

2023 Theme - Focus On What Matters
Sermon Series - Foretold and Fulfilled
Sermon Title - Christ's Coming Foretold
Sermon Text - Luke 1
Sermon Presenter - Pastor Larry

Introduction:

“Do you feel the world is broken? Do you feel the shadows deepen?

But do you know that all the dark, won't stop the light from getting through?”

It was prophesied that light was going to come into the world many years ago and it happened! Today we're going to talk about how the coming of the Messiah was foretold. I pray that today's message and the message that Dallas will bring to us next week will help bring special meaning to your Christmas, and help you find hope in this broken world that seems to be in the throes of ever increasing darkness. Let's pray!

Have you ever waited until the last minute on a Christmas gift? I know, I just made some of you really nervous because that's you this Christmas! Today we're going to take a look at the amazing detail God went to in planning the gift He was going to give the world through His Son Jesus Christ on that first Christmas. The giving of that gift was foretold way before it happened. In other words, that first Christmas gift was definitely not a last minute gift! The details given before and surrounding the birth of Christ are amazing! You see, God didn't expect us to hear a nice little story about a baby being born Savior of the world and just say, “Okay, I believe that.” He knew there would need to be some real and tangible ways for a person seeking the truth to verify the story. That's why we have the prophecies of Christ foretold as much as a thousand years before His birth. That's why there are over 60 prophecies concerning Jesus in the Old Testament. And when we get to the New Testament and the time for the actual birth of the Messiah, the details and miraculous ways in which the coming of the Messiah are foretold are astounding. Some people dismiss the real meaning of Christmas as irrelevant to their personal lives in today's modern world. Christmas to them has become just a holiday and time to spend with family and friends. And while some think the story of Christmas is a good story, they see it as only a story. They wonder how on earth a discussion about an event some two thousand plus years ago could make any difference in their life? If that's you, keep listening.

We don't know the exact date of Christ's birth or the exact year, however, we have some pretty good ideas. And historians don't just look to the Bible for information. There are many other sources about the man Jesus outside of the Bible. Some people question whether Jesus was even a real person. Let me put it this way: you may not believe Jesus was God's Son, or that He was divine, or that He was anything other than an ordinary human being, but to deny the historical Jesus you would have to deny way more than just the Bible.

In fact, I'll just turn to a very secular source of information that is highly used by our modern day, computer savvy, society. How many of you have ever used Wikipedia? A pretty good source of general information and it does have loads and loads of links to other places for info. I checked

the sources on the following statements and they were from very reliable and respected sources. Listen to what Wikipedia says about Jesus...

“Although the gospels do not provide enough details regarding exact dates, it is possible to draw from them a general picture of the life story of Jesus and to establish some date ranges regarding the major events in his life via correlations with non-Christian sources.[1][2][23] A number of historical non-Christian documents, such as Jewish and Greco-Roman sources, have been used in historical analyses of the existence of Jesus and his chronology.[24] Virtually all modern historians agree that Jesus existed, and regard his baptism and his crucifixion as historical events, and assume that approximate ranges for these events can be estimated.[25][26][27]

Source: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Chronology_of_Jesus

There's really no doubt amongst serious historians concerning the existence of a man named Jesus. His birth, His life and His death are well documented independently of the Bible in other well accepted historical documents. Where the debate comes in is the question of who Jesus was. Was He just a man or was He something way more? Was He the Messiah foretold in Old Testament Scriptures thousands of years ago? I believe He was indeed The Son of God and I believe He was a Heavenly gift sent to this world in order to offer salvation to all who would believe. Some will, some will not! Let me point out something to you that is fascinating. Something pointed out by a man by the name of J. Sidlow Baxter. I have one of his books from 1960. It is probably one of the most intellectually challenging, and yet deeply inspiring devotional books I've ever encountered! It was given to me by one of our church members, Vivian Batey. It belonged to her dad, James Richardson, who had pastored two different Churches in Mississippi, one for 25 years and another one for 15 years. Thank you Vivian. Listen to what Sidlow Baxter said...

