

Why Jesus Came

According to a 2022 nerdwallet.com article, 84% of Americans buy Christmas gifts for friends and family. Another survey on [YouGovAmerica.com](https://www.yougov.com) reported in 2020, that 48% of consumers are not finished buying presents a week before the big day. It also reported 9% of Americans do not even begin shopping until a week before Christmas. Young adults, ages 18-24 are the worst, 15% of them do not start shopping until then.

At my church's recent staff Christmas party, we were asked to name our best and worst Christmas gifts. All of us have received meaningful presents, and each of us has been given gifts which totally missed the mark.

Though most of us eventually realize our presents are not what makes the holiday meaningful, every year a great deal of time, energy and money are invested in purchasing Christmas gifts.

I laughed last year when my friend, Hannah, posted a conversation she had overheard between her two young sons, Logan and Bryant. She did not post it on Facebook until December 23, so it was too late to share last year, but I immediately knew I wanted to use it in a Christmas column this year.

Logan said, "I hope mom bought me a ticket on SpaceX. I would be closer to the planets and Jesus probably. She would like the Jesus part." Bryant replied, "Okay....if we had the kind of money for SpaceX, we would have a pool and a butler." Logan, "I thought they were just good money savers." Bryant, "Dad talks to mom about Starbucks all the time. I don't think so."

Almost all children get excited at Christmas, but kids have an extremely limited understanding of money. Neither Logan nor Bryant could grasp that a SpaceX ticket to the International Space Station costs \$55 million, or that a dedicated rideshare ticket may cost as little as \$275,000. Even as an adult I find it difficult to comprehend these numbers.

Bryant is young, but he is correct, no one in Hannah's family is going into space soon. However, Logan received Christmas gifts which he loved more than he would have enjoyed a SpaceX flight.

Frequently adults get confused about what really makes Christmas special. We fall into the trap of believing the amount we spend on Christmas determines the value of the season, but that is not the case. Jesus came not to give us gifts, but meaningful lives. He said, "I came that they may have life and have it abundantly." (John 10:10, ESV) Though on the surface what Jesus offers may seem much less exciting, the meaningful life he offers is worth far more than even the most expensive Christmas gift.

May you experience peace this Christmas as you recognize the Savior and understand the joy he offers each of us as we celebrate his birth. Merry Christmas everyone!