



# Different Perspectives of Christmas

By Dr. Linda Hancock

## ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Dr. Hancock has written a regular weekly column entitled “All Psyched Up” for newspapers in two Canadian provinces for more than a dozen years. Over the years, her readers and clients have said that they have benefited from her common-sense solutions, wisdom, and sense of humour. Dr. Linda Hancock, the author of “Life is An Adventure...every step of the way” and “Open for Business Success” is a Registered Psychologist who has a private practice in Medicine Hat. She can be reached at 403-529-6877 or through email [office@drlindahancock.com](mailto:office@drlindahancock.com)

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The other day I bought a pop-up book of the Christmas story to share with my seven year old granddaughter. She was so surprised when I mentioned that the stable must have been very smelly. I guess she had never thought about the fact that this was the home (and bathroom) for the animals.

We talked about the wise men and why they might be called "wise" as well as how they were able to afford nice clothes and expensive gifts. Always wanting to plant ideas that might germinate in the future, I suggested that perhaps they had gone to university and then found good jobs. Mikaeli thought I was joking and said "Grandma, there weren't any universities way back then".

I quickly replied "I'm sure there was some form of university back then Maybe it wasn't called that but people did study in groups". After all, they did take a Census so that leads me to believe that some things that we continue today had ancient beginnings.

And how did the wise men purchase the exotic gifts, pay their travel expenses and afford to leave home for an extended period of time without working? They must have had jobs, savings, inheritances or wealthy families to support them.

Sometimes we just focus on things that we are told and do not question further. Other times we perhaps question too much.

The Pope has recently stated that he does not believe there were animals at the birth of Jesus or that the angels sang. He even questions the date of the first Christmas and when the baby Jesus was born.

He is not alone. Some people question and doubt everything about the Christmas story.

Many do not even believe it happened and think the Bible is merely a collection of fables or stories that are fictional.

Our perspective determines how we view Christmas. Some treat it as a government-legislated annual holiday - a time to be away from the workplace and school. Many use it as an opportunity to travel or rest. Retail businesses grab hold of the marketing aspects and look forward to an economic boost generated by the largest sales period in the year. Churches recognize and make room for some people who they will only see in this season, at Easter, and for weddings and funerals. Charities know that this is a time when people will open their wallets and show kindness in order to help others. Families will pull out traditional recipes and look forward to having people come together. And children will wait eagerly for Santa Clause to hopefully fulfill their every wish.

Because it was so long ago, we will never know every single detail of the events that led to our annual celebrations. Everyone knows that Christmas was named for "Christ", the baby who was sent as a gift from God for all mankind. But not everyone has the same perception or celebrates in the same manner.

No matter what your perception is, I pray that this Christmas will be one that is filled with love and peace. And that even just for a few minutes you will think about the reason for the season.

Happy Christmas, everyone!