

THE SEASON THAT STILL TOUCHES HEARTS

STUDY ONE

The Gift That Still Saves Lives

John 1:1–5, 14; 2 Corinthians 9:15

The story of Christmas doesn't begin at a stable in Bethlehem but in the throne room of the King. In fact, it begins before time in "eternity past," in a beginning that really had no beginning, where only the Godhead of the Father, Son, and Spirit existed.

—Charles R. Swindoll

ON the first Christmas, God gave the ultimate gift to the world. He wrapped heaven's glory in the tiny, humble frame of a baby and, beaming with delight, gave us His only Son.

Pondering God's extravagant love offering to the world, Paul exclaimed: "Thanks be to God for His indescribable gift!" (2 Corinthians 9:15 NASB). The great apostle whose command of the Greek language produced eloquent prose and inspiring essays was at a loss for words. God's gift was *indescribable*! Paul even coined the Greek word translated "indescribable," for it appears nowhere else in Greek literature. The embodiment of God's greatest gift to humanity, Jesus is a treasure too wonderful for words.

Perhaps one reason for Paul's speechless awe was Jesus' *eternal nature*—which John explained in the first chapter of his gospel. Open your Bible to John 1, and prepare your heart to welcome the true wonder of Christmas.



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The Gift That Still Saves Lives

John 1:1–5, 14; 2 Corinthians 9:15



PREPARE YOUR HEART

God gave His Son to the world “to save sinners” (1 Timothy 1:15). Take a moment to let this thought sink into your heart, and write a prayer of thanksgiving and adoration to the Father for sending Jesus, our Savior—God’s personal gift to you!

Now, let’s open the Word to John’s description of adoration for Jesus in John 1.



YOUR TURN IN THE SCRIPTURES

Read slowly the following verses.

*In the beginning the Word already existed.
The Word was with God,
and the Word was God.
He existed in the beginning with God.
God created everything through him,
and nothing was created except through him.
The Word gave life to everything that was created,
and his life brought light to everyone.
The light shines in the darkness,
and the darkness can never extinguish it. (John 1:1–5)*



The Gift That Still Saves Lives

John 1:1–5, 14; 2 Corinthians 9:15



Observation: Jesus Existed before Bethlehem

A key principle in the *Searching the Scriptures* process is observation,¹ which helps you grasp what the text says before attempting to interpret and apply it. Reread 1 John 1:1–5, and highlight with your cursor in different colors (or print the page and underline, circle, or place boxes around) words that are repeated for emphasis. Notice the concepts John emphasizes through the repetition of certain words: *Word*, *beginning*, *God*, *created*, *life*, *light*, and *darkness*.

What did John say about the divine nature of “the Word” in John 1:1?

Write the phrases in verses 2–5 that describe the Word’s actions. Note the parallel phrases.

The Word is Jesus, the Messiah to whom John the Baptizer pointed (John 1:6–9, 15, 29–34). When did Jesus’ existence *begin*? He had no beginning because He was with God in eternity past, *existing as God* before time began.

The story of Christmas doesn’t begin at a stable in Bethlehem but in the throne room of the King. In fact, it begins before time in “eternity past,” in a beginning that really had no beginning, where only the Godhead of the Father, Son, and Spirit existed.

—Chuck Swindoll



The Gift That Still Saves Lives

John 1:1–5, 14; 2 Corinthians 9:15



Interpretation: God’s Planning and Wrapping the Gift

We often turn to the account of Jesus’ birth in Luke 2 to find the Christmas story, but the real story, according to John 1, goes back to eternity past and Jesus’ original home in heaven.

How God Planned to Save the World

In his message, Chuck described God as three persons yet one nature—the Godhead—and *God’s plan to save the world* (God’s “eternal decrees”).

Before there was time, before there was space, before there was matter, the eternal decrees were determined by the Godhead. Think with me: the Godhead—comprised of Father, Son, and Spirit; coequal, coeternal, and coexistent—knew everything and, therefore, was able to plan for anything. Knowing that people would populate the earth and knowing that sin would ultimately come and dominate the people of the earth, there would have to be a solution for those people whom God loved. There would have to be a solution to that sin problem that separated humanity from deity.

