

# Christ in Christmas                      Christian

I am sure you will all agree with me that Christmas time is the best season of the year.

Have you wondered why the birth of Christ was called **Christ**mas?

Or why we as believers of Jesus Christ are called **Christians**?

What is so significant of the title Christ?

If each one of you were asked who or what is the best part of the Christmas season, what would be the first thing you would think of?

Would you think of gifts, meeting and celebrating with family, fellowship with friends at church or would you think of food, cakes, Christmas plays and programmes? And for those who love to shop, would shopping come into your mind?

Did any of you think of 'Christ' as the best part of Christmas?

Our Christmas is filled with food, gifts, programmes, shopping, cooking, and family get-togethers. Often it looks like a birthday celebration where family and friends are all gathered. There is the sound of talking and laughing and aromas of delicious food in the air. There might be a birthday cake on the table but the person we have gathered to celebrate is missing.

Have you ever been part of such a birthday party? If you have, you would have experienced uneasiness, sadness, as something seemed amiss or an incomplete feeling.

On the very first Christmas, they celebrated the birth of the Messiah—Jesus Christ. Jesus was the center of that first Christmas. Let's look at what they experienced.

When Mary and Joseph looked at baby Jesus, they must have experienced a sense of divine accomplishment and joy.

The Angel who announced the birth of the Saviour to the shepherds said "I bring you good tidings of great joy..." (Luke 2:10). I am sure the angel was excited and overjoyed to publish the news of the birth of the Son of God.

After the angel gave the message to the shepherds, there was a multitude of heavenly hosts praising God that God's plan of redemption had unfolded.

After the shepherds saw the Saviour who is Christ the Lord, they returned back glorifying and praising God for all they had heard and seen (Luke 2:20).

The wise men that were in a pursuit of finding the King experienced great joy, sense of fulfillment and contentment that they had found the King. They presented their gifts and bowed down and worshipped Him.

Why was there so much joy, excitement, wonder, awe, sense of fulfillment, celebration, worship, praise and adoration among men and the heavenly hosts? Let's explore.

Over the course of the Old Testament, and in the period leading up to Jesus' birth, there arose an expectation that there would be someone to come in the future, a Messiah, who would fulfill all the Old Testament promises.

The people of Israel were looking forward to a Messiah (a political king). They expected a ruler who would save and redeem them from the oppression of the political tyranny of the Roman rule.

How did the people know that Jesus was the Messiah that they were looking forward?

We read:

In Matthew 1:21 - in a dream the angel told Joseph that Mary will bring forth a Son and you shall call His name Jesus; He will save His people from their sins.

In Luke 2:11 - the angels announced to the shepherds that there is born to you this day in the city of David a Saviour who is **Christ** the Lord.

In Matthew 2:4 - when Herod heard from the wise men that a King was born, Herod enquired from the chief priests where the **Christ** was to be born.

Now....coming back to my question, what is so significant about the title Christ?

Christ is not just Jesus' second or last name. It is a highly significant title given to Jesus throughout the Scriptures. In fact, it is the title that Jesus gladly accepted as divinely inspired by God when Peter confessed Jesus as the Christ in Matthew 16:13-18.

What does Christ mean?

The equivalent Greek word for Christ is – Χριστός – Christos – khris-tos'  
Meaning **Anointed**, that is, the **Messiah**, a description of Jesus as the anointed One.

**“khris-tos” is derived from the Greek word.**

χρίω – chriō – khree'-o

Meaning to **smear or rub with oil**, that is, (by implication) to consecrate to an office or religious service.

The word “Christ” does not appear in the Old Testament because it is derived from a Greek word, whereas the Old Testament is written in Hebrew.

The meaning of the word ‘anointed’ in Hebrew is - משיח – mîshîyach – maw-shee'-akh

In all instances where the word maw-shee'-akh appears in the Old Testament, it is translated as ‘anointed’. It refers to a person who is consecrated or anointed as a King, priest or prophet.

In 1Sam 26:9,11,16, 23 David is referring to Saul as God's Anointed (“maw-shee'-akh”)

In Lev 4:3,5,16 the Levitical Priests were called Anointed (“maw-shee'-akh”)

In Isaiah 45:1 Cyrus, the Persian King was called Anointed (“maw-shee'-akh”)

In the New Testament, the word “Christ” has always referred to Jesus. Jesus Christ – Yeshua Christos which means “Jesus the Anointed”.