“The greatest of thoughts in the human mind is the thought of a Supreme Being, or God. Whence came this idea, this universal and ineradicable God-awareness of mankind? It seems an inexplicable enigma, if there is no God in reality. The human concept and conviction of the Divine Being comes from God himself. Man needs God...; for besides life there is fear, and besides reason there is conscience, and besides God-consciousness there is sin-consciousness. Man knows that God is, and that to find Him is the deepest need of our strangely self-contradictory nature. But how shall God be known? Mere man-made religions are at best a hope and a guess. The most specious philosophies can only taper away into doubtful suppositions when they pass from physical phenomena to spiritual mysteries. The big, deep, acute need is for God to become self-revealed to man. But can that be achieved? God is purely spiritual and infinite; man is housed in the physical and is finite. Apparently there was only one adequate way, namely that God Himself should assume our human nature, astonishing as this may seem by a real human birth, and become a Member of our race as well as its Creator. This is verily what was effected in the Bethlehem miracle of two millenniums ago. The Son of God became the Son of Man...The Incarnation was no mere aesthetic condescension of the Godhead; it was a desperate necessity for man's salvation and restoration.”

I had someone ask me why God doesn't just prove to the world that He exists and then everybody would believe. I told them I've had that same question before in my life. I mentioned how God did some pretty amazing things in the Bible and yet many people refused to believe. Think about the miracles of the Bible and yet so many chose to remain in their unbelief. I've got a modern day scenario for you...

Some would like to be driving down the road when all of a sudden a big hand comes down out of the sky and slaps the pavement in front of them causing the road to buckle and their car to go careening up into the air while God catches the car with His other hand and gently lets it down on the side of the road. He then gently opens the door and says with a powerful, but gentle voice, "Any questions?" "Uh, no sir, I think I got it!" Others might say, "Ok, how did I end up on a movie set? I know I'm on a movie set. This can't be real!" Bottom line, God doesn't work that way. He does, however, do miraculous things to try and reach you. He puts special people in your life, He protects you in order to give you chance after chance, and He has given you access to the most miraculous book ever written. The Bible. And someone might be tempted to say, "well the Bible is just a book somebody wrote, like all books. But that's where you would be wrong. If you want to talk about the Quran, you would be talking about one man, Muhammad. If you want to talk about the Book of Mormon you would be talking about one man, Joseph Smith. If you're talking about The Sūtras' of Buddhism, you would be talking about one man, Siddhartha Gautama, (Su-dar-ta-gau-ta-ma) better known as The Buddha. But when you are talking about the Holy Bible, you must understand that this book we hold in our hands is a gathering together of 66 books, with at least 39 authors, compiled over 1,500 years! And when you consider the amazing continuity and agreement of facts, it is nothing short of miraculous. It is by no one's definition an ordinary book and it certainly contains no ordinary content. And when you take the nature of the Bible into consideration and look at the prophecies concerning The Messiah and the fulfillment, which Dallas will deal with next week, you'll see that God plans things down to the very last little detail! Once again, Jay Sidlow Baxter makes an astonishing observation concerning the detailed prophecies about the Messiah found throughout the Old Testament Scriptures. He sums it up this way...

"Thus it was revealed to Adam of which Race He should come; then to Abraham of which nation; then to Jacob of which tribe; then to David of which family ; then to Micah of which place. Then to Isaiah of which woman."

Amazing detail! It's clear that God wants you to believe in Him, to trust in Him, to choose Him, but He absolutely will not violate your free will to choose! He will not force you to believe. That's why it is by faith. God has given us His unique and powerful Word in the Bible, but believing God's Word by faith is the way we make the choice! Paul put it this way in the Book of Romans...

Romans 5:1 Therefore, since we have been justified through faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ,

Romans 5:2 through whom we have gained access by faith into this grace in which we now stand. And we boast in the hope of the glory of God.

God wants you to seek Him, to seek truth, to seek understanding, to seek knowledge, to seek wisdom. If you are willing to seek, God has put all of the proof you'll ever need within your reach. I love the old saying, "Wise men still seek Jesus!"

Here's the key... You must desire truth. You must seek truth. Many do not seek truth because truth would conflict with their personal goals and agenda, which at times can be quite selfish. In order to know truth you must put self aside and embrace truth. Jesus Himself said this in Luke's Gospel 11:9-10...

Luke 11:9 "So I say to you: Ask and it will be given to you; seek and you will find; knock and the door will be opened to you.

Luke 11:10 For everyone who asks receives; he who seeks finds; and to him who knocks, the door will be opened."