What was God’s solution to save the world, according to [John 1:14](#), [29](#), and [3:16](#)?

How God Wrapped His Gift for the World

God’s solution of sending His Son included a problem. How could God’s Son, “the sinless, spotless Lamb of God” (1 Peter 1:19), take on flesh and remain sinless? The answer came in the way God “wrapped” His gift to the world.



The Gift That Still Saves Lives

John 1:1–5, 14; 2 Corinthians 9:15

How did Isaiah indicate the Messiah would enter the world (*Isaiah 7:14*)? And how was Isaiah's prophecy fulfilled in Jesus' conception (*Luke 1:30–35*)?

We refer often to the virgin birth because Mary, upon giving birth, was still a virgin. But to be technical about it, it was a virgin conception. God wrapped the Word in Mary's womb in a miracle. —Chuck Swindoll



Correlation: Unwrapping God's Gift

God wrapped His most precious gift to humanity in a miracle in Mary's womb. The unwrapping came when Mary gave birth to Jesus, and "the Word became human and made his home among us" (John 1:14).

As Jesus grew into manhood, nothing about Jesus' appearance set Him apart. Though John witnessed Jesus' glory at the transfiguration, "the glory of the Father's one and only Son" (1:14), most people saw Jesus as any other human—with no halo or heavenly glow to identify Him as the Son of God. Because of His ordinary appearance, many struggled to see Him for who He truly was.

How did John say most people received the Gift of God (*1:10–11*)?



The Gift That Still Saves Lives

John 1:1–5, 14; 2 Corinthians 9:15

How did His family and those who knew Jesus growing up in Nazareth receive Him (*Mark 3:21; 6:1–3*)?

Here's the gift given to save lives and yet His very family questioned who He was. So, when I meet people who struggle with Jesus, I remember passages like this. Rather than rebuking them, I understand. When they unwrap the gift, all they see is just another Jewish man.
—Chuck Swindoll



Application: Treasuring God's Gift

What is your response when you see Jesus for who He truly is? The baby in the manger was deity wrapped in human flesh, the sinless Son of God who bore the judgment of the world and rose triumphant from the grave. Oh, the wonderful blessing of believing in Jesus and receiving God's gift!

But to all who believed him and accepted him, he gave the right to become children of God. They are reborn—not with a physical birth resulting from human passion or plan, but a birth that comes from God. (John 1:12–13)

Take a few moments of private worship to picture the baby in the manger as *God in the flesh*. “This gift too wonderful for words” (2 Corinthians 9:15) is the giver of your life and the light shining in your dark world. In the space below, build on your words of adoration at the beginning of the study, and express your confidence in Christ as the Master of creation and the Lord of your life.



The Gift That Still Saves Lives

John 1:1–5, 14; 2 Corinthians 9:15

God gave us His Son to channel His grace to the world. Through Jesus, we have all received “grace upon grace” (John 1:16 NASB). In the next study, we’ll examine how God showered His grace on Mary and Joseph through a life-changing surprise followed by soul-comforting relief.



A FINAL PRAYER

Father, through Your Son, You made the universe. The tiny fingers on the baby in the manger formed the planets and flung the stars in space. In the misty, precreation past, You had me in mind as Your beloved. I praise You for the awesome God You are, and I thank You for Your indescribable gift: Jesus. Amen.

ENDNOTE

1. To learn about Chuck Swindoll’s *Searching the Scriptures* method of Bible study, click “[How to Study the Bible for Yourself](#)” or visit [sts.insight.org](#).



The Gift That Still Saves Lives

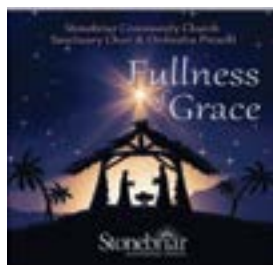
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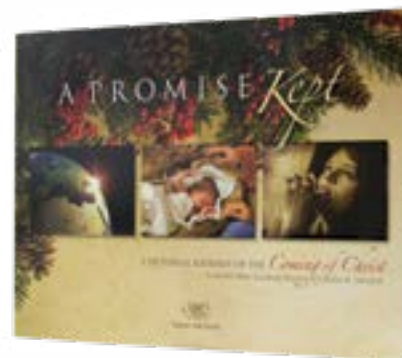
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For the 2019 broadcast, this *Searching the Scriptures* study was developed by Bryce Klabunde, executive vice president of Pastoral Ministries, based upon the original outlines, charts, and transcripts of Charles R. Swindoll's messages.



