacrificed for the sins of all humanity if they would only believe in Him (John 3:16-18). This miracle of Salvation from eternal death to eternal life can be yours by accepting the GIFT OF ETERNAL LIFE THROUGH RECEIVING JESUS CHRIST AS YOUR SAVIOR! HOW? BY FOLLOWING THESE STEPS!

1. UNDERSTAND THAT YOU ARE A SINNER! "For ALL have sinned and come short of the glory of God." (Romans 3:23) We all have committed sin by breaking God's holy law.
2. THE PENALTY FOR SIN IS DEATH! "The wages of sin is death" Romans 6:23a;
3. JESUS CHRIST PAID THE PENALTY! "But God commendeth (showed forth) His love toward us, in that while we were yet sinners Christ died for us." Romans 5:8;
4. CONFESS AND BELIEVE IN JESUS CHRIST! "That if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised Him from the dead, thou shalt be saved. For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation. For whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved!" (Romans 10:9-10, 13;)
5. PRAY ASKING THE LORD JESUS CHRIST TO COME INTO YOUR LIFE! How? Now where you are pray a prayer like the following. DEAR LORD JESUS, I KNOW THAT I AM A SINNER. I KNOW I CAN NOT SAVE MYSELF! I AM SORRY FOR ALL MY SIN! I BELIEVE YOU DIED FOR MY SIN, THAT YOU WERE BURIED AND AROSE FROM THE GRAVE. I BELIEVE YOU LIVE TODAY! PLEASE COME INTO MY LIFE AND CLEANSE MY SIN WITH YOUR PRECIOUS BLOOD WHICH CLEANSES FROM ALL SIN (1 John 1:7b). I NOW TURN FROM MY WAY AND EFFORTS TO TRUST YOU ONLY AS MY SAVIOUR!

