

737 Why Was Jesus Born?

Phil Sanders

God's Answers to Life's Questions

We know more about the birth of Jesus than we do about all of his days growing up. Why is the birth of Jesus so important? Most folks think of December 25 as Christmas Day, the day Jesus was born. Actually, no one knows what day of the year Jesus was born; and there is nothing in Scripture about an annual religious celebration of his birth. While the Scriptures say nothing about *when* he was born, they say a lot about *why* he came to this earth. There was never any birth in all the history of the world as important as the birth of Jesus, the Messiah! What was so important about this birth? Why was there a star to announce it? Why did wise men seek the child? What difference does believing in Jesus Christ make? Why did He come into the world?

Matthew 1:18-25 says, "Now the birth of Jesus Christ took place in this way. When his mother Mary had been betrothed to Joseph, before they came together she was found to be with child from the Holy Spirit. And her husband Joseph, being a just man and unwilling to put her to shame, resolved to divorce her quietly. But as he considered these things, behold, an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream, saying, "Joseph, son of David, do not fear to take Mary as your wife, for that which is conceived in her is from the Holy Spirit. She will bear a son, and you shall call his name Jesus, for he will save his people from their sins."

Being betrothed in those days was a far greater commitment than our engagements today. Betrothal, which commonly lasted a year, meant that bride and groom were officially pledged to each other but would not live together until the wedding day. Grooms had to pay part of the marriage price at the time of the betrothing. So even before the actual wedding, they were considered as husbands and wives. The parents of the bride would watch their daughters closely to make sure they were pure for their husbands. Mary, a pure virgin, conceived a child by the Holy Spirit during this time. Until an angel told Joseph the truth, he must have felt betrayed.

The child to be born to his wife Mary was special, unlike any child ever born. He was to be the promised Savior, the Messiah. The angel told Joseph that his name would be called Jesus, which means "God is salvation" or Savior, because He would save His people from their sins. For many years the Jews had looked for their Messiah. Prophecies had told them when and where He would be born and how He as King would set up a kingdom that would last forever. The angel stopped Joseph from divorcing Mary and to accept the child, which was a gift from God as a Savior of the world. Jesus would indeed be a blessing to all.

The Scriptures continue: "All this took place to fulfill what the Lord had spoken by the prophet: 'Behold, the virgin shall conceive and bear a son, and they shall call his name Immanuel' (which means, God with us). When Joseph woke from sleep, he did as the angel of the Lord commanded him: he took his wife, but knew her not until she had given birth to a son. And he called his name Jesus." Isaiah in chapter 7, verse 14, predicted that a young maiden, a virgin, who had never known a man, would conceive and bear a child. This child was special! He would be "God with us." God had come into the world in Jesus Christ!

The coming of Jesus into the world gives us our first and only understanding of what God is like as a man. John 1:1-4 says, "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was in the beginning with God. All things were made through him, and without him was not any thing made that was made. In him was life, and the life was the light of men." Jesus as a person has always existed as God with the Father and was involved in the Creation. He brought life and spiritual light to this world. We should not think that the birth of Jesus was His beginning as a person. He has always been. In his birth, however, he took a new form.

John 1:14 explains, "And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we have seen his glory, glory as of the only begotten Son from the Father, full of grace and truth." Jesus was a gift of grace for all of us. We have the forgiveness of sins because Jesus came to the world to save us from our sins. God so loved the world that he gave His only begotten Son Jesus for our sins. He came with a body as a baby in order that as a man He might present Himself as a sacrifice for sins. Hebrews 10 helps us understand the great mission of Jesus was to sacrifice Himself for the sins of the world. We can hardly imagine a greater sacrifice.