On the other hand in the Old Testament the Hebrew word “maw-shee'-akh”, has not been exclusive to Jesus as I just mentioned in the case of Saul, the Levitical Priests and King Cyrus.

But in two verses in the OT in Daniel 9:25&26, where we find the word anointed or “maw-shee’-akh” is translated as “Messiah”. Only in these verses “maw-shee’-akh” is translated as Messiah or Savior, as it is referring to “THE Anointed” one, Jesus our Messiah.

So the true meaning of Christ is not just Savior, Deliverer or Messiah but “THE Anointed One”.

In Acts 10:38 says, “how God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Spirit and with power, who went about doing good and healing all who were oppressed by the devil, for God was with Him”.

Jesus was anointed with the Holy Spirit in the beginning of His ministry.

But what was He anointed as?

There were three offices in the Old Testament that were traditionally anointed with oil as a symbol of their divine appointment. These three offices include prophets, priests, and kings.

For example, when Saul became the first king of Israel, Samuel the prophet anointed his head with oil in a ceremonial fashion (1 Samuel 10:1). This religious rite was performed to show that the king of Israel was chosen and endowed by God for the kingship.

Likewise, the priests (Exodus 28:41) and prophets (1 Kings 19:16) were anointed at God’s command.

Jesus The Anointed One fulfills the anointed roles as prophet, priest and king perfectly.

### **Christ the Prophet**

In **Hebrews 1: 1, 2** we read, “GOD, who at various time and in various ways spoke in time past to the fathers by the prophets, has in these last days spoken to us by His Son, whom He has appointed heir of all things, through whom also He made the worlds; who being the brightness of His glory and the express image of His person, and upholding all things by the word of His power, when He had by Himself purged our sins, sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on high...”

Throughout the ages, God rose up prophets to speak words of instruction, words of warning and words of comfort but none were greater than Moses. But during Moses’ prophetic ministry, he made a very peculiar promise that remained with the people of Israel all the way to the birth of Jesus.

**Deuteronomy 18:15** “The Lord your God will raise up for you a Prophet like me from your midst, from your brethren, Him you shall hear.”

Hundreds of years past by and the people of Israel never saw that prophet who was like Moses. There were a lot of prophets, but even after Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, and the rest, there was still this sense of looking forward to the coming of this prophet who would be like Moses.

Jesus taught in ways that no one had ever heard before. Most prophets would begin their prophetic messages with, “thus says the Lord”, but Jesus just “said it” as if He was the Lord. The crowds immediately recognized that Jesus was different. Matthew 7:28-29 tells us, “...when Jesus had ended these sayings, that the people were astonished at His teaching, for He taught them as one having authority, and not as a scribe.”

Furthermore, God had done incredible things through Moses like parting the red sea and raining food from heaven. But when Jesus came, He didn’t just part the sea. Rather He walked on top of it. He speaks to the winds and the waves and they obey Him. He multiplies five loaves and two fishes and feeds the thousands. Naturally, the people started to wonder whether this could be the prophet promised by Moses.

John 7:40-41: “Therefore many from the crowd, when they heard this saying, said, “Truly this is the Prophet.”

Others said, “This is the Christ.”

Jesus was different from all the prophets who ever lived; He was not just a prophet of God. He was God as a prophet. In the case of Jesus, God did not send someone to speak on His behalf. God came Himself. He spoke the words of God with unique authority because He was The Word in flesh (John 1:1-4).

As a prophet Jesus represented God to man.

Application: If Christ – the anointed One, is the center of your celebration then spend time reading and meditating on His Word.

Abide in His Word - Obey His Word.

Colossians 3:16 says “Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom teaching, and admonishing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord.”

Share the Good news—The Word that became flesh with others this Christmas.

Spend time worshipping and adoring Him with Psalms, hymns and spiritual songs.

### **Christ the Priest**

If Jesus was just a prophet, however, then Christmas is not worth celebrating. It is not enough for us to know more about God or His Word. The problem with humanity is that even when we know exactly what God has instructed, we rebel against Him. We need more than just somebody to tell us that we are sinners. We need somebody to take away our sins!