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THE SEASON THAT STILL TOUCHES HEARTS STUDY TWO

The Surprise That Still Brings Relief

Matthew 1:18–25; Luke 1:26–38

The message I have for all of us today is this: God keeps on surprising us when we least expect it. We simply need to stay alert, sensitive, and open to what God wants us to hear.

—Charles R. Swindoll

DURING World War II, a chaplain decided to accompany the crew of an Army Air Force bomber on a raid into Germany. The B-17 encountered heavy resistance when enemy fighter planes swarmed the plane and antiaircraft artillery peppered the sky. To steady the men, the chaplain activated the intercom and said, “It’s all right, men. Have no fear. God is with you.” The tail gunner, who was frantically firing his weapon, shouted back, “God may be with you guys up front, but He’s not back here!” Within a few seconds, an enemy shell passed through the tail of the plane and out the top, leaving gaping holes where it entered and exited but not detonating! After a moment of stunned silence over what appeared to be a miracle, the tail gunner added, “Correction. *God just walked in!*”¹

What a fitting way to describe the first Christmas! When Jesus was born, everything in the world seemed out of control. A power-mad Roman dictator occupied the throne, public executions were commonplace, and death was all around . . . then suddenly, God just walked in and did the impossible!

As Paul put it, “We were slaves to the basic principles of this world. But when the right time came, God sent his Son” (Galatians 4:3–4). To announce the Son’s entrance, a host of angels filled the sky with sound and light and surprised a group of shepherds. Rather than incite more fear, however, God’s surprise brought unspeakable relief—salvation, peace, and joy. God’s surprises *still* bring relief.



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The Surprise That Still Brings Relief

Matthew 1:18–25; Luke 1:26–38

In this study, we'll examine the angel's surprise visits to Mary first and then Joseph. These sudden appearances must have shocked them both, but along with the surprises came divine reassurances that brought comfort and inspired faith. Will God bring surprises into our lives? Most certainly! But, like Mary and Joseph, we can count on the divine relief that inevitably settles our souls when we rest in His sovereign plan.



PREPARE YOUR HEART

Let's prepare our hearts by reflecting on Isaiah's prophecy of the birth of the Savior who would come from the line of David and rule with peace, fairness, and justice. Read aloud the prophecy in [Isaiah 9:6–7](#), letting each name and description of the Messiah resonate in your spirit.

In what ways recently has your heart longed for the relief only the Prince of Peace can bring? Write a prayer to the Lord expressing your need for His reassuring rule in your world, and ask Him to bring you relief as you draw near to Him through your study.

Now, let's open the Word to Luke's description of the annunciation, the event when Gabriel announced to Mary that God would fulfill Isaiah's ancient prophecy through her.



The Surprise That Still Brings Relief

Matthew 1:18–25; Luke 1:26–38



TURN TO THE SCRIPTURES

Read slowly the following verses, imagining the scene unfold.

In the sixth month of Elizabeth's pregnancy, God sent the angel Gabriel to Nazareth, a village in Galilee, to a virgin named Mary. She was engaged to be married to a man named Joseph, a descendant of King David. Gabriel appeared to her and said, "Greetings, favored woman! The Lord is with you!"

Confused and disturbed, Mary tried to think what the angel could mean. "Don't be afraid, Mary," the angel told her, "for you have found favor with God! You will conceive and give birth to a son, and you will name him Jesus. He will be very great and will be called the Son of the Most High. The Lord God will give him the throne of his ancestor David. And he will reign over Israel forever; his Kingdom will never end!" (Luke 1:26–33)



Observation: God's Surprises

Let's employ the *Searching the Scriptures* process of observation as we look closer at these verses.² To enhance your study, Chuck Swindoll recommends putting yourself in the place of the main character, Mary. What surprises did God have for Mary? And what fears might have been going through her mind?

