



Wishin' You An Old Fashioned Kinda Christmas!

“..because Joseph was a descendant of King David, he had to go to Bethlehem in Judea, David's ancient home. He traveled there from the village of Nazareth in Galilee. He took with him Mary, his fiancée, who was obviously pregnant by this time. And while they were there, the time came for her baby to be born. She gave birth to her first child, a son. She wrapped him snugly in strips of cloth and laid him in a manger, because there was no room for them in the village inn” ~Luke 2:4-7, nlt

You remember how it all went huh.. how that Roman emperor, Augustus, decided it was time for a census so he could get more money via taxes.. and that called for long journey for many in Israel back in the day. It demanded an 80 mile journey for Joseph and a pregnant girl named, Mary, but behind the scenes God was in control and Christmas was on its way.

Today, maybe you're somewhat like me? My beautiful wife, Liney, knows that I love almost all things modern, but not when it comes to Christmas! I get all nostalgic at times so she and I are alike when it comes to Christmas.

We don't want this world's coldblooded winter solstice or moldy-regifted-fruitcake version ..or even Target's blow-up Santa and plastic tinsel version of Christmas! We want the real thang with the old old Story and an unchangeable caring God who was born into a feeding trough version. That's what it's all about!

What do you want and bottomline.. what's the Message of an old fashioned Christmas?

It's this.. the Maker of the universe Who had no beginning came down to us here—Immanuel—so that we can worship, know and serve Him having nothing in the way.

Why? So that He would not only be with us, but live as Lord inside of us ..so that He could save and lead us as we become more like Him.

Don't you want to become a blessing to Him and others?

Perhaps you've lost a loved one and this holiday that used to be so good in the past has become nothing but a pain for you as certain songs and sights tip off old memories.

Maybe you are currently isolated within some impersonal serial hospital, or a cold apartment room, or in a dank smelly ole jail or in some lonely old folk's home where you were stuck and then forgotten. Well you are not forgotten by all! There is a God who is there and is thinking about you now and you don't have to ever live alone! Let Him come in; let Him come closer and bring you comfort this time of year!

Sir, perhaps with this challenging economic situation, you feel pinched and pressured and angry as you think about the gifts that you wish you could buy people. Did you know that Christmas shopping affects men differently? Tests have revealed that the average man's blood pressure shoots way up to the same level as a fighter pilot during combat during this season. Yup, but when the women were tested, there was

no change in their blood pressure. But perhaps Christmas ain't even about all the material gifts we can give, but more about the non-material One that we each can receive.

I don't sing the blues at this time of year, but I do want to *experience an old fashioned kinda Christmas* if I'm allowed to choose. How 'bout you?

Do you like to sip hot apple cider with a cinnamon stick, or maybe have some cranberry juice or a Christmas Latte with love from above? What would it be like without taking time for people?

On Christmas, I wanna pray like I mean it with those who care ..to this Holiday's Jesus and then expect miracles! I always do don't you? I wanna sing some carols enthusiastically ..like I'm good at it.. with ole friends and children and family members and neighbors ..the kind I hardly even know but turn out.. but not for show. O no!

We can keep it simple! Next to a warm cracklin' fireplace all decked with ornaments and pine, we can skip the wine n look at what's fine.. like colored lights and holly wreaths and candy canes or some snow on the window panes! I wanna call together the crew and go to Luke chapter 2. How 'bout you?

Man, you don't have to be old fashioned to want an old fashioned Christmas!

While the masses are out using plastic and hustlin-bustlin-busy.. shopping for widgets and trinkets and gifts to give.. don't cha just want to pause and take the time to pray today?

We got through another year, so why should we turn to another beer and then sneer?

I wanna light some nice candles like my German friends still do and enjoy eggnog's spice ..while in my Pjs and clogs!

We wanna go to church to listen and love, fellowship and glisten from above (I know, sounds corny but you know that glow that I mean) ..all together and see the manger and hopefully a stranger ..and hear the horn getting out of the storm.. along with the drummer boys, violins and bell choirs—of that stuff we'll never tire'!