IN THE NAME OF THE LORD JESUS CHRIST I PRAY! AMEN

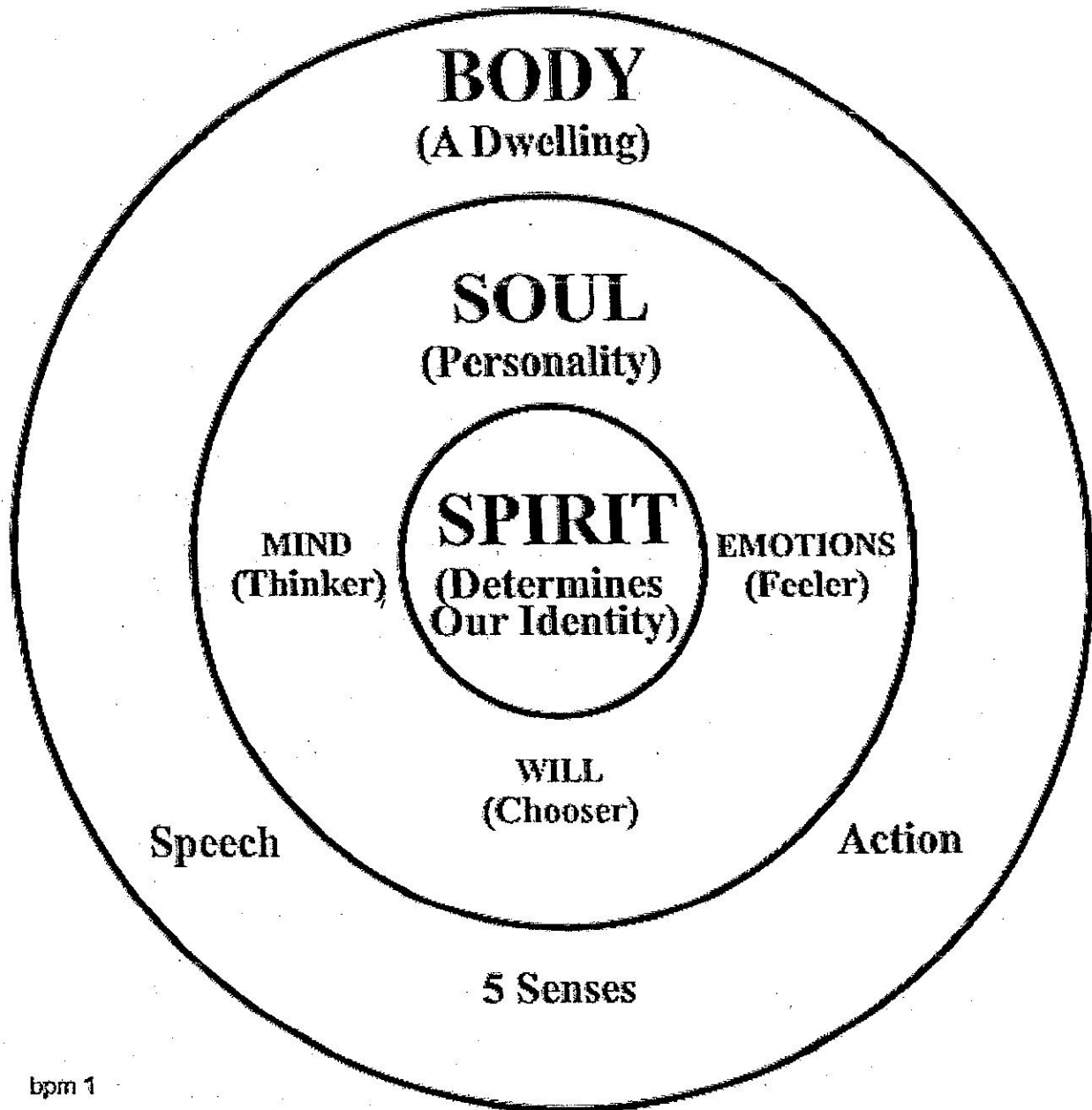
When a person receives the Lord Jesus into their life it will result in a change in their spirit. Note the attached diagram on the back of this page. Salvation takes place in our spirit. The spiritual part of man relates to the spirit world that is active all around us but most of the time we are not aware of it. The Bible explains in Ephesians 2:1 that the unbeliever is spiritually dead in sin which means separated from God because of sin. It also explains that when we invite the Lord Jesus into our life, the Holy Spirit is the one who does the work of Salvation in our spirit and gives us spiritual life. Jesus explained this in John 3 when He told a Jewish ruler in John 3:3 "Jesus answered and said unto him, "...I say unto thee, Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God." Nicodemus, the ruler, thought Jesus meant physical birth but Jesus explained in verse 6-7 "That which is born of the flesh is flesh (*physical birth*) and that which is born of the Spirit (*Holy Spirit*) is spirit (*spiritual birth*). Marvel not that I said unto thee, you must be born again." I Corinthians 6:19-20 speaking of a believer in the Lord Jesus Christ explains "What? Know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Spirit which is in you, which ye have of God, and ye are not your own? For ye are bought with a price (*the death of Christ*) therefore glorify God in your body and in your spirit, which are God's." II Corinthians 5:17 also explains that when a person truly receives the Lord Jesus into their life a definite change takes place." Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature, old things are passed away and behold, all things are become new."

Receiving the Lord Jesus Christ into one's life is more than head knowledge. Many people say they believe in the Lord Jesus who are not born again because they did not really open their life to accept the Lord Jesus Christ with their whole being. Let me explain with the following example.

Years ago there was a tight rope walker named Blondin. He stretched a wire across the Niagara Falls and advertised the walk. Great crowds arrived on the announced date and gathered on the Canadian and American side to watch. He walked the wire across then placed a wheel barrow on the wire and asked the crowd how many believed he could push it across. Everyone raised their hands because they wanted to see him do it. After he arrived on the Canadian side he asked how many believed he could push a man across in the wheel barrow. Everyone again raised their hands but when he asked who would get in the wheel barrow all hands went down. They said they believed but were not willing to get in the wheel barrow. Finally one man said he believed that Blondin could do it and he climbed into the wheel barrow. The crowd believed with a head knowledge but only one man placed his life in Blondin's ability to do it. Receiving the Lord Jesus into one's life is placing their whole being by faith in Jesus Christ alone to save them for eternity!

A Biblical Picture of Man

Man - A Three-Part Whole
(1 Thessalonians 5:23)



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