Okay, with this in mind, I want us to examine just how much preparation went into that first Christmas gift heaven was going to send to earth. I thought you might be interested to know some of the odds and probabilities that serious scholars have pointed out when it comes to the prophecies concerning The Messiah. There are over 48 prophecies written that were to be fulfilled by the person who would be the true Messiah. Scholar Louis S. Lapidus stated that the odds of one man fulfilling just eight of the prophecies is one chance in one hundred million billion. He said, "That number is millions of times greater than the total number of people who've ever walked the planet!" Lee Strobel in his book "The Case for Christ" says that Peter W. Stoner calculated the odds of fulfilling forty-eight prophecies was one chance in a trillion, trillion, trillion, trillion, trillion, trillion, trillion, trillion, trillion, trillion!" My mind can't even begin to comprehend math that big! And when some people say that Jesus had read the prophecies and just orchestrated being in the right places at the right time. The problem with that is this: If Jesus was not the Messiah, He could not have controlled where He would be born, or what era He would be born in. And many of the prophecies concern what was done to Jesus by His enemies. Again, something He had no control over. And when they divided His clothes and cast lots for them, He was hanging on a Cross. And you might be thinking that I've just left the Christmas story and went straight to Easter. But we must never forget, the Cross is why He was born. Easter was the point of Christmas. Jesus had come to defy the odds, fulfill all the prophecies, and bring us a Christmas gift that would be bought and paid for on what has become known as Good Friday just before the first Easter. So there was amazing detail and impeccable planning by God before He sent us that first Christmas gift! Thousands of years of preparation were drawing to an historical climax. The exact people, the exact circumstances, the exact timing, were coming together according to Father God's perfect plan! Open your Bibles to Luke Chapter 1:1 and we'll see Christ's Coming Foretold...

Luke begins his story with an important introduction statement. Listen...

Luke 1:1 Many have undertaken to draw up an account of the things that have been fulfilled among us,

Luke 1:2 just as they were handed down to us by those who from the first were eyewitnesses and servants of the word.

Luke 1:3 With this in mind, since I myself have carefully investigated everything from the beginning, I too decided to write an orderly account for you, most excellent Theophilus,

Luke 1:4 so that you may know the certainty of the things you have been taught.

Luke was a Gentile and yet he feels an urgent sense of calling to share a Jewish story. A story about a Jew named Jesus who had fulfilled ancient prophecies. Luke, a gentile, was so blown away with the way Jesus had fulfilled the Jewish prophecies of The Messiah, he wanted to make sure others knew. Luke had obviously become a follower of Christ. The truths about Jesus were just too much to ignore. Luke was not one of the twelve disciples or an eyewitness to Jesus. He drew from the eyewitnesses, namely Mark, and sought to show in detail how Jesus was the Messiah! Theophilus, was probably a Roman official of high ranking, thus the prefix, most excellent. Interestingly, the name Theophilus means "friend of God." So Luke was probably protecting this person's identity for safety reasons. Luke was writing his gospel account in an attempt to reach others with the amazing truth about Jesus Christ and so he begins his story with an amazing story of two very pious and devout Jewish people, Zechariah and his wife Elizabeth. Luke is going to highlight the detail in which God was working to prepare earth for heaven's gift!

Let's look at Luke 1:5-7

Luke 1:5 In the time of Herod king of Judea there was a priest named Zechariah, who belonged to the priestly division of Abijah; his wife Elizabeth was also a descendant of Aaron.

Luke 1:6 Both of them were righteous in the sight of God, observing all the Lord's commands and decrees blamelessly.

Luke 1:7 But they were childless because Elizabeth was not able to conceive, and they were both very old.

Let me stop right here for a moment. Elizabeth was barren. That's a devastating thing for a woman, especially if she wants a child of her own. And back in Bible days, a barren woman was seen as having been abandoned by God, or cursed. But this could not have been the case! Why? Listen to what Luke said about them...

Luke 1:6 Both of them were upright in the sight of God, observing all the Lord's commandments and regulations blamelessly.

So it wasn't something they had done that caused her to be barren. Some in our world today might be willing to point the finger and say, "Not enough faith!" How wrong of us to make such judgements! Only God knows what's in someone's heart. Only God knows why some things are the way they are. Here's the truth...God had a plan neither Zechariah or Elizebeth could have

ever imagined, and it had something to do with that first Christmas gift. What was it? Zechariah was about to find out, although he won't fully understand...

