

## **The Cost of Christmas** **Luke 2:21–35 (NKJV)**

21 And when eight days were completed for the circumcision of the Child, His name was called JESUS, the name given by the angel before He was conceived in the womb. 22 Now when the days of her purification according to the law of Moses were completed, they brought Him to Jerusalem to present Him to the Lord 23 (as it is written in the law of the Lord, “Every male who opens the womb shall be called holy to the LORD”), 24 and to offer a sacrifice according to what is said in the law of the Lord, “A pair of turtledoves or two young pigeons.” 25 And behold, there was a man in Jerusalem whose name was Simeon, and this man was just and devout, waiting for the Consolation of Israel, and the Holy Spirit was upon him. 26 And it had been revealed to him by the Holy Spirit that he would not see death before he had seen the Lord’s Christ. 27 So he came by the Spirit into the temple. And when the parents brought in the Child Jesus, to do for Him according to the custom of the law, 28 he took Him up in his arms and blessed God and said: 29 “Lord, now You are letting Your servant depart in peace, According to Your word; 30 For my eyes have seen Your salvation 31 Which You have prepared before the face of all peoples, 32 A light to bring revelation to the Gentiles, And the glory of Your people Israel.” 33 And Joseph and His mother marveled at those things which were spoken of Him. 34 Then Simeon blessed them, and said to Mary His mother, “Behold, this Child is destined for the fall and rising of many in Israel, and for a sign which will be spoken against 35 (yes, a sword will pierce through your own soul also), that the thoughts of many hearts may be revealed.”

Each year it seems that celebrating Christmas gets more expensive.

Not only the gifts and food, but cost of travel.

Each year people put themselves into debt to buy gifts they can’t afford.

And most of the time we only buy gifts for those who bought us gifts last year.

And now the merchants have convinced us that Black Friday begins before Halloween.

We that original Christmas was very expensive as well. And I am not talking about the gifts that the wise brought to Jesus.

### I. To God the Father

#### A. It pleased the Father to bruise Him

##### 1. Isaiah 53:10 (NKJV)

- a. 10 Yet it pleased the LORD to bruise Him; He has put Him to grief. When You make His soul an offering for sin, He shall see His seed, He shall prolong His days, And the pleasure of the LORD shall prosper in His hand.

#### B. The only way that God would save you and me, to give us Christmas was to send

the Beloved, His Beloved Son.

1. John 3:16 (NKJV)

a. <sup>16</sup> For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life.

2. Romans 8:32 (NKJV)

a. <sup>32</sup> He who did not spare His own Son, but delivered Him up for us all, how shall He not with Him also freely give us all things?

3. Romans 5:6–8 (NKJV)

a. 6 For when we were still without strength, in due time Christ died for the ungodly. 7 For scarcely for a righteous man will one die; yet perhaps for a good man someone would even dare to die. 8 But God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us.

C. Back in the days of the Great Depression a Missouri man named John Griffith was the controller of a great railroad drawbridge across the Mississippi River. One day in the summer of 1937 he decided to take his eight-year-old son, Greg, with him to work. At noon, John Griffith put the bridge up to allow ships to pass and sat on the observation deck with his son to eat lunch. Time passed quickly. Suddenly he was startled by the shrieking of a train whistle in the distance. He quickly looked at his watch and noticed it was 1:07—the Memphis Express, with four hundred passengers on board, was roaring toward the raised bridge! He leaped from the observation deck and ran back to the control tower. Just before throwing the master lever he glanced down for any ships below. There a sight caught his eye that caused his heart to leap poundingly into his throat. Greg had slipped from the observation deck and had fallen into the massive gears that operate the bridge. His left leg was caught in the cogs of the two main gears! Desperately John’s mind whirled to devise a rescue plan. But as soon as he thought of a possibility he knew there was no way it could be done.

Again, with alarming closeness, the train whistle shrieked in the air. He could hear the clicking of the locomotive wheels over the tracks. That was his son down there—yet there were four hundred passengers on the train. John knew what he had to do, so he buried his head in his left arm and pushed the master switch forward. That great massive bridge lowered into place just as the Memphis Express began to roar across the river. When John Griffith lifted his head with his face smeared with tears, he looked into the passing windows of the train. There were businessmen casually reading their afternoon papers, finely dressed ladies in the dining car sipping coffee, and children pushing long spoons into their dishes of ice cream. No one looked at the control house, and no one looked at the great

gear box. With wrenching agony, John Griffith cried out at the steel train: “I sacrificed my son for you people! Don’t you care?” The train rushed by, but nobody heard the father’s words, which recalled Lamentations 1:12: “Is it nothing to you, all who pass by?”

(Condensed and adapted from “Is It Nothing to You?” by Dr. D. James Kennedy, March 19, 1978, Coral Ridge Presbyterian Church, Ft. Lauderdale, Florida.)  
Michael P. Green, ed., *Illustrations for Biblical Preaching: Over 1500 Sermon Illustrations Arranged by Topic and Indexed Exhaustively*, Revised edition of: The expositor’s illustration file. (Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1989).

1. But the cross was no accident.
  - a. It was not something that God had not planned for.
2. Acts 2:22–23 (NKJV)
  - a. <sup>22</sup> “Men of Israel, hear these words: Jesus of Nazareth, a Man attested by God to you by miracles, wonders, and signs which God did through Him in your midst, as you yourselves also know—<sup>23</sup> Him, being delivered by the determined purpose and foreknowledge of God, you have taken by lawless hands, have crucified, and put to death;

## II. To God the Son

- A. Humiliation
- B. Depravation
- C. Servitude
- D. Suffering
- E. Rejection
- F. Death

### 1. Blood Transfusion

In his book *Written in Blood*, Robert Coleman tells the story of a little boy whose sister needed a blood transfusion. The doctor explained that she had the same disease the boy had recovered from two years earlier. Her only chance for recovery was a transfusion from someone who had previously conquered the disease. Since the two children had the same rare blood type, the boy was the ideal donor.

“Would you give your blood to Mary?” the doctor asked.

Johnny hesitated. His lower lip started to tremble. Then he smiled and said, “Sure, for my sister.”

Soon the two children were wheeled into the hospital room—Mary, pale and thin; Johnny, robust and healthy. Neither spoke, but when their eyes met, Johnny grinned.

As the nurse inserted the needle into his arm, Johnny’s smile faded. He watched the blood flow through the tube.

With the ordeal almost over, his voice, slightly shaky, broke the silence. “Doctor, when do I die?”

Only then did the doctor realize why Johnny had hesitated, why his lip had trembled when he’d agreed to donate his blood. He’s thought giving his blood to his sister meant giving up his life. In that brief moment, he’d made his great decision.

Johnny, fortunately, didn’t have to die to save his sister. Each of us, however, has a condition more serious than Mary’s, and it required Jesus to give not just His blood but His life.

Thomas Lindberg

Written in Blood, by Robert Coleman

2. But Jesus literally gave His all for us.

### III. To Us

- A. He performed heart surgery and took out our evil heart of sin and gave us a heart for God.
- B. He took every one of our sins regardless of the filth and shame and laid them on Himself to take them away.
- C. He moved us from the kingdom of darkness into the kingdom of light.
- D. He removed our spiritual blindness and gave eyes to see wonderful things.
- E. He healed our deaf ears and gave us the ability to hear the gospel of life.
- F. While we were dead in sin He gave His life for us to raise up to set together with Him in heavenly places.
- G. Although we were paupers here we have become heirs of God and joint heirs with Jesus Christ

### IV. To Satan

- A. His control over mankind.
- B. His kingdom as it were.
- C. His final defeat and destruction.