I wanna see His Light, that's O so bright and get some shots of people huddlin-in tight out of that dark of night ..by the tree ..without a fight.

Nope, can't find any Inn Keeper mentioned in any Gospel account. Can't find those Wisemen from Persia arriving to visit a baby in that feeding trough.. but do see em stopping by a house later on to see a child. So many things to discover along with my Lover!

I wanna look at the old old story and follow it up to where it gets all gory. Wanna see what I haven't yet discovered. Wanna notice all that the Bible doesn't say and does say and then ask new questions ..and give Him all the glory! It's not learnin' for learn's sake.. oh No! It's learnin' for livin's n givin's sake!

In fact this year, you can do more than merely learn or observe an old fashioned Christmas! You can firsthand.. [experience CHRISTmas?](#)

Got some questions for ya...

What are you waiting for? Don't wait any longer to [dive in!](#)

Do you know what the three reasons for Christmas are.. according to the angel of the Lord (can't be certain, but I think this was Gabe) in Luke 2 who first announced it?

Give up?

OK, here they are: 1. Joyous celebration! (v. 10), 2. Salvation in the Lord! (v. 11), 3. Horizontal reconciliation ..as a natural outworking of righteousness. Yup, after receiving the free Gift of salvation in Christ, Christmas is about having and expressing good will towards men (v. 14)!

You already know, but now [you can experience](#) all this!

Hey there everybody, got any unaddressed bitterness, any jealousy, envy or anger towards anyone? Do you still pray for your president?

Perhaps you've been taken advantage of at home, at work or at church, or been slandered, verbally abused by a loved one or even physically abused ..and now you are estranged and marginalized or shamed.

Maybe like those lowly shepherds out watching their fuzzy animals by night (probably temple sheep to be offered), you're anonymous out there in obscurity? Well Christ wants you to know that you matter to Him! Who did God have that angel visit, puffed up exclusive kings and queens? Nope.

Tis the season to conspire by the fire (not evil stuff) and fervently pray for all kinds of people! We can love those who hate and slander us.. at first on our knees! And the feelings might eventually line up with our prayers but who cares.. what feelings say!

Some of you might need to go to some, or contact one down in his own slum. Tis the season to go share this Jesus with those relatives who are at odds with their Maker, yes, for the purpose of being a sort of saltshaker ..and seeing em reconcile upwards! Sure, God wants to save them and He still uses Christians in this. Ask what He'd have you do or have you say today!

*Almighty God became a man by lowly, humble birth;
And Mary treasured in her heart this Gift of boundless worth. ~Sper*

*Tidings, glad tidings! God is love, to man He sends His salvation!
His Son beloved, His only Son, the work of mercy hath begun. ~ Montgomery*

God came to live close with us so that we could live close with Him!

Tis the season to be jolly by golly! Bur for too many Americans it's just another reason to all-out party uber-hardy (..and then hit the roads to drive home).

Drinking used to make so many Christmas all wrong with absolutely no song. As a kid seeing it, and as an adult doing it. I remember one Christmas out on the run as my mom took us four children in the night, just to avoid a drunken fight.

In fact I remember one year not too long ago in Carrollton, Texas how we lost a very dear friend named, Frank McLaughlin, who was simply up early and driving to Prestonwood for a prayer meeting at 6:00 AM, when suddenly a blitzed driver plowed through a red light and broadsided Frank's old car, sending him immediately home to heaven instead. He got out of bed to go worship, but didn't know it would be face to face.

Twas the season to weep! We also lost a neighbor who had been a star high school football player one early morning after a night of local partying. He wrapped his little pickup truck around a telephone pole. Please don't drink, pig out on food, purge or do drugs! Christmas is about becoming part of the Solution rather than part of the problem in this world.