The Hebrew writer said, "Therefore, when He comes into the world, He says, "Sacrifice and offering You have not desired, But a body You have prepared for Me; In whole burnt offerings and sacrifices for sin You have taken no pleasure. Then I said, 'Behold, I have come (In the scroll of the book it is written of Me) To do Your will, O God.'" (Heb. 10:5-7). At Gethsemane Jesus prayed, "Not my will, but Thine be done." Jesus suffered a cruel death on the cross to atone for our sins. He paid the price for our transgressions, our iniquities, and our sins. Such love is humbling and makes us ever grateful for His willingness to take away our sins.

You'll remember when Jesus spoke to Zacchaeus, He said in Luke 19:10, "For the Son of Man has come to seek and to save that which was lost." Jesus is looking for the spiritually lost to help them find God and salvation. Paul said in 1 Timothy 1:15-16, "It is a trustworthy statement, deserving full acceptance, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners, among whom I am foremost of all. Yet for this reason I found mercy, so that in me as the foremost, Jesus Christ might demonstrate His perfect patience as an example for those who would believe in Him for eternal life." That ought to give us all hope! God loves us all, even in our sins.

No matter who you are, no matter what you have done in your past, no matter how you may see yourself, there is hope for you. If you humble yourself in faith and repentance before God and become obedient to His will, you will see that God's forgiveness is greater than your sins. Don't let anyone tell you there is no hope for you, that God does not offer salvation to all. Jesus died for every person and offers His grace to those who will believe and obey Him. If the Lord could save the chief of sinners, He can save you. Jesus came to make a difference in your life. He gave Himself, risked it all, because He knew the person you could become.

We need to know there is a way to heaven for all of us. Jesus said in John 14:6, "I am the way, and the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me." Jesus is indeed the way to life and the way to truth and the way to the Father. You can find that way by listening closely to Him and obeying His will. Jesus asks us to deny ourselves, take up our crosses daily, and to follow Him (Luke 9:23). If you have been living your own life, following your own path, you may have found it hasn't led you to the peace and joy you seek. Many people think Jesus is a fairy tale, but those who take Him seriously find that He is indeed all He claims to be.

Jesus is not only full of grace, He is also full of truth. We all need that truth. We need to be able to put our stakes down into something solid that we can depend on—there is nothing more solid in this life than Jesus. He said to Pilate in John 18:37, "You say that I am a king. For this purpose I was born and for this purpose I have come into the world—to bear witness to the truth. Everyone who is of the truth listens to my voice." Verse 38 says, "Pilate said to him, 'What is truth?'" When people do not know the Lord Jesus they ask that question, "What is truth?" But when they come to the Lord, come to know His love and His honesty, they quit asking.

Jesus Himself is the truth. He is full of grace *and* truth. He tells us what we need to hear. When we want to know the truth about spiritual matters, the best and only place to go is Jesus. Jesus promised in John 8:31-32, "If you abide in my word, you are truly my disciples, and you will know the truth, and the truth will set you free." It is only when we listen to him and obey Him that we can find the freedom we seek. People go to the doctor to find cures, but those cures only work when people follow instructions. In the same way the Great Physician can help you spiritually if you will abide in His word, in His teaching. He can make a difference!

Imagine with me a man who has been involved in an accident and breaks his leg. The ambulance arrives with a doctor, and he says to the doctor, "Give me a sedative quickly for this terrible pain. That's all I need is just something to knock me out!" Now a sedative will ease the pain, but a sedative won't correct the problem. Unless the doctor fixes the break, puts things back into place, the man can never find healing and peace. Some folks think they can find a sedative to make their problems go away, but until they fix the sin in their lives, they will continue to hurt and live broken lives. Jesus came to heal with love and repentance and truth.

You can't wish your sins away. You can't drink or drug them away. You can't meditate them or ignore them away. There is only one thing, my friend, that will help you get over the guilt of sin: the blood of Jesus Christ. That blood is applied to your soul to cleanse and free you from all the guilt of the past when you obey the gospel. Faith is not some empty desire. It is deep trust in the promises of God. Repentance is a change in your life, so that you can become someone new, someone you can respect. In baptism the blood of Jesus cleanses you from sin and guilt. It causes you to be born again, to become a new person, free from that old way of life.

