Has Christmas Lost Its True Meaning?

Key Vocabulary	Definition
Christianity	Christianity is a faith/religion which is focussed on the life and teachings of Jesus Christ, who Christians believe to be the Son of God. Jesus was born in Bethlehem
Christian	- Christians follow the teachings of Jesus Christ, a preacher and healer who lived in the Middle East more than 2000 years ago. Christians believe that Jesus was the Son of God, sent down to earth to save people by dying on the cross and taking the punishment for their sins.
Christmas	Christmas is a Christian holy day/festival/celebration that marks the birth of Jesus, who Christians believe to be the Son of God.
Incarnation	The incarnation is the Christian belief that God took human form by becoming Jesus. Incarnation literally means 'to take on flesh'. For Christians, the incarnation shows that Jesus was fully God and fully human.

The Christmas Story

Jesus was born to a woman called Mary who was engaged to Joseph, a carpenter in the town of Nazareth in Galilee. Mary was visited by an angel who told her that she would give birth to a baby called Jesus.

Jesus was born in Bethlehem because Joseph and Mary had travelled there to take part in a census which the Roman rulers had ordered.

When Mary and Joseph arrived in Bethlehem the local inn was full with people returning for the census. The innkeeper let them stay in the rock cave below his house which was used as a stable for animals. It was here that Mary gave birth to Jesus.

Jesus was visited by three wise men from the East who had followed a star to Bethlehem. The wise men presented Jesus with gifts of gold, frankincense and myrrh. An angel also guided some poor shepherds to see the birth. For Christians this shows that Jesus came for all people of all backgrounds.

Key Knowledge

To Christians, Christmas is very important because they are celebrating God's son, Jesus, coming to earth to help people. (The Incarnation).

To celebrate Christmas, Christians:

- Go to church

- Give presents

- Send cards

- Sing carols

- Remember Jesus being born

Why do Christians celebrate Christmas?

• Christmas is a time to remember that when Jesus was born, God became human. This allowed God to save humanity from sin. Without the incarnation of Jesus, Christianity could not exist.

• Christmas is a time for Christians to remember that they are part of a global community, despite differences within Christianity.

• Christmas is a time when families can bond and show love to one another. It reminds Christians that Jesus was born as a member of a human family who showed him love and loyalty.