

# WINTER



Winter comes with cold and often snowy weather. It is a time for staying indoors and doing quiet activities. It is a time when many people get sick with colds or the flu. It is also a time when many people have accidents due to snow and ice.

Winter is also a pretty time of the year. We can see the wonderful pattern of the tree branches against a deep blue sky. The sight of a bird is more cheering than it is at other times when there are many birds around. It is a time for getting closer to our families, telling stories and thinking about things.

What can we learn from God's creation of winter?

God gives us a good picture of what our sins do to us when we look at winter. If we did not sin, we would live in a bright and sunny Garden of Eden. Instead, our sins have led us to a cold and empty place. Instead of having plenty, nothing seems to grow or look welcoming. Instead of feeling light, we are weighed down with heavy clothing. Instead of being healthy, we suffer illness and injury and are miserable. Instead of being happy, we are sad and depressed. Even just walking is hard because of the snow and ice. When we think how bad our lives would be without Jesus to save us, we would have to say the same thing the Bible teaches us in Romans

7:24, "What a wretched man I am! Who will rescue me from this body of death?"

If we did not have Jesus to live a perfect life and then to sacrifice His life on the cross to save us from our sins, our lives would always be like a very cold and difficult winter. Because of God's love for us, He sent Jesus to warm our cold hearts and give the whole world hope for eternal life in heaven. As Jesus teaches us in John 3:16, "God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life."

There are also happy lessons to be learned in winter. The whole world seems to have lost its fancy dressing and we see things as they really are. Just as we see the bare branches of the trees against a beautiful blue sky and wonder at how interesting they are, we can also look at our lives and see how interesting and wonderful God has made them. Because we cannot run and play outside very much in winter, we often enjoy reading. It is a good time to read our Bibles and learn about the wonderful warmth of God's love. We may think everything is

cold and empty but in the Bible we learn that nothing could be further from the truth. God fills the world with His great love and gives us many things to enjoy - even in winter. During the rest of the year we see many birds. In winter we see few birds but they are more exciting to us because there are so few. The Bible teaches us this in Psalm 107:8-9, "Let them give thanks to the Lord for his unfailing love and his wonderful deeds for men, for he satisfies the thirsty and fills the hungry with good things."

Winter is a time for us to try to enjoy our families more since we cannot go outside and play as much as we want to. It is a good time to talk and hear stories. It is a good time to hear Bible stories so that we can enjoy our larger family which is the family of all who believe in Jesus. This is called God's kingdom on earth and there are many members of this family. If you are feeling lonely and sad, you can think about the millions of people who are your family in God's kingdom. They are all over the world.

Winter is also a good time to think of others and what you can do for them. God teaches us to be kind

to others with His creation of winter. Feeding the wild birds when there is so little food for them to find outdoors makes us feel good. When we do something nice for someone else, we are sharing the love that God gives to us every day. The Bible teaches us in 1<sup>st</sup> John 4:7, "Let us love one another, for love comes from God. Everyone who loves has been born of God and knows God."

It is good to remember the lessons of winter so that when the warm weather finally comes, you will have grown wiser in your faith in Jesus. You will have seen what your life could have been if not for Jesus - cold and empty. If you remember this then you will rejoice even more when winter is over.

