ARE WE SCARED OF CHRISTMAS?

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Category: Christian Life

I don't mean scared of Christmas in the sense of worrying about how much it will all cost, or recovering from the annual fight to get round the supermarkets as people lay in enough food to survive the siege of Leningrad despite the fact that the shops will only be closed for a day or two. I'm thinking about a more fundamental sense.

It seems to me that a lot of Christians, particularly those of the Evangelical flavour aren't entirely sure what to do with Christmas and are eager to rush on to Easter. Easter is seen as the heart of Gospel - after all "Christ died for our sins". Now, I'm not saying that Easter is not important - don't get me wrong. In many ways, the cross is the heart of the Christian message. But, the cross is not the whole of the message by a long way. Christ dying for our sins only has any purpose in the context of a God who is actively reaching out to his creation, communicating to them and seeking to draw them to himself.

The Incarnation - Christmas - is the supreme example of God moving towards humanity, seeking them out and demonstrating his love for them. Through Christmas and the life of Christ on earth we get a clear picture of what our God is like - and it is because of the nature and character of God that we eventually get to Easter.

When I'm driving somewhere, I just want to arrive at my destination. I hate stopping to sight see or enjoy places *en route*. Because of this, I've missed visiting or enjoying many lovely (apparently) places in Britain and elsewhere because I just wanted to get to the end of the trip. It seems to me that we have a tendency to be like this about Christmas - we are so keen to get on to Easter that we risk not appreciating the sheer wonder of God becoming a man and revealing himself to us. Yes, Christmas needs Easter (and the second coming) to bring God's plan to fulfilment, but we shouldn't let the importance of the destination blind us to the sheer wonder and beauty of this part of the journey.

Our God, heaven cannot hold him, nor earth sustain,
Heaven and earth shall flee away when he comes to reign,
But in the bleak mid winter, a stable place sufficed,
The Lord God almighty, Jesus Christ.

Just what sort of a God does this?