

Christmas Message 2018

Why

Last week...Jesus asked His enemies a question:

What think ye of Christ? Whose son is he?

Then He stumped and silenced them with a follow-up question:

How then doth David in spirit call him Lord, saying, The LORD said unto my Lord, Sit thou on my right hand, till I make thine enemies thy footstool? If David then call him Lord, how is he his son? (Matt 22:43-45)

How to you explain your answer in light of Ps 110:1?

According to the Bible, the very words of God,

The Christ/Messiah/Savior is
the Son of Man (100% man)
AND
the Son of God (100% God)

The Christ/Messiah/Savior
comes from eternity/heaven
AND
is born in Bethlehem
AND
comes out of Egypt
AND
is from Nazareth

ALL those things about the Christ/Messiah/Savior **MUST** be true or God is a liar
ALL those things **ARE** true of Jesus Christ and the God's words are true
Jesus Christ is the **ONLY** Savior...it is impossible for there to be any other!

This week...Wonder and Why

Let's think about the Christmas Story we read in Luke 2 with Matt 1:18-25

Lots of people are on the move, going home to be counted

Among them is a poor working man living in Nazareth going home to Bethlehem with his fiancé, his soon-to-be wife...who is on the verge of giving birth to a Son that is not his

- gender is already known, before our days of ultrasounds
- already named by God Himself – Immanuel (God with us)

Joseph wanted to divorce Mary, but God intervened and told Joseph what was going on. His wife had NOT been unfaithful to him, she had been VERY faithful to God.

This poor couple is facing a situation no couple had ever faced or has ever faced since or ever will face in the history of the world – a virgin was pregnant with the Son of the Living God, Maker of heaven and earth

Far beyond a miraculous conception (like Elizabeth, Hannah, etc), a supernatural one.

They made a long and very uncomfortable trip home and now they are...on the outs. Literally.

They are out in the elements with the animals and sharing a field with poor shepherds and their flocks of sheep

They have no shelter and no covering

The roof over their heads is the stars of heaven

Suddenly, a birth announcement is made to the shepherds...by an angel!

The Savior of the world...promised first to Eve and later to David...has been born!

Then a choir of angels started singing!

The poor shepherds hustle to find the poor family into which God chose to send His Son/Messiah
Then they started spreading the news and praising God!

Those who heard them...and those involved (Mary and Joseph)...wondered

What is going on?

What is God doing?

So, coming back to this morning, we wonder too

Why was God made flesh, why did God take the body of a man?

Why did Jesus come as a baby?

Why was Jesus born?

We have the Bible to give us understanding

Why was God made flesh, why did God take the body of a man?

Adam and Eve sinned against God in the Garden of Eden...and an enemy of man entered the world – death

Man had no power over death, death had power over Man

Only God had power over death, so God was made flesh...

The Incarnation (vs fertilization) when the God the Son (relationship) was given a human body by the God the Holy Spirit

to

- defeat/conquer for man man's enemy – death
- give whosoever would believe Him His power over death

Why did Jesus come as a baby?

God created Adam from the dust of the ground

God formed Eve from one of Adam's ribs

Every other human has been...begat of a father and born of a woman

Jesus was begat of His Father which is in heaven and born of the Woman on earth to keep His promises to Eve, SSAIJ&D...and thru them to all of us

The Bible says,

Lord himself shall give you a sign; Behold, a virgin shall conceive, and bear a son, and shall call his name Immanuel (Is 7:14)

Matt 1:23 which, being interpreted means "God with us"

For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given: and the government shall be upon his shoulder: and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace (Is 9:6)

Why was Jesus born?

Remember only God has power over death, so God took on the body of man to

- defeat/conquer for man man's enemy – death
- give whosoever would believe Him His power over death

Therefore, Jesus Christ was born to...

- die
- rise again from the dead

Jesus said,

Therefore doth my Father love me, because I lay down my life, that I might take it again. No man taketh it from me, but I lay it down of myself. I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it again. This commandment have I received of my Father (John 10:17-18)

Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that heareth my word, and believeth on him that sent me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation; but is passed from death unto life (John 5:24)

The Bible says,

For this purpose the Son of God was manifested, that he might destroy the works of the devil (1 John 3:8b)

In the hospital I overheard a cancer patient who professed to be a Christian speaking with the chaplain:
“I’m angry at God for this.”

The Bible says God loves us and wants us to live.
(sickness and disease are not His fault!)

The Bible says the devil hates us and is trying to kill us.
So be angry with the devil and cry out to God for help!!!!