Mary voiced confusion about the angel's message: "But how can this be? I am a virgin" (Luke 1:34). She wasn't resisting God's plan; she was simply asking a question.



The Surprise That Still Brings Relief

Matthew 1:18–25; Luke 1:26–38

Do you feel surprised by a circumstance in your life? It's okay to feel confusion, just as Mary did. What would you like to request from the Lord?

Gabriel relieved Mary's confusion by answering her question. But before we read Gabriel's response, let's observe Joseph's surprise in a later scene.

Imagine Joseph's heartache when Mary told him that she was going to have a baby. Naturally, he assumed she was pregnant by another man. Being a gracious and righteous man and loving Mary dearly, Joseph did not wish "to disgrace [Mary] publicly"; rather, "he decided to break the engagement quietly" (Matthew 1:19). But an angel *surprised* Joseph by telling the troubled fiancé in a dream: "Do not be afraid to take Mary as your wife" (1:20).

What confusion might that message have caused Joseph?

Understandably so, both Mary and Joseph experienced distress after God surprised them. When "God just walks in," He usually doesn't forewarn us. It's normal to feel afraid and wonder what God is doing. However, at our lowest, most doubtful point, God relieves our distress with His reassurances. Let's look at how God brought relief to Mary and Joseph.



The Surprise That Still Brings Relief

Matthew 1:18–25; Luke 1:26–38



Interpretation: God's Relief

In the interpretation phase of our *Searching the Scriptures* study, we'll seek to understand the meaning of the similar messages the angel gave Mary and Joseph. In the following chart, compare the verses in the columns, noting the similarities and differences.

Luke 1:34–35	Matthew 1:20–21
Mary asked the angel, "But how can this happen? I am a virgin." The angel replied, " <u>The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you.</u> So the baby to be born will be holy, and he will be called the Son of God. (emphasis added)	As he considered this, an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream. "Joseph, son of David," the angel said, "do not be afraid to take Mary as your wife. <u>For the child within her was conceived by the Holy Spirit.</u> And she will have a son, and you are to name him Jesus, for he will save his people from their sins." (emphasis added)

What does it mean that Mary will "became pregnant through the power of the Holy Spirit" (Matthew 1:18)? And what does the word *overshadow* imply in the sentence, "the power of the Most High will overshadow you" (Luke 1:35)? These questions need to be researched.

Let's consult our Bible study tools to clarify meaning. You can look up these verses in your commentaries or check out the explanation of Jesus' miraculous conception in Constable's Notes, an online commentary. Go to Luke 1 at netbible.org, click "Constable's Notes," and scroll down to the comments on Luke 1:35–37. What do you discover from your reading?



The Surprise That Still Brings Relief

Matthew 1:18–25; Luke 1:26–38

God surprised Mary and Joseph with the “bombshell” that she would bear the Savior of the world. Along with the surprise, however, came the relief that she would remain a virgin and the conception would result from a miracle. List the specific promises to Mary ([Luke 1:35–37](#))? In what ways did God reassure Mary?

God also surprised Joseph when He told him to take Mary as his wife even though she was pregnant. What reassurances encouraged Joseph to go through with the marriage, even though, culturally, the marriage would have been scandalous (Matthew 1:20–23)?

We feel the greatest relief when we *know* beyond doubt that God is in control and He is working His plan. Gabriel told Mary, “nothing will be impossible with God” (Luke 1:37 NASB). What a hopeful truth to claim during life’s surprises!



The Surprise That Still Brings Relief

Matthew 1:18–25; Luke 1:26–38



Correlation: The Ultimate Reassurance

What do the following verses affirm about God's power to do the impossible?

Jeremiah 32:17, 27

Mark 10:23–27

Although God's surprises *shook* Mary and Joseph, His reassurances *stabilized* them. How did they respond to God's surprises? In the final section of our study, we'll see Mary and Joseph's humble acceptance of God's plan as we apply the lesson to our lives.