*Each of life's tragedies in this fallen world, are a wake-up call to reflect and repent. Why not
just accept the Son the Father sent?*

Do you suppose that these Galileans were worse sinners? ~Jesus, Luke 13:2

Not trying to scare or become some negative kill-joy to put a damper things, but these guys were both too young and these accidents were such unnecessary tragic losses for their families who loved them. Drunks always think it'll happen to anyone but them.

Tis the season to be your brother's keeper instead of some spiritual sleeper! With all that's going on this Christmas to outright rob your grandkids, your quality of life and increase our debt, isn't it high time for us to wake up and turn back to the Word of God?

Yes sadly, countless people look forward to the Holidays as just one more excuse to celebrate with friends and coworkers ..but in a destructive sort of way. America wise up!

Perhaps you've been planning a royal blow-out bash, hoping no one will crash. Do it without getting smashed.

Why even provide an opportunity where it could happen? Do you need a law suit?

As a teen, I remember personally viewing every event of life as just another excuse to get blasted, so I can relate. I was a fool, and so un-cool ..for my parents, no jewel!

Sin so often affects more than one. Listen to the Son! Innocent people can get hurt and you can lose your shirt! It separates ..sometimes forever. So take it from Kurt.

As this month pensively rolls along, with you just singin' a song, , drive defensively!

Pre-think and avoid the stink ..so your bank account won't sink.

*“As members of a fallen race, the question that we all must face
Is ‘Have we chosen to repent and trusted Christ whom God has sent?’” ~D. De Haan*

Already got your stance? Already have some twisted convictions in advance, smarty pants? Isn't being filled with faith and the Holy Spirit ..or refilled.. a much better alternative of comfort? This will give your family a decent chance!

Steer clear of those who regularly don't make wise choices in this regard. Why get chard?

“For the drunkard and the glutton shall come to poverty...” ~Proverbs 23:21

"Whoever walks with the wise will become wise; whoever walks with fools will suffer harm." ~Proverbs 13:20

“But now I have written unto you not to keep company, if any man that is called a brother be a fornicator, or covetous, or an idolater, or a railer, or a drunkard..” ~1 Corinthians 5:11

I'm sure that you really want to be a good example for those around you, especially for the children this time of year. For that I give a cheer! You don't really want to bring in the New Year all wrong and then wake up in some strange thong ..and feel a beating GONG? Who needs another splitting hangover?

You know that there is more to life than livin' for short-term fleeting pleasure ..especially with such a high price tag. No jive, we want you to make it through on into next year.. alive!

Jesus taught us to deny ourselves ([Matt. 16:24](#)). And listen to what Paul once said, **"I discipline my body and bring it into subjection"** (1 Cor. 9:27, nkjv).

What exactly did Paul mean by that statement? Well, Paul wanted his audience to know that by Christ's power, he had already learned to say no to his fleshly nature that regularly told him to do what it told him to do. He had, by faith and the Word of God, conquered his own inner "pushy" appetites and the strange lusts that would try to tempt him. Yup, Paul had gotten all his worldly *partay* passions under control—under God's control. Not by will-power!

He was ready to rejoice and all-out celebrate in a qualitatively different manner that was even safe for all those around him. We can do that as well.

If you are not yet a Christian, listen, I'm not trying to be the morality-police here to rain on your parade. I use to hate that when cold rigid people would try to moralize me before I had received a new nature on the inside. Again, my old nature was relentless and wanted to party all the time and this world ..and boring Religion kept trying to squeeze me into its mold. I was lost as a hairy tarantula and proud of it! Wouldn't listen.

Today I'm different and I didn't make myself this way--didn't even have to become religious. I actually love the Lord and His Bible which says: "**Wine is a mocker, strong drink is a brawler, and whoever is led astray by it is not wise**" ([Prov. 20:1](#)).

Paul was different too as a thoroughly Spirit-baptized-n-controlled believer. Are you? You can be.. before it's too late.. even before grandma fills your plate!