Luke 1:8 Once when Zechariah's division was on duty and he was serving as priest before God,
Luke 1:9 he was chosen by lot, according to the custom of the priesthood, to go into the temple of the Lord and burn incense.

Okay, let's wait right there: What I'm about to tell you is another amazing mathematical oddity. Listen to what historians say about Zechariah being chosen at this particular time to take care of the temple duties. Malcom O. Talbert states this in the Broadman Commentary...

"According to some estimates, there were approximately 20,000 priests in Palestine at this time. Each of the 24 divisions ministered in the Temple for one week twice during the year. Since there were hundreds of priests in a division, they were chosen by lot to officiate at certain rituals. Such a privilege as the burning of incense, which took place daily, morning and evening, would fall to the lot of given priests no more than once during his lifetime."

Once again, God was preparing the details for His upcoming gift to the world. But let's read on, and I'll try to stop interrupting Luke's story...

Luke 1:10 And when the time for the burning of incense came, all the assembled worshipers were praying outside.

Luke 1:11 Then an angel of the Lord appeared to him, standing at the right side of the altar of incense.

Luke 1:12 When Zechariah saw him, he was startled and was gripped with fear.

Luke 1:13 But the angel said to him: "Do not be afraid, Zechariah; your prayer has been heard. Your wife Elizabeth will bear you a son, and you are to call him John.

Luke 1:14 He will be a joy and delight to you, and many will rejoice because of his birth,

Luke 1:15 for he will be great in the sight of the Lord. He is never to take wine or other fermented drink, and he will be filled with the Holy Spirit even before he is born.

Luke 1:16 He will bring back many of the people of Israel to the Lord their God.

Luke 1:17 And he will go on before the Lord, in the spirit and power of Elijah, to turn the hearts of the parents to their children and the disobedient to the wisdom of the righteous—to make ready a people prepared for the Lord."

Luke 1:18 Zechariah asked the angel, "How can I be sure of this? I am an old man and my wife is well along in years."

Luke 1:19 The angel said to him, "I am Gabriel. I stand in the presence of God, and I have been sent to speak to you and to tell you this good news.

Luke 1:20 And now you will be silent and not able to speak until the day this happens, because you did not believe my words, which will come true at their appointed time."

Luke 1:21 Meanwhile, the people were waiting for Zechariah and wondering why he stayed so long in the temple.

Luke 1:22 When he came out, he could not speak to them. They realized he had seen a vision in the temple, for he kept making signs to them but remained unable to speak.

Luke 1:23 When his time of service was completed, he returned home.

Luke 1:24 After this his wife Elizabeth became pregnant and for five months remained in seclusion.

Luke 1:25 “The Lord has done this for me,” she said. “In these days he has shown his favor and taken away my disgrace among the people.”

Zechariah and Elizabeth have just found out they are a part of God's detailed plans to introduce the Messiah to the world. They will give birth to John the Baptist, who will prepare the way of the Lord! This was prophesied in the Old Testament book of Malachi. Let me ask you a question: what would your reaction be if you had been in Zechariah's shoes? Now, I know we don't have too many literal visitations by angels these days, but God does have a way of confronting us with His message and our reaction matters!!! Now we are going to look at one more amazing part of Christ's Coming Foretold in Luke Chapter 1.

The Angel Gabriel appeared to Mary with a powerful message in which we find that Mary had found favor in God's eyes and God's presence was with her. Mary was a humble servant who walked with God and trusted His will for her life. The information Gabriel brought to her concerning her upcoming pregnancy carried potential risk for her socially and even physically. However, Mary fully submitted to God's will and as a result, she was given one of the greatest honors of all time: The honor of giving birth to the Messiah, and Savior of the world!

Luke 1:26 In the sixth month, God sent the angel Gabriel to Nazareth, a town in Galilee,

This is the same Gabriel who had brought God's message to Zechariah while serving in the temple in Jerusalem. This time we find Gabriel in the small town of Nazareth. Luke points out that Nazareth is a town in Galilee. This is further proof that Luke was writing his gospel to reach gentiles. Jews already knew the geography of the Holy Land. Another reason to point out Nazareth was to show the world that no matter where you're from, no matter how lowly your background, it's the call of God that counts. You might remember some would later question the concept of the Messiah being from anywhere other than Bethlehem. Listen to what would happen years later...

John 1:45 Philip found Nathanael and told him, “We have found the one Moses wrote about in the Law, and about whom the prophets also wrote—Jesus of Nazareth, the son of Joseph.”