God is not through surprising us. God is not finished with His plan to bring relief to our situation in ways that we would never have guessed. We just must be open. We must be willing to believe Him. And when He directs in a certain area, our response—knowing His direction—must be, “Yes.” —Chuck Swindoll



The Surprise That Still Brings Relief

Matthew 1:18–25; Luke 1:26–38



Application: Our Response

Read Mary and Joseph's responses to God's surprises.

Mary's response.

Mary responded, "I am the Lord's servant. May everything you have said about me come true." And then the angel left her. (Luke 1:38)

Joseph's response.

All of this occurred to fulfill the Lord's message through his prophet:

"Look! The virgin will conceive a child!

*She will give birth to a son,
and they will call him Immanuel,
which means 'God is with us.'"*

When Joseph woke up, he did as the angel of the Lord commanded and took Mary as his wife. But he did not have sexual relations with her until her son was born. And Joseph named him Jesus. (Matthew 1:22–25)

Write down an application principle—an eternal truth—from this passage that you can put into action.



The Surprise That Still Brings Relief

Matthew 1:18–25; Luke 1:26–38

Throughout the Christmas story we find the pattern of God's *surprise* followed by *relief* followed by *faith*. Can you perceive God's pattern repeating itself in your life lately? What surprise has He brought you? What might be His reassuring message? And how can you apply the principle of faith today?

The Christmas story is full of surprises. Mary and Joseph, the shepherds, even the Magi experienced unexpected divine encounters. But along with God's surprises came God's miracles followed by trusting obedience from each individual. At this Christmas season, may you discover the joy of faith in a God who can do the impossible!



A FINAL PRAYER

Father, I give You my heart without reservation and without hesitation today. You have first place in my life. I want to adore You above all others this Christmas. Be the Master of my life—my decisions, my actions, and my responses to whatever surprises You bring. I pray in the name of my Savior, Jesus, amen.

ENDNOTES

1. Jane Polley, ed., "God Just Walked In," in *American Folklore and Legend* (Pleasantville, NY: Reader's Digest, 1978), 393.
2. To learn about Chuck Swindoll's *Searching the Scriptures* method of Bible study, go to the web page, "[How to Study the Bible for Yourself](#)."



The Surprise That Still Brings Relief

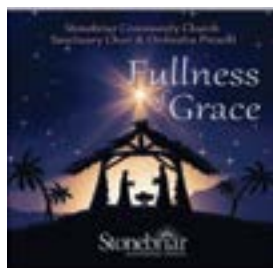
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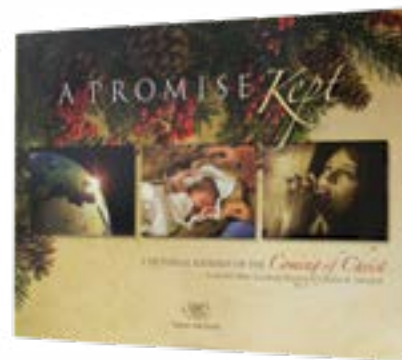
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THE SEASON THAT STILL TOUCHES HEARTS STUDY THREE

The Magnet That Still Draws Us Close

Luke 2:1–20

When all the necessary and predicted events had fallen into place, the Savior came exactly where God appointed Him to be born and at the time God wanted Him to come.

—Charles R. Swindoll

JESUS' birth was no last-minute, hope-it-works plan! Jesus was born exactly where and when God intended. God's predetermined plan was like a magnet, pulling together the events surrounding Christ's birth so that Jesus was born at just the right time, in just the right place.

This study for Christmas reminds us that God sovereignly gets His way, often through circumstances no one expected. The magnetism of God's plan drew Mary and Joseph to Bethlehem; it summoned the shepherds to the manger to worship Jesus; and it shone the way for the wise men on their quest to find the King of Kings. It still draws us to Jesus like a heavenly magnet as we come together and worship our Lord and Savior at Christmas.

On that first Christmas, the divine Son of God took His first human breath as He entered humanity as one of us. The moment of Jesus' birth was an event like none other in history, and it changed the world forever. Its appeal was . . . and still is . . . irresistible!



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The Magnet That Still Draws Us Close

Luke 2:1–20



PREPARE YOUR HEART

Let's prepare our hearts by reflecting on Micah's prophecy of the birth of our Savior.

