

Did You Miss Christmas?

Distractions:

How To Miss Christmas:

Luke 2:1-7 Matthew 2:1-16 Matthew 13:53-58

→ Be an **inn keeper**

→ Be your **own king**

→ Be **religious**

→ Be **familiar**

Two Things To Take Home:

Missing Christmas is:

❶ More about our **expectations** than our **experiences**.

❷ Thinking it's better to **give than to receive**.

Food for Thought for the week of December 27, 2015

(Questions and Scriptures for further study)

1. This weekend we learned that when it comes to Christmas and God's gift of his Son, it's better to receive than to give. However, once we receive this gift it frees us up to think about the gifts we can give to God. Micah 6:8 talks about three "gifts" God wants from us – justice, mercy, and walking humbly. What guidance do the following verses give us in how we can be just, merciful, and walk humbly according to God's plan?

Justice:

Proverbs 22:22-23

Saying 2

²² Do not exploit the poor because they are poor
and do not crush the needy in court,

²³ for the LORD will take up their case
and will exact life for life. *[NIV]*

Proverbs 29:7

⁷ The righteous care about justice for the poor,
but the wicked have no such concern. *[NIV]*

Isaiah 1:17

¹⁷ Learn to do right; seek justice.
Defend the oppressed.

Take up the cause of the fatherless;
plead the case of the widow. *[NIV]*

Jeremiah 22:3

³ This is what the LORD says: Do what is just and right. Rescue from the hand of the oppressor the one who has been robbed. Do no wrong or violence to the foreigner, the fatherless or the widow, and do not shed innocent blood in this place. *[NIV]*

Mercy:

Matthew 23:23

²³ "Woe to you, teachers of the law and Pharisees, you hypocrites! You give a tenth of your spices—mint, dill and cumin. But you have neglected the more important matters of the law—justice, mercy and faithfulness. You should have practiced the latter, without neglecting the former. *[NIV]*

Luke 6:27-36

Love for Enemies

²⁷ "But to you who are listening I say: Love your enemies, do good to those who hate you, ²⁸ bless those who curse you, pray for those who mistreat you. ²⁹ If someone slaps you on one cheek, turn to them the other also. If someone takes your coat, do not withhold your shirt from them. ³⁰ Give to everyone who asks you, and if anyone takes what belongs to you, do not demand it back. ³¹ Do to others as you would have them do to you.

³² "If you love those who love you, what credit is that to you? Even sinners love those who love them. ³³ And if you do good to those who are good to you, what credit is that to you? Even sinners do that. ³⁴ And if you lend to those from whom you expect repayment, what credit is that to you? Even sinners lend to sinners, expecting to be repaid in full. ³⁵ But love

your enemies, do good to them, and lend to them without expecting to get anything back. Then your reward will be great, and you will be children of the Most High, because he is kind to the ungrateful and wicked. ³⁶ Be merciful, just as your Father is merciful. *[NIV]*

Zechariah 7:8-10

⁸ And the word of the LORD came again to Zechariah: ⁹ "This is what the LORD Almighty said: 'Administer true justice; show mercy and compassion to one another. ¹⁰ Do not oppress the widow or the fatherless, the foreigner or the poor. Do not plot evil against each other.' *[NIV]*

Walking Humbly:

Romans 12:16

¹⁶ Live in harmony with one another. Do not be proud, but be willing to associate with people of low position. Do not be conceited. *[NIV]*

James 1:21

²¹ Therefore, get rid of all moral filth and the evil that is so prevalent and humbly accept the word planted in you, which can save you. *[NIV]*

1 Peter 5:5-6

⁵ In the same way, you who are younger, submit yourselves to your elders. All of you, clothe yourselves with humility toward one another, because,

"God opposes the proud
but shows favor to the humble."

⁶ Humble yourselves, therefore, under God's mighty hand, that he may lift you up in due time. *[NIV]*

2. Looking back on the four different groups of people Kirk talked about who missed Christmas, which group are you most likely to fall into? What are some steps you could take to avoid being a part of this group?