

will be their judge who will find them guilty of all the wrong of their lives, or He will welcome them as their Saviour who has forgiven them.



When Jesus was born in Bethlehem, God came into our world, clothing Himself in flesh and blood. He was fully Divine and fully human – the Word had become flesh. Throughout His life He did what only God could do: He fed the hungry, healed the sick, raised the dead back to life; calmed the storm at sea. He lived as only God could live: He never sinned in anything He thought or spoke or did. But He went to the terrible death of being crucified, where as the God-man He took on Himself the sin of the guilty world. The baby laid in a crib, was to lie on a cross bearing in His own body the sin of the world, so that all who trust Him could be forgiven. Three days later He did what only God can do. He rose from the dead. And now, for all

who will turn from their own way to God's way, He offers new, eternal life.

The Bible pictures this new life as a garment: 'I will greatly rejoice in the Lord. My soul shall be joyful in my God; for He has clothed me with the garments of salvation. He has covered me with the robe of righteousness.'¹ Jesus likened the offer of forgiveness and a relationship with Him as giving 'white garments that you may be clothed.'² And that 'clothing' is not just for Christmas, but for life ... and eternity. Our own efforts will never be sufficient to earn a place in heaven. But no one who has turned from their own way and trusted Jesus Christ as Lord and Saviour will go to hell. Heaven is not a reward for doing good, but a gift which Jesus came to purchase and offer to us.

Or as one Christmas jumper says, 'You can't have Christmas without Christ.'



¹ Isaiah 61:10. ² Revelation 3:18

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Roger Carswell,
c/o Unit C, Tomlinson Road,
Leyland, PR25 2DY, UK

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What would Christmas be without Christmas trees, Christmas dinner, Christmas carols, Christmas cards or, more recently, the Christmas jumper?

Christmas gives us the opportunity to wear clothes we would never normally be seen dead in. What other time of the year would we wear an elf's outfit or a jumper which lights up and plays jingle bells?

Clothing is a great way to tell your story. If you want to know who you are, look at your clothing. I've seen Christmas jumpers which make me think, others which make me smile and others which are just crude. They each tell us something about the person who is wearing them.

Some are just fun



I love the children's jumper with the words 'Santa, I can explain ...' or, 'I'm only a morning person on Dec 25th.'

Christmas is a time of joy. It's great to be with the family, even if at times it can be fraught. But surely there is more to the Christmas story than just good fun. At the first Christmas the angels announced to shepherds that they were bringing good tidings of great joy and peace for all.

Others are about food

A friend of mine wore this at a Christmas party.



But for many, Christmas is just a time of indulgence, going out on the town and getting drunk. On a cold

winter Saturday I saw a man wearing a T-shirt saying 'Tis the season to be smashed'. Really?

Is this what Christmas is about? Is life just one extended party?

Doesn't the Christmas message offer an answer to the times when life is tough, when we have done wrong, when we face suffering or bereavement? The angel told Joseph that Mary was to have a child conceived in her by God, the Holy Spirit, and that the baby's name was to be 'Jesus, for He shall save His people from their sins.'



Some declare a faith

Christians will always want to wear their faith on their sleeve, though not necessarily on a jumper! But this Christmas time, let us remember that we are celebrating the birth of a baby who is the only way for people to come to know God as their Father.

The jumpers of Christmas carry many messages but the most important one, the reason for the season, is that God has come into our world to rescue us from ourselves and our sin.

Every person, of every religion and background, will meet God. Either He