*But you, O Bethlehem Ephrathah,
are only a small village among all the people of Judah.
Yet a ruler of Israel
whose origins are in the distant past,
will come from you on my behalf. (Micah 5:2)*

Most people assume great kings come from great cities where important people live and royals rule. Yet, according to Micah's astonishing prophecy, the greatest King would be born in the "small village" of Bethlehem.

Like small, ordinary Bethlehem, we're "small," ordinary folks. And yet, the ruler of the universe inhabits us with His presence. Take a moment to thank the Lord not just for coming into the *world* but into our *hearts* through the Holy Spirit. Invite Him this Christmas to fill you with His light, joy, and peace and to guide you to a closer walk with Him.



TURN TO THE SCRIPTURES

Turn to Luke's telling of the Christmas story in [Luke 2:1–20](#) and read his account slowly, noting four sections: Augustus' decree and Mary and Joseph's trip (Luke 2:1–5); the birth of Jesus (2:6–7); the angels' announcement (2:8–14); and the shepherds' response and praise (2:15–20).



The Magnet That Still Draws Us Close

Luke 2:1–20



Observation: God's Surprises

The *Searching the Scriptures* method of Bible study includes the skills of observation, interpretation, correlation, and application.¹ Let's begin by observing how God pulled together the events surrounding Jesus' birth. God was the *invisible* and *invincible* force that turned the wheels of history so that Jesus was born at the appointed time and in just the right location.

Augustus' Edict and the Decrees of God

On the human level, what was the reason Joseph and Mary had to travel to Bethlehem ([Luke 2:1–5](#))? On the divine level, why did God want them to be in Bethlehem ([Micah 5:2](#))?

Behind the scenes of Jesus' birth are the “eternal decrees” of God, comprised of His sovereign plan for all things He determined before time began. These plans even include the census edict of Augustus, the great emperor of Rome, who, unbeknownst to him, was merely God's errand boy for fulfilling Old Testament prophecy. Like a magnet, God's eternal plan drew Mary and Joseph to Bethlehem so that Jesus could be born in “David's ancient home” (Luke 2:4).

The Birth of Jesus

Likely, the Jewish Bible scholars who studied the messianic prophecies assumed the royal descendent of King David would be born in a palace. What details of Jesus' humble birth would have shocked the Bible scholars of Jesus' day ([Luke 2:6–7](#))?



The Magnet That Still Draws Us Close

Luke 2:1–20

Jesus' lowly birth identified Him with society's underclass. "There was no lodging available" (for someone who was an outcast). And Jesus was swaddled "in strips of cloth" (as the dead were wrapped). How do these foreshadow Jesus' future life and ministry (*Isaiah 53:3*; *Luke 23:53*)?

There was no flare to Jesus' birth. We live in a day of dazzling spotlights, light shows, and ear-splitting performances. Not with God. Jesus was born with understated simplicity and the muted tones of humility and obscurity. —Chuck Swindoll

The Announcement of the Angels

God's heavenly "magnet" kept pulling world events and aligning people around the birth of God's Son. After drawing Joseph and Mary to Bethlehem via Augustus' imperial edict, God called upon His celestial angels to draw the shepherds to the manger. How did the "angel of the Lord" first appear, and what did he say (*Luke 2:8–12*)?

No one in Judea would have expected God to announce the Messiah's arrival to shoddy shepherds. But then, neither would anyone expect the Messiah to be born among animals, swaddled in cloths, and laying in a feeding trough!



The Magnet That Still Draws Us Close

Luke 2:1–20

The Response and Praise of the Shepherds

For centuries, artists have attempted to capture the moment the shepherds saw the newborn Savior and His mother treasuring her baby with Joseph looking on. View the online image of the 1622 painting, *The Adoration of the Shepherds*, by Gerard van Honthorst, which is exhibited at the Wallraf-Richartz Museum in Cologne, Germany. Put yourself in this painting as one of the shepherds.

If you were one of them, how do you think this rustic, simple setting would have inspired your praise?

