

SELFLESS SAVIOUR – “For life not just for Christmas”

INTRO

Show all Slides – What is Christmas to you?

Christmas is coming! Presents to buy, work to finish, dinners to organise, time to rest and relax, services to attend, events to participate in, people to see, places to drive to, traffic to avoid, weather to watch out for... food to eat, gifts to wrap, money to spend and oh...and don't forget...TV to watch!

Stressed yet?

Christmas can be so stressful and also selfish.

We get so stressed out we just want to run away and be by ourselves.

David Grayson (American journalist) once said, *"I sometimes think we expect too much of Christmas Day. We try to crowd into it the long arrears of kindness and humanity of the whole year. As for me, I like to take my Christmas a little at a time, all through the year. And thus I drift along into the holidays--let them overtake me unexpectedly--waking up some fine morning and suddenly say... to myself: Why this is Christmas Day!"*

That's true of the world, but is it true of us Christians too?

The world grows a conscience at Christmas!!!

HAPPINESS

Selflessness is directly linked to **Happiness**

The **holiday** of Christmas is almost here.

We want to **enjoy** ourselves.

There is **nothing** wrong in that.

Christmas is 2 things:

- 1. A national holiday for all**
- 2. Our Christian festival**

We have to balance the two.

Don't you want to be happy this Christmas?

Salvation Army - War Cry once said, *"Christmas is a season of joy and good will, of singing and merriment and of generosity. Christmas is a season of sharing and love. Christmas is a season of concern for the needs of others, a season of the helping hand. And that's as it should be. **For there is great satisfaction in making others happy**". – Think about that...?*

GOD WANTS TO SAY TO YOU: *“Want to be happy, make others happy.”*
“But it’s hard, I’m so busy and tired”

The secret to a fulfilled life is: J-O-Y.

Jesus first

Yourself last

& Others in between.

It’s the most important life **philosophy you’ll ever learn.**

Let’s look at Colossians 3:12-17:

*“Therefore (BOCF), as God’s **chosen people, holy and dearly loved**, clothe yourselves with compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness and patience. ¹³ **Bear with each other and forgive one another** if any of you has a grievance against someone. **Forgive as the Lord forgave you.** ¹⁴ And over all these virtues **put on love**, which binds them all together in perfect unity. ¹⁵ **Let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts**, since as members of one body you were called to peace. **And be thankful.** ¹⁶ Let the message of Christ dwell among you richly as you teach and admonish one another with all wisdom through psalms, hymns, and songs from the Spirit, singing to God with gratitude in your hearts. ¹⁷ **And whatever you do, whether in word or deed, do it all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through him.**”(NIV)*

The literal translation of v12 is *“sink into/ dress yourselves with tender mercy from the inward affection coming from your bowels”!*

The Hebrew understanding was that the real, strong, passionate loving emotions came from deep within you.

That deep affection comes from PRAYER TIME WITH GOD.

CONSUMERISM

From experience, the ONLY WAY a Spirit filled Christian will have true happiness is to be SELFLESS.

Our society is geared towards BUYING STUFF.

“BUY STUFF AND YOU’LL BE HAPPY”. Me, me, me, me, me.

Q) How many of you have bought things to make you happy and after a day or so you get bored? E.g. iphone, clothes, holidays.

Clip – BBC iPlayer “food that makes billions” – 1:35 – 2:55.

Water has been sold to us as the must have commodity, and we buy it in all shapes and sizes. **2.5 billion people don’t even have safe water to drink.**

Beware this Christmas of buying for the sake of it.

JESUS' TOP 10 QUOTES

10. **Matthew 25:35-40** – *I was hungry and you gave...*
9. **Mark 10:42-45** – *greatest should be the least...came to serve*
8. **Matthew 4:17** – Kingdom of God is at hand
7. **Matthew 6:31-34** – Do not worry
6. **Matthew 5:3-12** – *blessed are the meek, merciful, peacemakers, pure*
5. **Mark 8:34-36** – *save your life to lose it, gain the whole world & still lose*
4. **Matthew 7:1-5** – *judge not others first*
3. **Matthew 5:43-45** – *love your enemies*
2. **Matthew 7:12** – *do to others as you would have them to do to you*
1. **Matthew 22:37-40** – *love God, love others*

These are Jesus' most common verses. 8 out of 10 are all about others.
Being selfless is the key to happiness & joy.

Humility is not thinking less of yourself, but thinking of yourself less!

A FRUITFUL CHRISTMAS

Q) How would you like this Christmas to go?

- Have fun
- Relax
- See family & friends
- See people happy
- Make people happy
- Help people
- See God change people
- Be selfless & pray

If we do these in reverse order we'll accomplish them all.

If we make these a top ten then we'll achieve none.

Love for the right reasons:

- **Get some rest**
- **Pray every morning**
- **Be intentional** – EXPLAIN – family, neighbours – **Col 3:17**
- **Help others**
- **Enjoy yourself too.**

DANGER - DON'T:

*** Serve for the sake of it**

*** Serve to earn God's approval**

- * Serve so others like you
- * Serve to be noticed
- * Serve all day, every day

The most loving Christians are those who calmly serve others whilst enjoying themselves.

CONCLUSION

This gospel is for life and not just for Christmas.

This Christmas share the Good News of Jesus' love whilst being the Good News of Jesus' love!

Napoleon Bonaparte said, 'Alexander, Caesar, Charlemagne and myself have founded great empires, but on what did those creations rest? *Upon force.* But Jesus founded his, on love ... Jesus Christ by some mysterious influence ... draws the hearts of men towards him, that at a word thousands...would rush through fire and flood for him, not counting their lives dear to themselves ... I know men..., and Jesus Christ was more than a man.'

Re-read Colossians 3:12-17

PRAY