

# AND THERE WAS LIGHT:

## Unwrapping the Wonder of Christmas

Year after year people everywhere expect to experience the joy and wonder of Christmas through the gifts, gatherings, traditions and twinkling lights. **But what if this Christmas meant something more?** According to John's Gospel, the birth of Jesus was a historical event of *cosmic proportions*. That's because Jesus was no ordinary child. He is *Immanuel* – the eternal God with us - the fulfillment of ancient prophecies, and the true Light for all mankind. From the very beginning, he was, is, and will always be our only Savior. So how would this Christmas be different if - instead of presents and parties - we chose to be wrapped up in the awe and wonder of almighty God coming to Earth so you can be reborn, fully forgiven, and truly loved by our heavenly Father? Join us this December at The Story, as we begin our journey through the Gospel of John and encounter the true meaning of Christmas: ***The Word became flesh and made his dwelling among us. We have seen his glory, the glory of the one and only Son... full of grace and truth. - John 1:14***

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### December 14, 2025 - What Child Is This?

How would you respond to the question, "Who is Jesus?"

Why is this question so consequential?

### 3 Questions to Ask About Jesus

**Question #1:** Who did \_\_\_\_\_ claim to be?

What did Jesus say about his own identity? (See John 8:58 and John 17:5)

**Question #2:** Who did his \_\_\_\_\_ believe him to be?

John 1:9 - The true light that gives light to everyone was coming into the world...

What did John the Apostle believe about Jesus' identity?

What did the other apostles believe about him?

- Simon Peter (Matthew 16:16):
- Thomas (John 20:28):
- Nathanael (John 1:49):
- Andrew (John 1:41):
- Paul (Colossians 1:15-20):

What did Jesus' own brothers, James and Jude, say about his identity?

- James (James 1:1 and James 2:1):
- Jude (Jude 1:25):

**Question #3:** What did his \_\_\_\_\_ say about him?

John 1:10-11 - He was in the world, and though the world was made through him, the world did not recognize him. He came to that which was his own, but his own did not receive him.

Who were Jesus' "own" people who didn't receive him? Why did they reject him?

(see: Matthew 9:10-13, John 10:30-33)

*"He was executed for practising sorcery..." - Jewish Babylonian Talmud (Sanhedrin 43a) c. 450 AD*

What does this quote from the Jewish Talmud tell us about what ancient Jews believed about Jesus?

## MODERN NON-CHRISTIAN BELIEFS ABOUT JESUS

- **MODERN JUDAISM** (16 Million) - Jesus was a first-century rabbi with many followers, a miracle-worker.
- **ISLAM** (2.1 Billion) - He was born of a virgin, an inspired teacher and revered prophet, ascended into Heaven.
- **NEW AGE/NON-RELIGIOUS/AGNOSTIC/ATHEIST** (2 Billion+) - He was a wise and good moral teacher
- **HINDUISM** (1.2 Billion) - Jesus was a holy man, a guru who experienced “oneness with God,” a “saint.”
- **BUDDHISM** (500 Million) - Jesus was an enlightened being, a holy person, and a wise teacher.
- **MORMONISM / LATER DAY SAINTS** (17.5 Million) - Jesus is a son of God, created by God, who died on a cross and was resurrected to save many.
- **JEHOVAH’S WITNESSES** (9 Million) - Jesus is a god and the son of God whose life “began” in Heaven as the archangel Michael, and he was resurrected (spiritually).

What do these non-Christian opinions of Jesus suggest about his true identity?

**John 1:12-13** - Yet to all who did receive him, to those who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God - children born not of natural descent, nor of human decision or a husband’s will, but born of God.

What did Jesus come to do, and for whom? What does this tell you about who Jesus is?

## **WHAT DO CHRISTIANS BELIEVE ABOUT WHO JESUS IS?**

- **CHRISTIANITY** (2.3 Billion) - Jesus is the one true God who, through his death and resurrection, canceled the power of sin and death once and for all, making salvation possible for everyone who has faith in him.

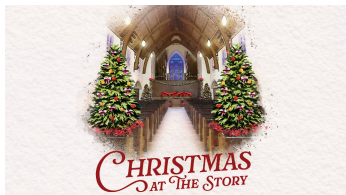
If you’re a follower of Jesus, why have you chosen to give your life to him?

If you aren’t, what questions, doubts, or life experiences are holding you back?



### **Children's Christmas Choir Show TONIGHT!**

Come back later today for our Children's Christmas Choir show at 5:30pm! Visit **thestory.church/events** to learn more and grab free tickets for your whole family. We hope to see you!



### **Christmas at The Story**

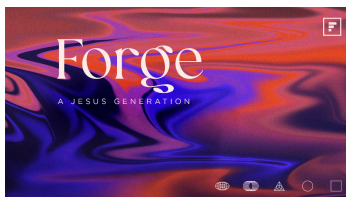
Save the dates for our SIX candlelight services this year!

Travelers - Thurs. 12/18 @ 7pm

Eve Eve - Tues. 12/23 @ 6:30pm

Eve - Weds. 12/24 @ 1:30, 3:00, 4:30 & 6:00pm

Pre-register for nursery: **thestory.church/christmas**



### **Forge Retreat for Students**

We're excited to travel to The Woodland's Methodist Church once again for their FORGE weekend - February 13-15, 2026!

This is a powerful weekend filled with worship, fun sessions and activities, awesome teaching, and more! Visit

**thestory.church/events** to read more and register.