In the Old Testament, there was an awareness of the separation sin caused between God and Man. God ordained a ceremonial system of offering sacrifices by which our sins can be covered. God ordained priests – “anointed ones” who would offer sacrifices on behalf of themselves and the people.

As the anointed priest, Jesus was far greater than all the priests. He did not offer any animal sacrifice for our sin; He offered himself, an unblemished lamb of eternal worth.

After He made that full sufficient perfect sacrifice for our sins, He as a priest has entered the holy of holies, not the earthly temple, but Heaven. He does not just enter the holy of holies once a year, but indeed He is there forever now.

**Hebrews 9:11-12:** “But Christ came as a High Priest of the good things to come, with the greater and more perfect tabernacle not made with hands, that is, not of this creation. Not with the blood of goats and calves but with His own blood He entered the Most Holy Place once for all, having obtained eternal redemption.”

**Hebrews 7:23-24:** “But He, because He continues forever, has an unchangeable priesthood.”

As our high priest He represents His people and intercedes for the forgiveness of their sins. Hence we can go to Him because he ever lives to make intercession for us.

**Romans 8:34:** “...Christ who died, furthermore is also risen, who is even at the right hand of God, who also makes intercession for us.”

**Hebrews 7:25:** “Therefore He is also able to save to the uttermost those who come to God through Him, since He always lives to make intercession for them.”

As our high priest, Jesus is able to understand our weaknesses and help us.

As **Hebrews 4:15,16** says, “For we do not have a High Priest who cannot sympathize with our weaknesses, but was in all *points* tempted as *we are, yet* without sin. <sup>16</sup> Let us therefore come boldly to the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need.”

Application: During Christmas are you celebrating what Jesus did for you on the cross?

Are you thankful that He took your sin; your punishment? Are you aware of the sin still present in your life and are you asking Him for His mercy and grace to overcome it?

Christ will truly be the center of your Christmas when you come to a place where you are able to confess your sin, ask Him for His forgiveness and live in freedom from the power of sin.

As a prophet, Jesus the anointed One represents God to the People.

As a Priest, Jesus the anointed One represents people to God.

As a King, Jesus the anointed One initiated the Kingdom of God, the Kingdom of Heaven here on earth.

## **Christ the King**

God promised that one day there would come someone from the line of King David who would sit on an eternal throne and rule over a never-ending Kingdom.

**Luke 1:32-33** “He will be great and will be called the Son of the Most High. And the Lord God will give to him the throne of his father David. And he will reign over the house of Jacob forever, and of his kingdom, there will be no end.”

On that Christmas day, the Kingdom had come because the King had arrived. Jesus ushered in the Kingdom of God and Heaven. This Kingdom still awaits its completion. It will be a Kingdom when there is no more war, death, sorrow, nor crying. There will be no more curse of sin and no more separation from God. It will be a kingdom only for those who repent of building their own little kingdoms and turn to trust Jesus Christ in faith as their new and eternal King.

If Jesus was this Messiah—The Christ—The Anointed One, then why did people not recognise Him or accept Him?

The Israelites were looking for a King who would fight and overthrow the Roman government and give them political freedom, peace and prosperity. They couldn't accept Jesus as He was and as He claimed to be, as Lord and Christ. They were not willing to accept someone who was the Light that exposed their sin. They did not wish to submit to Him as Lord, instead they wanted Him to do what they wanted and that was to be a political ruler. They also did not wish to come to Him as unworthy sinners seeking grace.

It's easy for many of us to accept Him as a nice Savior who forgives our sins and thus assures us a place in Heaven and as the One who blesses us and helps us to be happy. At the same time, we find it difficult to submit to Him as Lord. We find it difficult to totally submit and surrender our lives and let Him have His way in our lives.

When we find it difficult to submit to Him as Lord, we are not truly accepting Him.

Becky Pippert, in her book *Out of the Salt Shaker & into the World*, tells of inviting Lois, a Stanford student who was skeptical about the existence of God, to a Bible study. Lois agreed to come but said, "The Bible won't have anything relevant to say to me."

