

From Where I Sit . . .

WHAT IF CHRIST HAD NOT COME?

We've reached that time of the year when the majority of the "Christianized" world is particularly aware of the coming of our Lord. Most particularly are they interested in celebrating His birth -- as the slogans describe it, "He's the reason for the season." We can understand the desire of man to honor King Jesus. This is natural and should be compelling to those who know of His marvelous sacrifice for our hope. While we cannot find Biblical reason to set one day apart above other days for celebrating the birthday of Jesus, we are at least thankful that men are willing to acknowledge His coming. We certainly must not conduct ourselves hatefully, resentfully, or in any other way that would make the world think we avoided showing or love for the Lord during this one season just to prove a point. I am thankful every day that Christ was born! I'd hate to live in a world where they would not acknowledge this wonderful event in history.

As opposed to one special day, and one very special "high sabbath," we are very much aware in the Bible of the need for daily meditation, and every Lord's Day observance of the communion of the body and blood of the Lord. No, the church doesn't set the "Christmas" season apart as a special holy day, but we who are Christians can rejoice while others rejoice that Christ has come, and hopefully lead them to a fuller awareness of what this world would be like if Christ had not come. Yet we must not give them the impression that, as the church, we set apart days that the Lord Himself did not set apart. That's why we don't have special "Christmas" services, or programs-dramas-concerts, or manger scenes, etc within the church. These are of men and not of the Bible.

I want us to think very practically about our title question. What a difference his coming has made in MY life!!! We would not have the chart or compass that helps us measure some fundamental values: for example, good homes are the fences that God has put around the nation, and Christ has given us the standard for good homes: The standard of monogamy; The standard of Loving as one's own self; The standard of purity.

We would not adequately understand the Fatherhood of God. Jesus has shown us the Father. When asked to "show us the Father" Jesus responded that if any man hath seen me he hath seen the Father. In the Old Testament the concept of the Fatherhood of God was less pronounced with only a few references. It is, however, a frequent theme after Christ came. Now we view Him through very personal eyes.

We would not understand mercy and grace. I would not be a very nice person. He has changed my life personally in: Who I married; How we raised our children; How we entertained ourselves; What my priorities and commitments are. Without Jesus we would not have the close family tie of the Broad Street Church of Christ. He is the tie that binds our hearts together in love.

. Without Him, I would be nothing; Without Him I'd surely fail.
Without Him, I would be drifting, Like a ship without a sail.
Jesus, oh Jesus, do you know him today,
Please don't turn him away.
Oh, Jesus, My Jesus, Without him, how lost I would be.

..... Terry Broome

Printed in the *Broad Street Banner*, Volume XVII, Number 50, December 18, 2002.