

Thesis: **Before time began, God had a Christmas plan!**

How many of you are you making plans for Christmas? How many of you are being challenged as you make plans for Christmas? Food, finances, families, etc.

Are you aware that **before time began God had a Christmas plan**? Are you aware that His Christmas plan included you? Listen to what Paul said in Ephesians 1:3-6 as he wrote to Christians:

*Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places in Christ, 4 just as He chose us in Him **before the foundation of the world**, that we should be holy and without blame before Him in love, 5 having predestined us to adoption as sons by Jesus Christ to Himself, according to the good pleasure of His will, 6 to the praise of the glory of His grace, by which He made us accepted in the Beloved. NKJV (Emphasis added)*

Let me say it again: **Before time began, God had a Christmas plan!** His incredible plan involved a Man who was not just any Man but who was the God-Man, God's one and only Son! That is why I call it **God's Christmas Plan**. His mysterious and marvelous plan involved the God-Man, it involved you – and me – and the whole world! Do you remember what God said to His people through the prophet Jeremiah, recorded in Jeremiah 29:11? *For I know the plans I have for you," declares the LORD, "plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future. NIV*

**Before time began, God had a Christmas plan!** That declaration brings us to this question: What is **God's Christmas plan**?

Today's text is from another of Paul's letters, this one called Colossians in our bible. Please join me as we look for **God's Christmas plan** in Chapter 1, verse 13 and following:

*For this reason we also, since the day we heard it, do not cease to pray for you, and to ask that you may be filled with the knowledge of His will in all wisdom and spiritual understanding; 10 that you may walk worthy of the Lord, fully pleasing Him, being fruitful in every good work and increasing in*

*the knowledge of God; 11 strengthened with all might, according to His glorious power, for all patience and longsuffering with joy; 12 giving thanks to the Father who has qualified us to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in the light. 13 He has delivered us from the power of darkness and conveyed us into the kingdom of the Son of His love, 14 in whom we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of sins.*

*15 He is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn over all creation. 16 For by Him all things were created that are in heaven and that are on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or principalities or powers. All things were created through Him and for Him. 17 And He is before all things, and in Him all things consist. 18 And He is the head of the body, the church, who is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead, that in all things He may have the preeminence.*

*For it pleased the Father that in Him all the fullness should dwell, 20 and by Him to reconcile all things to Himself, by Him, whether things on earth or things in heaven, having made peace through the blood of His cross.*

*21 And you, who once were alienated and enemies in your mind by wicked works, yet now He has reconciled 22 in the body of His flesh through death, to present you holy, and blameless, and above reproach in His sight — 23 if indeed you continue in the faith, grounded and steadfast, and are not moved away from the hope of the gospel which you heard, which was preached to every creature under heaven, of which I, Paul, became a minister. NKJV*

It is hard to get our minds around all God has done for us, but we can say with absolute confidence: **Before time began, God had a Christmas plan!** So once again we ask: What is **God's Christmas plan?**

**God's Christmas plan** is that we might:

### **1. Belong to Him!**

Appl. "Be-longing:" Notice the word itself!

My "being" requires community!

My being "me" requires a "you"!

Expl. Paul speaks here of kingdoms in conflict. (13)

We have all belonged to the kingdom of this world, the kingdom of darkness.

As Christ-followers, we now are citizens of His Kingdom of Love.  
Now we belong to God! We have been adopted into His family!

**God's Christmas Plan is that we might belong to Him!**

Illus. Debbie and I watched (for the third time) the movie *August Rush*.  
Freddie Highmore played the part of a boy seeking his parents.

Illus. Heaven's music has been playing before time began!  
Job 38:4-7 *"Where were you when I laid the foundations of the earth?  
Tell Me, if you have understanding.*

*Who determined its measurements?*

*Surely you know!*

*Or who stretched the line upon it?*

*To what were its foundations fastened?*

*Or who laid its cornerstone,*

*When the morning stars sang together,*

*And all the sons of God shouted for joy?" NKJV*

God plays the song through His creation!

At the cross, God played the song of redemption!

God still plays the music so we can find Him!

Appl. **Before time began, God had a Christmas plan!**

What is His Christmas Plan?

**God's Christmas Plan is that we might belong to Him!**

Let's go back to the text to find a second reality about **God's Christmas plan.**

What is **God's Christmas Plan? God's Christmas Plan is that we might:**  
**2. Begin Again!**

Expl. Listen to Paul's language: *In whom we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of sin (14).*

Can you imagine any sweeter message than that of grace?

I have no doubt some of Paul's listeners thought they were through!

Paul wanted them to know forgiveness was available!

They could begin again!

Appl. Here's a little word for you: *When I think I'm through, God's not!*

**I can begin again!**

Illus. Four hundred years ago Saint Francis of Sales (1567-1622) said:

*It is right that you should begin again every day. There is no better way to finish the spiritual life than to be ever beginning.*

Appl. Are you “ever beginning,” or have you stopped beginning?  
Has failure stopped your beginning again? *"Failure is the opportunity to begin again more intelligently."* (Henry Ford)

Has success stopped your beginning again?

Appl. **Before time began, God had a Christmas plan!**

What is His Christmas Plan?

**God's Christmas Plan is that we might begin again!**

We have found two elements of **God's Christmas Plan**: His plan is that we might **belong to Him**, and that we might **begin again**. Can we find another in our text?

What is **God's Christmas Plan**? His plan is that we might:

### **3. Be His Friend!**

Expl. Walk slowly back through verses 19-22.

By His work on the cross, Christ has changed our world!

Hear the language of reconciliation (20-22).

What marvelous grace!

Enemies – but now friends!

What a costly business!

*Through the blood of His cross* (20)

*Through death* (22). (Remember Romans 5:8)

Appl. What a glorious thing it is to have peace with God!

Illus. I love the lyrics that Israel Houghton wrote:

*Who am I that You are mindful of me*

*That You hear me when I call*

*Is it true that You are thinking of me*

*How You love me it's amazing*

*(Chorus)*

*I am a friend of God*

*I am a friend of God*

*I am a friend of God*

*He calls me friend*

*God Almighty, Lord of Glory*

*You have called me friend*

*He calls me friend...*

Appl. I would love it to be said of me and you what was said of Abraham:  
*He was called the friend of God (James 2:23)*

Appl. **Before time began, God had a Christmas plan!**

What is His Christmas Plan?

**God's Christmas Plan is that we might be His friend!**

## CONCLUSION

Well, that is **God's Christmas Plan! Before time began, God had a Christmas plan.** His plan was that we might **belong to Him, begin again, and be His friend!**

That brings me to a most important question: Are you allowing **God's Plan** to become your reality? A frightening truth is that we can thwart **God's Plan.** We can choose to say no to God; we can walk away. How foolish would that be?

Today, you can **belong to Him.** Today, we can **begin again.** Today, we can **be His friend.** The question is not can we be part of **God's Christmas Plan;** the question is: Will we?