The next day Becky discovered that Lois was living off campus with her boyfriend, Phil. To Becky's great surprise, Phil came with Lois to the Bible study. Before she knew Lois' background, Becky had already decided to study Jesus' encounter with the woman at the well in John 4.

She started the study and suddenly realized that the passage dealt with a woman living in sexual sin. Not wanting Lois to feel ambushed, Becky tried to arrange it so that Lois wouldn't have to read any of the text as they went around the room. But it turned out that Lois had to read the portion where Jesus said to the woman, "You are right in saying, 'I have no husband' ... for the man you're living with now is not your husband." It was Lois' first time ever to read the Bible. She said, "I must say, this is a bit more relevant than I had expected!"

Becky later met with Lois and talked with her about Christ. "Is there any reason why you couldn't become a Christian?" Becky asked. "No," Lois said. "Well, I can think of one," Becky said. "What will you do about Phil?" Then she talked directly about how becoming a Christian is a relationship with God that affects every aspect of our lives, including our morals. As they talked, it became clear that God had been pursuing Lois for a long time. There were tears and struggles followed by a sincere prayer asking Christ to be her Savior and Lord.

Immediately she said, "Becky, I've got problems. I'll have to tell Phil and move out; I have no place to go; it's impossible to get a dorm room this late, and now I'll have to pay this month's rent in two places." So they prayed again and as Lois left, Becky agonized over how such a young believer could handle so much.

Later Becky was chatting in the hall with some other students when she heard a commotion and turned to see Lois, slowly walking down the corridor, carrying several suitcases and smiling with tears streaming down her cheeks. Everyone began asking her why she had left home. "Oh, no. I haven't left home. I've finally *found* my home," she said. "You see, today I became a Christian."

That decision had far-reaching effects. That same night three girls decided to get their lives right with Christ. The next day Lois was told she could move into the dorm and she discovered her new roommate was a mature Christian.

Three months later, her boyfriend Phil became a Christian and he too grew rapidly. He had been angry over her conversion and her moving out, but after he was converted he told her, "thanks, Lois, for loving God enough to put him first instead of me. Your obedience affected my eternal destiny."

If Christ has to be the center of Christmas, then Christ has to be the center of us as Christians.

The Greek word for Christian comes from the word, *Christianos* – *khris-tee-an-os*' Which means *Just like the word "Christ" originates from the Greek word khris-tos', "Christian" also originates from the Greek word khris-tee-an-os!* It is a follower of Christ - someone who acts as Christ. and someone who emulates THE Anointed one.

As Prophets, let us emulate the anointed One by truly representing God to the People. Let us share the Word and live by the Word and obey the Word.

As Priest's, let us emulate the anointed One by representing people to God. Let us live our lives victorious over sin and the power to sin thus leading people to the cross. Let us intercede for the lost souls so they too can know the Christ of Christmas.

As a King, let His lordship be seen over every area of our lives.



**USEFUL RESOURCES**



Watch our online Sunday Church service live stream every Sunday at 10:30am (Indian Time, GMT+5:30). Spirit filled, anointed worship, Word and ministry for healing, miracles, and deliverance.

**YOUTUBE:** <https://youtube.com/allpeopleschurchbangalore>

**WEBSITE:** <https://apcwo.org/live>

Our other websites and free resources:

**CHURCH:** <https://apcwo.org>

**FREE SERMONS:** <https://apcwo.org/resources/sermons>

**FREE BOOKS:** <https://apcwo.org/books/english>

**DAILY DEVOTIONALS:** <https://apcwo.org/resources/daily-devotional>

**JESUS CHRIST:** <https://examiningjesus.com>

**BIBLE COLLEGE:** <https://apcbiblecollege.org>

**E-LEARNING:** <https://apcbiblecollege.org/elearn>

**WEEKEND SCHOOLS:** <https://apcwo.org/ministries/weekend-schools>

**COUNSELING:** <https://chrysalislife.org>

**MUSIC:** <https://apcmusic.org>

**MINISTERS FELLOWSHIP:** <https://pamfi.org>

**CHURCH APP:** <https://apcwo.org/app>

**CHURCHES:** <https://apcwo.org/ministries/churches>

**WORLD MISSIONS:** <https://apcworldmissions.org>