



Only 6 days to go until Christmas and people keep asking me if I am ready and my answer is "Jennifer says we are!" I love time with family and checking in with the rest of our family back home. I love buying gifts for those who are important to me and it makes my heart smile to watch them open these gifts. The wonderment of a Christmas gift has never diminished for me and it is funny how a gift generates the same response in young and old alike. Basically, I love everything about the Christmas season. It's a time for us to remember a small child was born. His birth was very humble, and given the location, His birth was unassuming and could have been overlooked. But this was the Son of God whose life would transform the world. On the night of His birth, all of Heaven knew some specular and amazing was happening. In Luke 2, we read that a multitude of angels could not restrain their song in the celebration of the birth of the One they knew to be Savior, Lord and King. So, instead of a "Silent Night" we have a joy, party type reaction to His birth. It wasn't such a silent night after all and here we are over 2,000 years later, still singing praises of that little baby boy, Jesus Christ, who would be Servant, Sacrifice, Savior

and King. Over the years, Christmas has obviously taken on a different meaning to me. In my childhood and youth, I was brought up to know the true meaning of Christmas. I knew that it was all about Jesus, but I would get carried away in the traditions of Christmas that Jesus really didn't get a look in. It was all about gifts and family but I believe that my mindset today is very different. I finally realized that the phrase 'Jesus is the reason for the season' is really true. We sing "Away in a manger" and picture everything being soft and cuddly which of course is way off the mark. Jesus entered our world as a servant, coming to seek and save that which was lost, you and me. He became a human, who would suffer pain just as you or I do today. He would thirst, He would hunger, and He would be exhausted. He lived the life of a wanderer, traveling on a divine mission to evangelize those He so compassionately left Heaven to save. He was ridiculed, scorned and laughed at. His greatest enemies came from inside the church. He was a man who's life could be bought for thirty pieces of silver. He became nothing, served humbly, loved unconditionally, and flawlessly, and without sin, He would set the example that we should be trying to follow today.

This precious baby, born into our world, would one day embrace a cross for all of mankind. His death was long and painful, and it was reflective of His life...a life lived in humble servitude and sacrifice by One who deserved much better. The real story of Christmas has no Santa Claus or decorative ornaments. The real story involves the Son of God offering Himself as a gift to our world. The real gift of Christmas is Christ. He came to earth out of compassion and love and He walked out of the grave as Savior. That's the real gift of Christmas. He brought hope and salvation to all men who would make Him Lord. He is the gift, and He is the true reason we celebrate. So, with that in mind may I wish you a Merry Christmas, because Jesus truly is the reason for the season!

