



## Isaiah 9:6-7

*Isaiah 9:6 A child is born to us! A son is given to us! And he will be our ruler. He will be called, "Wonderful Counsellor," "Mighty God," "Eternal Father," "Prince of Peace." 7 His royal power will continue to grow; his kingdom will always be at peace. He will rule as King David's successor, basing his power on right and justice, from now until the end of time.*

### TITLE

Are you the sort of person who notices when things go missing. Maybe it's a toy that's been your favourite, or that favourite but worn out jumper that Mum has thrown out. If you walk along the sea front you'll find lots of things that went missing during the storm last week – bins, noticeboards, parts of beach huts, sand and the rest of it.

### WHAT' MISSING

So here's a little test for you. What's missing?

### TOP OF TREE

The clue is next to it. A top of tree decoration. A minister friend of mine put his tree up and his children noticed there was nothing there. They said, "where's the fairy?" Dad said, "we're Christians, we don't believe in fairies so we don't put them on our tree. Instead, we either put a star on the tree to remind us of the star God placed into the sky to mark the birth of Jesus, or we put an angel on to remind us of the angels that announced His birth." "But we want a fairy – put one one!" So Dad obliged and here it is.

### EMPTY FAIRY LIQUID BOTTLE

Let's look at a few more missings:

THOMAS THE TANK ENGINE - face

THE X FACTOR JUDGES – Gary Barlow

THE NATIVITY SCENE – Jesus

You may think that's funny, but if you got the meaning of the play this morning, you'll know that for many people, the main thing that's missing in CHRISTmas is Christ! It's everything else-mas. Jingle-mas, Turkey-mas, Santa-mas, Presents-mas, Decorations-mas, Happy-mas, Visiting relatives we don't want to see-mas, Mistletoe-mas, Telly-mas, Drunk-mas, Hangover-mas, Indigestion-mas, Broke-mas. But Christ-mas. Where's that for you.

But the whole idea of Christmas isn't any of these. The clue is in the name Christ-mas. It's the celebration of the fact that a child was born – Jesus. He wasn't any old child. He is the Wonderful Counsellor," "Mighty God," "Eternal Father," "Prince of Peace." God entered into the world as a human being. He became one of us. And that's a really big thing to think of. Why?

### WHAT'S MISSING

There is another really important decoration missing from the church. It is the best Christmas decoration, but it hangs here all year.

### CROSS

Yes, I've taken away the cross. Did you notice? Jesus was born for the day 30 years later when he would die on the cross. What started at Bethlehem ended at the cross. It was intended that way. When Jesus died, he took the punishment for our sins – everything we had ever done

wrong. He did that to open a way by which we can know God for ever – every day we live here and every day forever.

FOUND

And this Christmas God offers as He does every Christmas and actually every day – its the gift of forgiveness, of life and of hope through Jesus. Will you trust and follow Jesus today?

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