Immanuel set the sober Example for us down here—Jesus submitted to the Spirit's leading. And no one experienced more glory than He did! Like Paul, you know you want His joy and peace and love as well.

The Bible says of Him, "**The Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we beheld His glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth**" (Jn. 1:14).

Think on how Paul acknowledged, "**All things are lawful**" (1 Cor. 6:12). That word appears some 40 times in the New Testament regarding whether a behavior is legally permissible. Since Paul added in how we Christians are under grace, not under the law (Rom. 6:14-15), how then do we celebrate and live out our freedom without hindering others or ruining ourselves with all kinds of self-indulging behaviors?

We're also to walk in the Spirit continuously!

Don't get me wrong. The Bible obviously does not condemn the use of wine in moderation. I won't be so arrogant so as to try and set your personal convictions regarding such grey area issues. But God's Word clearly speaks against drunkenness--it speaks against the abuse of wine and of strong drink, rather than against the use of wine in a general sense.

I don't think Christian leaders should ever drink alcohol, even during a holiday, because they could become a stumbling block for weaker saints. For anyone, I personally don't see a need for them drinking cocktails at all. What good does it do for you that something else couldn't give and be better for you? Besides you'll never get drunk if you never even start to drink.

In the Greek, the word oinos, translated as "wine" in the New Testament, is used and it basically means "wine."

Back in the day, there was a different term for grape juice. The International Standard Bible Encyclopedia suggests that in New Testament times wine usually existed in a fermented form. It says: Unfermented grape juice is a very difficult thing to keep without the aid of modern antiseptic precautions, and its preservation in the warm and not overly clean conditions of ancient Palestine is impossible (p.3086).

The references to wine in the New Testament are both positive and negative. But John the Baptist refused to sip it. He was considered the last of the Old Testament prophets and certainly needed keen insight and

good judgment. Don't you in our day? Jesus Christ also refused wine ..while hanging on the cross because He was to fully experience the "cup of suffering" that His Father had for Him.

He vicariously suffered in our place—our sins were judged there at Calvary. Earlier, on the other hand, Jesus used wine to illustrate a teaching. He never got drunk. You remember how His first miracle included the creation of wine at the marriage in Cana (Jn. 2:1-11). Jesus once illustrated His Message with "new wine" and "new skins" to emphasize the need for a full renovation of perspective and understanding about the written law verses a vital relationship with His Father (Matt. 9:16-17). You probably also remember how Pastor Timothy was encouraged by Paul to take a little wine as medicine for his physical problem.

When Liney and I lived in Europe, we had lost and saved friends that drank wine, beer and champagne. Some got buzzed, some got drunk and others never did. Of course many of our friends were the real deal and looked to the Lord to meet their needs and for comfort instead of from a bottle. It was a cultural thing there.

Personally here in the States, I love to use alcohol ...to clean with. Why? Cuz it cleans stuff real good. And because the American culture tends to laud the abuse of it— intoxication has been so "vogue" here a long time.

Tis the Season to conquer all our fears, our drinking, our gluttony, our covetousness, our impatience with quirky relatives, our people-directed anger, our materialism, our debts, our greed, our unbelief, our selfishness, our anxieties.. our cynicism, our loneliness and the needless busyness that only robs—that distracts and crowds away from the Message of the Baby of Bethlehem.

”Thus says the Lord: ‘Stand in the ways and see, and ask for the old paths, where the good way is, and walk in it; then you will find rest for your souls..’” ~[Jeremiah 6:16](#)

We're wishing you a wonderful old fashion CHRISTmas and a truly blessed New Year!

Have a prayer request or some questions about knowing God ..and how to properly walk in Jesus Christ? At fish4souls.org click "[Contact](#)" and let us know! Perhaps we can help. Follow.. [Facebook.com/ShareJesus](https://www.facebook.com/ShareJesus) or at [Twitter.com/kurtwvs](https://twitter.com/kurtwvs)

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