

Worship Fully MSG Notes Letter Version

A **CONSPIRACY** may be defined as 'any concurrence in action or combination to bring about a given result' (*Dictionary.com*).

With that understanding Jesus started a conspiracy that changed the world.

1 Then the whole assembly rose and led him off to Pilate. 2 And they began to accuse him, saying, "We have found this man subverting our nation. He opposes payment of taxes to Caesar and claims to be Messiah, a king." 3 So Pilate asked Jesus, "Are you the king of the Jews?" "You have said so," Jesus replied. 4 Then Pilate announced to the chief priests and the crowd, "I find no basis for a charge against this man." 5 But they insisted, "He stirs up the people all over Judea by his teaching. He started in Galilee and has come all the way here." Luke 23:1-5 NIV®

Advent means the coming, or the arrival of something anticipated . . .

Christmas is the time we celebrate the **ADVENT** of God's conspiracy to redeem the whole world.

14 So the Lord God said to the serpent, "Because you have done this, "Cursed are you above all livestock and all wild animals! You will crawl on your belly and you will eat dust all the days of your life. 15 And I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your offspring and hers; he will crush your head, and you will strike his heel." Genesis 3:14-15®

Notice, it is foretold to come through the 'offspring' of the woman, aka a human baby! Now to that baby's story . . .

1 In those days Caesar Augustus issued a decree that a census should be taken of the entire Roman world. 2 (This was the first census that took place while Quirinius was governor of Syria.) 3 And everyone went to their own town to register. 4 So Joseph also went up from the town of Nazareth in Galilee to Judea, to Bethlehem the town of David, because he belonged to the house and line of David. 5 He went there to register with Mary, who was pledged to be married to him and was expecting a child. 6 While they were there, the time came for the baby to be born, 7 and she gave birth to her firstborn, a son. She wrapped him in cloths and placed him in a manger, because there was no guest room available for them. 8 And there were shepherds living out in the fields nearby, keeping watch over their flocks at night. 9 An angel of the Lord appeared to them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were terrified. 10 But the angel said to them, "Do not be afraid. I bring you good news that will cause great joy for all the people. 11 Today in the town of David a Savior has been born to you; he is the Messiah, the Lord. 12 This will be a sign to you: You will find a baby wrapped in cloths and lying in a manger." Luke 2:1-12 NIV®

But over the centuries we've lost sight of the purpose of Christmas such that now we can sum up where we are as a culture with Christmas with this adaptation of

'Twas the Night Before Christmas' (*modern version*)

<http://www.alchemistmatt.com/twas/twasall23.html>

How did we get to this point where Christmas is more about who can sell what to whom than it is about the advent of Christ?

Some say it is because we are not **WORSHIPPING** enough.

He has made everything beautiful in its time. He has also set eternity in the human heart. Ecclesiastes 3:11ab NIV®

We were made to worship and if we do not worship what we were made for then we will worship **SOMETHING ELSE**.

Worship is ascribing **WORTH** to something, to adore, give honor, respect, and reverence, to hold in awe and to serve.

Our Advent Conspiracy is to put Christ back in Christmas so our worship will return to **GOD** who is the only one worthy to receive it.

Our Advent Conspiracy is not about holding more worship services but rather about learning to worship more **FULLY!**

We worship more fully by entering the Christmas story as **PARTICIPANTS** rather than just observing it as bystanders.

Ten examples of ways to worship more fully . . .

1. Zechariah **PRAYED** (Luke 1:13)
2. Mary **OFFERED** herself (Luke 1:38)
3. Elizabeth **EXCLAIMED** (Luke 1:42)
4. Joseph **OBEYED** (Matthew 1:24)
5. Angels gave **PROPS** (Luke 2:13-14)
6. Shepherds **CAME AND SAW** (Luke 2:15-16)
7. Shepherds **WENT AND SHARED** (Luke 2:17-18)
8. Simeon **BLESSED** (Luke 2:22-35)

9. Anna **GAVE THANKS** (Luke 2:36-38)

10. Wise men **GAVE GIFTS** (Matthew 2:1-11)

When we participate in the Christmas story rather than just observe it, we will worship Christ more fully.

Part of Advent Conspiracy is making the choice to give at least one less gift to family or friends and repurpose the resources you would have used for that gift to a ministry or mission that is helping others here locally.

This advent season consider how you are **EXPRESSING** your worship of God

Take these ten examples of ways to Worship More Fully and be intentional about implementing one or more of them into your daily life:

Prayed, Offered, Exclaimed, Obeyed, Gave Props, Came & Saw, Went & shared, Blessed, Gave Thanks, Gave Gifts

'Twas the night before Christmas' (better ending)

Christ's eyes... how they twinkle!
Christ's Spirit... how merry!
Christ's love... how enormous!
All our burdens... He'll carry!
So instead of being busy,
overworked, and uptight
Let's put Christ back in Christmas,
and enjoy some good nights!²

MY NEXT STEP THIS WEEK IS (choose one or more)

Memorize the selected verse

- Luke 23:5 _____
- Be present for our December 6th 'Stop the Scam' seminar.
- Give one less gift and redirect the cost towards a mission /ministry.
- Consider the ten examples of how to participate in the Christmas story and choose one or more of them to implement this week.

Drive It Home: Discuss my Christmas traditions and practices to identify any places where my worship may be being misplaced.

1 The concept of this series and some content comes from a book by Rick McKinley, Chris Seay, and Greg Holder called, "Advent Conspiracy: Can Christmas Still Change the World?" This adaptation of the messages is © Carl Barnhardt, December 2023

2 Author of this adaptation is unknown. Internet search 11/21/2023 revealed numerous instances of this adaptation with no specific author credit. The earliest dated use of this adaptation gave credit to Rev. Jon Prain, Pastor, The Federated Church, Avon, Illinois, November 25, 2001, and was found at: Canonical List of 'Twas the Night Before Christmas Variations, Version 2007.1, Part 23 of 50, January 7, 2007; <http://www.alchemistmatt.com/twas/twasall23.html>. Some minor word edits.