

On Christmas...

Santa Claus has the right idea. Visit people only once a year. - *Victor Borge*

Are you willing to believe that love is the strongest thing in the world - stronger than hate, stronger than evil, stronger than death - and that the blessed life which began in Bethlehem nineteen hundred years ago is the image and brightness of the Eternal Love? Then you can keep Christmas. - Henry Van Dyke

As we struggle with shopping lists and invitations, compounded by December's bad weather, it is good to be reminded that there are people in our lives who are worth this aggravation, and people to whom we are worth the same. - Donald E. Westlake

Christmas has lost its meaning for us because we have lost the spirit of expectancy. We cannot prepare for an observance. We must prepare for an experience. - Handel H. Brown

Even before Christmas has said Hello, it's saying 'Buy Buy'. - Robert Paul

For many of us, sadly, the spirit of Christmas is "hurry". And yet, eventually, the hour comes when the rushing ends and the race against the calendar mercifully comes to a close. It is only now perhaps that we truly recognize the spirit of Christmas. It is not a matter of days or weeks, but of centuries - nearly twenty of them now since that holy night in Bethlehem. Regarded in this manner, the pre - Christmas rush may do us greater service than we realize. With all its temporal confusion, it may just help us to see that by contrast, Christmas itself is eternal. - Burton Hills

In the old days, it was not called the Holiday Season; the Christians called it 'Christmas' and went to church; the Jews called it 'Hanukka' and went to synagogue; the atheists went to parties and drank. People passing each other on the street would say 'Merry Christmas!' or 'Happy Hanukka!' or (to the atheists) 'Look out for the wall!'" - Dave Barry
"Christmas Shopping: A Survivor's Guide"

One of the nice things about Christmas is that you can make people forget the past with a present. - Author Unknown

Christmas is just plain weird. What other time do you sit in front of a dead tree in the living room and eat candy out of your socks? - Shoebox Greetings

Some businessmen are saying this could be the greatest Christmas ever. I always thought that the first one was. - Art Fetting

Why does Scrooge love Rudolph the Red - Nosed Reindeer? Because every buck is dear to him - Unknown

And the Grinch, with his Grinch-feet ice cold in the snow, stood puzzling and puzzling, how could it be so? It came without ribbons. It came without tags. It came without packages, boxes or bags. And he puzzled and puzzled 'till his puzzler was sore. Then the Grinch thought of something he hadn't before. What if Christmas, he thought, doesn't come from a store? What if Christmas, perhaps, means a little bit more? - Dr. Seuss

Probably the reason we all go so haywire at Christmas time with the endless unrestrained and often silly buying of gifts is that we don't quite know how to put our love into words.

- *Harlan Miller*

To abandon all, to strip one's self of all, in order to seek and follow Jesus Christ naked to Bethlehem where He was born, naked to the hall where He was scourged, and naked to Calvary where He died on the cross, is so great a mystery that neither the thing nor the knowledge of it, is given to any but through faith in the Son of God.

- *John Wesley*

This is the Christian's joy:

I know that I am a thought in God,
no matter how insignificant I may be –
the most abandoned of beings,
one no one thinks of.
Today, when we think of Christmas gifts,
how many outcasts no one thinks of!
Think to yourselves, you that are outcasts,
you that feel you are nothing in history:
"I know that I am a thought in God."
Would that my voice might reach the imprisoned
like a ray of light, of Christmas hope –
might say also to you, the sick,
the elderly in the home for the aged,
the hospital patients,
you that live in shacks and shantytowns,
you coffee harvesters trying to garner your only wage
for the whole year,
you that are tortured:
God's eternal purpose has thought of all of you.
He loves you, and, like Mary,
incarnates that thought in his womb.

- Oscar Romero, 1978
(*martyred in 1980*)

There have been many babies who grew up to become kings,
But there was only one King who became a baby.
- David Phelps

One wintry night the starry universe
Went whirling upside down
And everything that was, was not the same
One wintry night a supernatural birth
Left Heaven and earth spellbound
As the Mysterious Omniscient took a name
Darkness fled from light; wrong was made right
In just one wintry night
- David Phelps

You came and chose to wear the skin of all of us,
And it's easy to forget You left a throne...
Let me not forget to tremble.
- Nichole Nordeman

**I remember the story of the three wise men,
first one came in and said I bring a gift of gold. Second one said, I bring you Myrrh.
Then the third little kid comes in, dumps his present of the floor and says, 'and Frank send this'.
– Joy Pockock**

Greetings to the World – written by Patrick Winstanley <http://www.funny-poems.co.uk/christmas/x01-greetings.asp>

“Happy Christmas” is what I chose to say
But many greetings are used for the day
To one and all during the festive season
And different languages are the reason
Say "Frolyke Kerstfeest" or "Joyoo Noel"
"Felleeth Navidad" even "Glaydlig Yool"
"Kalla Kristoogenna", "Boo-on Natarlee"
"Boas Festas" or "Sheng Dan Kwhy Lee"
You could say "Frerlicker Vine-akten"
Or maybe "Roshdesrom Kristovim" then
So you can say it in very many ways
But please never say “Happy Holidays”

Cool Yule written by Patrick Winstanley <http://www.funny-poems.co.uk/christmas/x01-greetings.asp>

Last day of school,
Kids say “that’s cool”
Angel’s wings
Shepherd brings
Presents for Jesus
Rudolf sneezes
Everything is frosting over
Even my car made by “Rover”
Reindeer fly
But I can’t fly
But I have cream on my
Hot mince pie
But I still get a lift
When I get a gift

Thou shalt know him when he comes,
Not by any din of drums,
Nor his manners, nor his airs,
Nor by any thing he wears.
Thou shalt know him when he comes,

Not by a crown nor by a gown,
But his coming known shall be,
By the holy harmony
Which his coming makes in thee.
Thou shalt know him when he comes.

(15th century)

You did the unthinkable,
You built one bridge to us
Long enough, strong enough
to link the unlinkable.

Merciful God in this Advent season we thank you that you can rewrite the script of our lives, moving us

from wandering to arrival,
from self-hatred to acceptance,
from distance to nearness,
from loneliness to belonging,
from weakness to energy,

and all this because of the enfleshment of your dear Son, our Lord and Saviour Jesus, who became one with us and showed us the way.

Amen - *Lucy Shaw*

What sweeter music can we bring
Than a carol, for to sing
The birth of this our heavenly King?
Awake the voice! Awake the string!

Dark and dull night, fly hence away,
And give the honor to this day,
That sees December turned to May.

Why does the chilling winter's morn
Smile, like a field beset with corn?
Or smell like a meadow newly-shorn,
Thus, on the sudden? Come and see
The cause, why things thus fragrant be:
'Tis He is born, whose quickening birth
Gives life and luster, public mirth,
To heaven, and the under-earth.

We see him come, and know him ours,
Who, with his sunshine and his showers,
Turns all the patient ground to flowers.
The darling of the world is come,
And fit it is, we find a room
To welcome him. The nobler part
Of all the house here, is the heart.

Which we will give him; and bequeath
This holly, and this ivy wreath,
To do him honour, who's our King,
And Lord of all this revelling.

What sweeter music can we bring,
Than a carol for to sing
The birth of this our heavenly King?

Robert Herrick (1591-1674)