Forasmuch then as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself likewise took part of the same; that through death he might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil; And deliver them who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage (Heb 2:14-15)

Whom God hath raised up, having loosed the pains of death: because it was not possible that he should be holden of it (Acts 2:24)

imputed to him for righteousness. Now it was not written for his sake alone, that it was imputed to him; But for us also, to whom it shall be imputed, if we believe on him that raised up Jesus our Lord from the dead; Who was delivered for our offences, and was raised again for our justification. (Rom 4:22-25)

And this is the record, that God hath given to us eternal life, and this life is in his Son. He that hath the Son hath life; *and* he that hath not the Son of God hath not life. These things have I written unto you that believe on the name of the Son of God; that ye may know that ye have eternal life, and that ye may believe on the name of the Son of God. (1 John 5:11-13)

The answer to these “Why” questions means that Jesus Christ is a gift from our Father which is in heaven to us...God’s gift to us is Jesus Christ

Jesus said,

And no man hath ascended up to heaven, but he that came down from heaven, *even* the Son of man which is in heaven. And as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of man be lifted up: That whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have eternal life. For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life. For God sent not his Son into the world to condemn the world; but that the world through him might be saved (from death) (John 3:13-17)

God gave us His Son as a gift because...He loves us and He wants to live...to have His power over death

The Bible says,

God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us (Rom 5:8)

In this was manifested the love of God toward us, because that God sent his only begotten Son into the world, that we might live through him. Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that he loved us, and sent his Son *to be* the propitiation for our sins...We love him, because he first loved us (1 John 4:9-10, 19)

The Lord is not slack concerning his promise, as some men count slackness; but is longsuffering to us-ward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance (2 Peter 3:9)

in the sight of God our Saviour; Who will have all men to be saved, and to come unto the knowledge of the truth. (1 Tim 2:3b-4)

And in Jesus Christ is eternal life...victory over death and life everlasting/forever

The Bible says,

I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me (Gal 2:20)

Also in Jesus Christ is help to live like Him in this hard and cruel world

Bad things happen

Kids/people are mean...they lie and say mean things, and do mean things

Things many times are not fair or right

So, until we see Jesus face-to-face, He gives us

- Joy...more than just happiness, because joy can overcome suffering while happiness cannot
- Peace...that cannot be explained with words
- Contentment...in every circumstance, no matter what happens
- Hope...that is greater than any disappointment or discouragement or evil
- Encouragement...strength to keep going

What are we to do with God's gift of Jesus Christ?

- Eternal life
- Joy
- Peace
- Contentment
- Hope
- Encouragement

Share Jesus...with everyone we know and meet

Because God loves them too!!

Jesus said,

It is more blessed to give than to receive (Acts 20:35)

Jesus said,

freely ye have received, freely give (Matt 10:8b)

Jesus said,

This is my commandment, That ye love one another, as I have loved you.
(John 15:12)

We share Jesus Christ with others...those who like us and those who do not like us...

- by speaking the Good News of the Gospel
 - by being like Jesus...giving to others
 - hope
 - compassion
 - kindness
 - mercy
 - grace
 - encouragement
 - love
- in a world that does not give any of those precious things

The Bible says,

Hereby perceive we the love *of God*, because he laid down his life for us: and we ought to lay down *our* lives for the brethren. But whoso hath this world's good, and seeth his brother have need, and shutteth up his bowels *of compassion* from him, how dwelleth the love of God in him? My little children, let us not love in word, neither in tongue; but in deed and in truth. (1 John 3:16-18)

To see someone who needs help and giving them help when you are able to help
is to love like God loves

The help we give should give is the help that God knows they need...
help that will draw them to Jesus Christ

The Bible says,

Beloved, if God so loved us, we ought also to love one another...If a man say, I love God, and hateth his brother, he is a liar: for he that loveth not his brother whom he hath seen, how can he love God whom he hath not seen? And this commandment have we from him, That he who loveth God love his brother also (1 John 4:11, 20-21)

The Greatest Gift is Jesus Christ

Like every gift, He is offered freely, with no strings attached

Like every gift, He must be received...by faith

i.e.. agreeing with God, believing what God said

The Bible says,

For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: *it is* the gift of God: Not of works, lest any man should boast (Eph 2:8-9)

Have you received God's Greatest Gift?

Go share Him with others

Have you not received God's Greatest Gift?

God is still offering you the gift of His Son and salvation from death that is in Him

Will you receive Him into your heart this morning?

As we leave here to celebrate with our families, let's

- be thankful and grateful for our gifts but let's be more thankful for the giver/Giver
- treasure the relationships more than the stuff
- cling to the people tighter than to the things
- focus on the Savior Who set aside His glory in heaven to come to earth to
 - die in order to defeat our enemy, death
 - rise in order to give us His eternal life