John 1:46 “Nazareth! Can anything good come from there?” Nathanael asked. “Come and see,” said Philip.

Unless you knew the story of how Jesus was born in Bethlehem you would be right to question this. His parents would later move back to Nazareth where Jesus was raised. Can any good thing come out of Nazareth? It sure can when God's in it!! Let's continue. God sends Gabriel ...

Luke 1:27 to a virgin pledged to be married to a man named Joseph, a descendant of David. The virgin's name was Mary.

The information in this verse is vital to our story. Mary was a virgin and she was pledged to be married to Joseph. Joseph was not a rich man or of high position, but he was of royal lineage. A descendant of King David. These facts shed light on just how precarious Mary's situation was, given the information she is about to receive. To be engaged or betrothed to someone was a legally binding agreement in New Testament days. To break this agreement carried serious consequences. Social embarrassment and rejection were assured. Breaking this agreement was tantamount to divorce. If a woman was found to have been unfaithful, she could be stoned to death. Mary was well aware of these things.

Luke 1:28 The angel went to her and said, "Greetings, you who are highly favored! The Lord is with you."

What a greeting!! Mary is told she is highly favored and that The Lord is with her. This gives us insight into the integrity and innocence of Mary. The Angel did not say she was perfect. Remember, Jesus is the only perfect person who has ever lived, but Mary was a very sincere and Godly person. God's presence was with Mary. Obviously Mary walked with God in her daily life. We don't know what she was doing when the Angel spoke to her, but God was with her. Here's a powerful thought...God was with her already, but she would soon carry in her womb the One who would be called Immanuel which means "God with us!" Even though the Angel starts off with such positive words, Mary is still very scared. Even in Bible times, visitations from Angels were rare and could be positive or not...Let's read on...

Luke 1:29 Mary was greatly troubled at his words and wondered what kind of greeting this might be.

Luke 1:30 But the angel said to her, "Do not be afraid, Mary; you have found favor with God.

How cool is that? She had found favor with God. God had chosen to shine His grace on her in a special way. Remember, God looks at the heart. He obviously knew Mary's heart and she had found favor with God. Let's read on...

Luke 1:31 You will conceive and give birth to a son, and you are to call him Jesus.

Luke 1:32 He will be great and will be called the Son of the Most High. The Lord God will give him the throne of his father David,

Luke 1:33 and he will reign over Jacob's descendants forever; his kingdom will never end."

Now at this point Mary is probably a bit overwhelmed. It would have been the dream of every young Jewish woman to have the honor of carrying the Messiah. Mary knew the language the Angel was using meant she had been chosen. The name Jesus was not unfamiliar to Jewish people. It was the Greek form of the Hebrew name Joshua, which meant "Yahweh is salvation," and "The anointed one" or Messiah. Can you imagine what is going through Mary's head right about now? "Ok, wait a minute. I'm going to have a child. It's going to be a boy. I'm supposed to give Him the name reserved for the coming Messiah? Boy am I going to have some questions to answer!" Mary didn't question the truthfulness of what Gabriel had said, she believed, but she didn't understand how this could happen so she very humbly asked a question...

Luke 1:34 "How will this be," Mary asked the angel, "since I am a virgin?"

Luke 1:35 The angel answered, "The Holy Spirit will come on you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you. So the holy one to be born will be called the Son of God.

Luke 1:36 Even Elizabeth your relative is going to have a child in her old age, and she who was said to be unable to conceive is in her sixth month.

Luke 1:37 For no word from God will ever fail."

Gabriel knows what a difficult thing this is for Mary to understand. The words he has spoken to her are mysterious, powerful and supernatural! He helps her to believe by telling her of the miracle which has happened to her relative Elizabeth. Mary has to decide how to react to this amazing message. Her mind is racing. Her heart is pounding. She knows that if these words come to pass, she could face rejection by her "husband to be" and possibly death. She knew people would wonder who she thought she was naming her child Jesus, the Savior, the Anointed One, the Messiah. So, what would be her response? What would she say? What would you say? What would your reaction be? She could have said, "This is too much. I don't want this kind of responsibility. I just want to live my life. Please choose someone else. I'm not ready." But she doesn't. Let's look at this young handmaiden from Nazareth and see her phenomenal reaction...