Jesus wants to liberate you from the ugliness of the past so that you can live victoriously and peacefully in the present and gloriously in the hereafter. Jesus said in John 10:10, "The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy. I came that they may have life and have it abundantly." Life with Christ is abundant. It is filled with "love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control; against such things there is no law" (Gal. 5:22-23). It is a liberating life that allows you to sleep with peace and confidence at night. It is filled with goodness and righteousness and love. It has hope and a future. Nothing is better than true Christianity!

You don't have to live life lonely, broken, angry, or defeated. You can have this abundant life in Christ Jesus. He came to make it all possible for you. He lived a model life so you to follow in His steps, He established a church for you to be in His family, He gave us a Bible to give us hope and instruction in how to live, and He has planned an eternity of glory for us to live with Him forever. Jesus came because He had enough faith in humanity to suffer and die for them. He knew they could become godly people, could love righteousness, and could fill the earth with goodness and joy. He came to earth to transform sinful people into saints.

There is no wonder at the birth of Jesus, an angel said, "Fear not, for behold, I bring you good news of a great joy that will be for all the people. For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, who is Christ the Lord" (Luke 2:10-11). I hope that joy is a joy for you too. I hope in your heart, you realize what a *great* gift Jesus is to this world. Don't take this gift lightly. Don't live your life as if Jesus doesn't matter. He is the most important thing that will ever happen to you or me in this life! Love Him, embrace Him, come to Him, and serve Him. Let the sacrifice He made on the cross for you melt your stony heart and cause you to change your life.

My friend Jesus came to you, so that you could come to Him. Jesus said in Matthew 11:28-30, "Come to me, all who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn from me, for I am gentle and lowly in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light." Why not decide today to come to the Lord? Get back to church! Get back to righteous living! Get back to love and faith and hope and peace in Christ. Let His joy and love once again fill your life with every good thing as you give yourself to Him. Don't wait another day to obey the gospel by faith, repentance and baptism. (Prayer)

Jesus came two thousand years ago to save us from our sins. He is coming again for his own, to bless and keep them. When Jesus come again. He will be glorified in His saints. We will all be changed, from the corruptible body to an incorruptible one. This earthly body will be changed to a heavenly one when He comes. He will usher us into heaven, where He has prepared a place for us to live with Him forever and ever. It is a place without disease, without death, and without sorrow, a place pure and holy. It is the place where God dwells, and He has reserved a dwelling place for every one of His children who love and serve Him.

Jesus has given us in Scripture the way to prepare for His second coming. He is coming to save those who believe. "Without faith," Hebrews 11:6 says, "it is impossible to please God." If we love God, we want to please Him by believing in Him. Faith, however, is not all that is necessary to please Him. We also must turn away from sin in repentance and turn to Him in obedience. Loving God means loving what is right and leaving what is wrong. With love, faith, and repentance, we also need to be baptized. When we are baptized, God washes away our sins with the blood of Jesus. He cleanses us and makes us his children, heirs of heaven. I hope you won't wait a single day to become a child of God and one who follows Christ.

When Jesus comes, will He come for you? Though He has prepared a way for us to live with Him forever, some people do not prepare for Him. They live in rebellion or apathy. They ignore the warnings and the call of the gospel message. They live their lives with selfishness, never appreciating the grace of the Lord or the truth of His Word. I hope you are not among that crowd. Today is a day to rejoice with hope, because Jesus has come into this world to bring life and light, to bring joy and peace, to bring salvation, and to bring the truth. They are wondrous gifts for all people. Let us rejoice in them and give ourselves to our great God and Savior Jesus.

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Concord Road Church of Christ
8221 Concord Rd., Brentwood, TN 37027
1-877-226-5747

phil@God-answers.org

www.tv.God-answers.org