

Important Christmas thoughts.

Luke 2:1-20

Adrian Rogers: "Christmas is not about the gifts under the tree. Rather, Christmas is about the gift that was given on the tree when Christ died there for our sins and gave us the gift of eternal life."

"For me to live is \_\_\_\_\_, to die is \_\_\_\_\_."

Adrian Rogers: "If you put anything other than Christ in the first blank, then you must finish the sentence with the word "loss" because you can't take anything else with you when you die."

"You may not be able to give as much as somebody else can. You may not have the gifts and talents of someone else. But God doesn't want your gifts! He doesn't need your gifts! He wants your love."

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Paul Harvey once told the story of a family who kept the same tradition each Christmas Eve—the mother and children would go to the church service, and the father would stay home to read the paper. When the family returned home from church, they would all gather to open their presents.

The father no longer believed in the stories of God coming as a baby in a manger. As the family left for church one particular Christmas, the father opened the evening paper and settled in by the fireplace. Suddenly, he heard tapping on the window. A bird kept flying against the glass trying to get out of the snow and into the warmth of his home.

Feeling sorry for the bird, the man went outside hoping to bring it in. When he got closer to the scared creature, it flew against the window even harder. The more the man tried to capture the bird, the more it continued to fly into window. He yelled out in frustration, "Stupid bird! Can't you understand that I'm trying to help? If only you understood, you wouldn't fly away. If only I could become a bird, and get you to understand."

Just then the church bells rang, and the father fell to his knees, began crying, and said, "Oh God, I didn't understand."

God's Son came in human form that we might understand from where we came, for what reason we were separated, and how we can be restored to God. Christmas isn't about empty promises of

material gifts, holiday icons, or seasonal sights and sounds. It is about a fulfilled promise of a restored relationship between God and humankind.