Luke 1:38 "I am the Lord's servant," Mary answered. "May it be to me as you have said." Then the angel left her.

Now we know why she was highly favored by The Lord! Now we know why God was with her. Now we know why God was able to use her for such an important task. Mary was available to God! Mary was willing to serve God in any capacity. Mary trusted that God's will was superior to her own in every way! Mary was submissive to God! Some of us here today may be thinking..."None of this really applies to me" and asking the question "what would I do is irrelevant because I'll never be in that position. Mary's situation was unique and is a one time occurrence in history. I would never face the same kind of question Mary faced!" To this I reply, "Don't be so quick to jump to conclusions!" What I'm about to tell you should wake some of you up from your spiritual slumber. I'm no Angel, but I believe God has laid a message on my heart to give you! If this message sinks into your heart you may leave here this morning feeling like you've seen an angel. Are you ready? Remember, your reaction to God's message matters! Here we go...

Mary was approached by God and asked to carry Jesus in her womb and give birth to the Messiah as a part of God's gift to the world. God is approaching you this morning with this question...

Would you be willing to carry the Messiah in your heart and share God's gift of love to your world?

The writer of Romans put it beautifully when he wrote the following words...

Romans 10:8 But what does it say? “The word is near you; it is in your mouth and in your heart,” that is, the message concerning faith that we proclaim:

Romans 10:9 If you declare with your mouth, “Jesus is Lord,” and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved.

Romans 10:10 For it is with your heart that you believe and are justified, and it is with your mouth that you profess your faith and are saved.

Romans 10:11 As Scripture says, “Anyone who believes in him will never be put to shame.”

Romans 10:12 For there is no difference between Jew and Gentile—the same Lord is Lord of all and richly blesses all who call on him,

Romans 10:13 for, “Everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved.”

Romans 10:14 How, then, can they call on the one they have not believed in? And how can they believe in the one of whom they have not heard? And how can they hear without someone preaching to them?

Romans 10:15 And how can anyone preach unless they are sent? As it is written: “How beautiful are the feet of those who bring good news!”

So here's some takeaways! Just like Mary, there's a lot to consider. You may be ridiculed and thought a fool for believing in the message of Christmas. Some might say you're acting like you've seen an Angel or something. You will have to decide whether or not you are willing to embrace God's will for your life rather than your own. The same Holy Spirit that came upon Mary and brought Jesus to her, is the same Holy Spirit who will come upon anyone who calls upon the name of the Lord and will bring Jesus into the heart!

Here's the question, are you willing to make the same commitment to God as Mary did?

Luke 1:38 “I am the Lord's servant,” Mary answered. “May it be to me as you have said.” Then the angel left her.

I know it's a huge step to place your life in someone else's hands, but God's hands are big, strong and faithful. God's hands will lead you, protect you and provide for you! This doesn't mean you will never face difficulties or hardships. You will! The difference, you won't be alone! Mary's life was certainly not easy and the task she was called to accomplish also came with some burdens and heartaches, but in the end she knew God knew best! And if you've been faithful like Zechariah and Elizabeth, and yet your prayers have not been answered, God has not forgotten you and you must trust He has a plan. What a wonderful Christmas gift from heaven to you this Christmas if you could stop worrying about things and start trusting God with things. I can only imagine how many times Zechariah and Elizabeth wondered why? But they remained faithful. Somehow they just knew God had things under control. Do you have that kind of peace in your life? That kind of trust? With all the detail God puts into things, you should know He's got detailed plans for your life. If God would go to this much trouble to prepare for the giving of the gift of His Son Jesus to be the Savior of the World, don't you know He's been working in the details of your life trying to show you how much He loves you and cares for you.

This Christmas I pray you'll understand that God's gift to you was no last minute gift and it was no cheap gift!! It was a gift He planned on offering to you even before you were born... John 3:16 states it so well...

John 3:16“For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life.

John 3:17 For God did not send his Son into the world to condemn the world, but to save the world through him.

So God has proven His love for you! He proved it by the gift He sent to you many years ago. And the historical details and amazing ways in which Jesus Christ fulfilled the ancient prophecies of the Old Testament were a part of God's plan to prove His love to anyone who would honestly and earnestly seek Him. These amazing facts are a part of God's Christmas package to you. But something about a gift...it must be received. If it is rejected it will do you no good! So what will you do with the gift of the Messiah this Christmas?