Don't miss "all people" in Luke 2:10, starting with you! You're not unknown to God. You're not uninfluential before God. He knows you by name, knows every hair on your head. He cares about you, just as He cared for the shepherds who received the message first.
—Chuck Swindoll



Interpretation: “The Fullness of the Time”

Observing God’s sovereign plan at work in the details of Luke’s Christmas narrative leads us to a better understanding of “the fullness of time” in Galatians 4:4. Read the following verses and reflect on the meaning of this phrase.

But when the fullness of the time came, God sent forth His Son, born of a woman, born under the Law, so that He might redeem those who were under the Law, that we might receive the adoption as sons. (Galatians 4:4–5 NASB)



The Magnet That Still Draws Us Close

Luke 2:1–20

How had biblical history culminated according to God's timetable and reached its "fullness" at the coming of Christ? For a hint, turn back one chapter in Luke and read Zacharias' prophecy of Jesus' birth as the fulfillment of God's promises to David and Abraham (*Luke 1:68–73*) and the ultimate fulfillment of God's rescue of His people (*1:74–79*). Based on this passage, what promises were fulfilled when Jesus was born?

By fulfilling the teaching and prophecies of the Old Testament, the coming of Christ signaled a new era in God's redemptive plan—a new era radiantly marked by the Messiah's star rising in the east!



Correlation: How God's Heavenly Magnet Drew the Magi

A review of the attractive power of God's plan at Christmas wouldn't be complete without considering the Magi. What drew the wise men to travel from Eastern lands to Bethlehem (Matthew 2:1–2)? Who did they hope to find, and why did their quest threaten King Herod (2:2–6)?



The Magnet That Still Draws Us Close

Luke 2:1–20

What was the wise men's response when the star led them to Jesus and they entered His home (Matthew 2:9–12).

The angel of the Lord brought the shepherds "great joy" (Luke 2:10) and, at seeing the star, the Magi were "filled with joy" (Matthew 2:10). Joy is our heart's natural response when we praise God. *Joy to the world, our Savior is born!*

It's a wonderful Christmas tradition to give gifts to those we love. This is a wonderful moment to complete your Christmas giving list by giving yourself to Christ.
—Chuck Swindoll



Application: Giving Ourselves to Christ

How can we adequately respond to the gift of Jesus? We can give Him ourselves in return. As you close this Christmas study, express your heart of adoration and joy by worshiping the Child. Pick out your favorite carol to sing in joyful praise, or you can close meditatively with the final lines from "Angels We Have Heard on High."

*Come to Bethlehem, and see
Him whose birth the angels sing;
Come, adore on bended knee
Christ the Lord, the newborn King.
Gloria in excelsis Deo,
Gloria in excelsis Deo.²*



The Magnet That Still Draws Us Close

Luke 2:1–20



A FINAL PRAYER

Father, thank You for drawing me to Your Son through the power of the Holy Spirit. Like the shepherds and the wise men, I feel the pull of Your redemptive grace announced by the angels and revealed by the rising star. I come to the manger in worship and with no gift to give my Savior but my heart. Receive my love and worship today! Amen.

ENDNOTES

1. To learn about Chuck Swindoll's *Searching the Scriptures* method of Bible study, visit the web page, "[How to Study the Bible for Yourself](#)."
2. Traditional French carol, public domain.



The Magnet That Still Draws Us Close

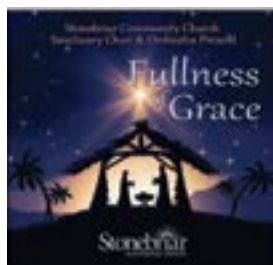
Luke 2:1–20



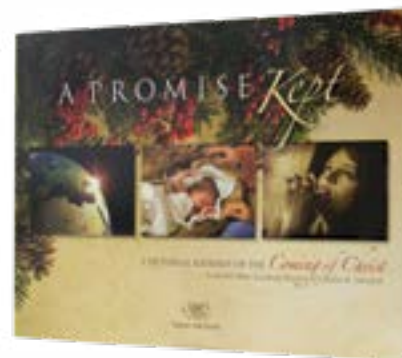
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For the 2019 broadcast, this *Searching the Scriptures* study was developed by Bryce Klabunde, executive vice president of Pastoral Ministries, based upon the original outlines, charts, and transcripts of Charles R. Swindoll's messages.



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