

THE DAY THE STATE OF THE STATE

By Brian Holtz CEO, Compass Financial Ministry



Christmas is almost here! With it, of course, comes a lot of busyness, preparation, and excitement.

But if I'm not careful, I find myself selling the occasion short. On the extreme, I can lose sight of the "reason for the season" altogether, but on most days, I find myself simply celebrating Jesus' birthday.

I believe that is an unfortunate, but all too common, mistake. Sure, we are celebrating His birthday, but even more than that, we are celebrating His arrival! We're celebrating the fulfillment of hundreds of Old Testament prophecies over the course of thousands of years.

Beginning in Genesis 3 when God promised a seed of man who would crush the serpent's head, God was working a plan of redemption and restoration. A way for sinful men to have the hope, peace, love, and joy He intended from the beginning. And it was finally here – in the form of a baby born to a virgin and a lowly stable.

So, as we close in on that day of celebration, slow down and take some time to reflect on what Jesus' birth brought us. It wasn't just the greatest man to ever live.

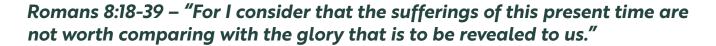
It was the fullness of God's immeasurable love.

In Christ,

Brian Holtz, CEO

Brin Moly





Based on this passage, how would you explain biblical hope and how it is different from how we commonly use the word in our culture today?
In this passage, the Apostle Paul closely relates hope in the future with suffering in the present. Take a moment and list three things you are currently suffering through.
1. ————————————————————————————————————
3
For every suffering in life, God offers hope, although not always the way we ask. For each of your sufferings, what hope does Scripture offer. Be specific and support it with a specific verse or passage.
1
2
3
In light of the hope offered in Scripture, what specifically do you have hope for in your sufferings?
1
2
3



Psalm 23 – "The Lord is my shepherd; I shall not want."

	is Psalm never uses the word "peace," it certainly communicates it. What are specific phrases or images in this psalm which bring you a feeling of peace?
How has Go	d brought you a similar sense of peace in past challenges of life?
What are so	me ways peace and hope are connected?
What are fiv your life nov	re ways these peaceful phrases or images in this psalm apply to situations in w?
1. ———	
2	
3	
4	
5	





1 Corinthians 13 – "If I speak in the tongues of men and of angels, but have not love, I am a noisy gong or a clanging cymbal."

In the first part of this passage (v. 1-3), the Apostle Paul focuses on the importance of love. In your own words, explain the importance of love in the Christian faith.
The second part of this passage (v. 4-7) focuses on describing love in terms of what it is and is not. Which are you strongest at? Which are you weakest at?
In the third section of this passage (v. 8-12), Paul offers some promises associated with love. What stands out to you about the persistence of love?
In verse 13, Paul states that faith, hope, and love remain. "But the greatest of these is love." Why do you believe he regards love as the greatest of these three?



Philippians 4 – "Therefore, my brothers, whom I love and long for, my joy and crown, stand firm thus in the Lord, my beloved."

you think he meant by this?	e church in Philippi as his Joy and crown. What do
	osition to being anxious. Do you believe it's possible omething at the same time? Why or why not?
He explains that he rejoiced in their gen	g others to rejoice to writing about his own rejoicing. nerosity, not that he needed or wanted the gift, but s and their desire to support him. When have you
What are five things that bring you joy?	
1.	
2	
 4. 	
5.	



John 1:1-18 – "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God."

As a follower of Jesus, how does His birth bring you hope?
As a follower of Jesus, how does His birth bring you peace?
As a follower of Jesus, how does His birth inspire love in your life?
As a follower of Jesus, how does His birth bring you joy?