

Petersham, Mass.  
December 21, 1947

Sunday before Christmas.

Morning.

163

Service for Christmas. Page

165

12th Service, Page 45

170

Litany Page 47.

Readings:

Mark 9/2--13

Mark 14/26 and 32 to 42.

Why the Birth of Jesus is celebrated?

The celebration of Birthdays.

In the family.

Among friends- Otto by the window.

Great characters, Washington, Lincoln  
etc.

Jesus--- Not because of his birth. We  
do not know the date, or the year.

Mark, the oldest does not mention it.

In fact the earliest mention of what we  
now call Christmas, is in the calendar  
of Philocalus, which was drawn up at  
Rome in 336, A.D. -- Up to the end of +  
the third century, the birth was celebrated  
on Jan 6th. Not until 375 was the change  
made at Antioch from Jan xth to Dec. 25.

So we may say that by the year 400 or  
earlier the custom of celebrating the  
birth of Jesus had become a part of the  
Christian world.

Why-- Not because of the legends  
associated with his Birth. They are  
beautiful poetry, and tinsel with  
which the package is wrapped. The real  
significance of the life of Jesus has  
even to this date dawned upon the vast ~~no~~

December 21, 1947

throngs of Christendom.

The two passages that I read for a Scripture lesson are the two great events in his life, revelations of his character that made his life significant.

I spoke last Sunday of his declaration in the synagogue at Nazareth as to the end to which he was ~~giving~~ devoting his life.

The enthusiasm and consecration of ~~xxx~~ youth to a great and generous purpose .

In time came the tests.

One before his immediate followers. his disciples. Does he really mean what he says, Has he the stuff to ~~take~~ take it, as we would say.

Imagine the feeling of his three disciples when they finally came to the conviction that he could take, that he was in the great tradition of his race, the tradition of Moses elijah.

Two-- Gethsemene.\*\* face to face with the question of whether or not he could go through with the role that he had started . Not easy.

But he tied, and ushered in a new era in human history, and

that is why in this year 1947 we celebrate the birth of a Jewish boy born in Bethlehem of Judea nearly two thousand years ago.