

“A Saviour; Good News for Everyone”

Luke 2:8-20

“Do not be afraid, I bring you good news of great joy. Today in the town of David, a Saviour has been born to you; He is Christ the Lord.”

We've been looking at the names and titles of Jesus specifically mentioned at His birth. All of which so far were names revealed by God through angels. The angel Gabriel told Mary she would be supernaturally impregnated with the Son of the Most High, the Lord God. And that same angel told Mary and Joseph to name Him Jesus. The Name Jesus means 'salvation'. Here, when the angels interrupted the Bethlehem shepherds raising lambs that would be used for sacrifices at the temple in Jerusalem only 6 miles away, they announced that a Saviour had been born to them, who is Christ the Lord. Now we have Saviour and Christ the Lord. What does this mean?

Saviour

Saviour means deliverer, rescuer. One who frees you from something you are trapped in. One who rescues you from danger or suffering, even death. God loves people so much that He sent Jesus to be one of us because we must need to be rescued and delivered from something that we are captive to and in danger of. What? When the angel appeared to Joseph in a dream telling him that the child Mary held in her womb was there by the Spirit of God, he told Joseph to name Him Jesus because

“He will save His people from their sins.”

What are sins? Sins are all the ways we think, act and speak against the ways and Word of God. People often think of 'sin' as the terrible things people do but that's not the case. God defines sin as any thought or act that is contrary to His Word. If I think selfishly or speak a hurting word or act angrily these are all evidence that we have a sin nature. We all sin and that can be proved.

The apostle Paul wrote in Romans 6:23

²³ *For the wages of sin is death ...*

We all know what wages are, they are the reward for our work. Paul says here the 'reward/result' of sin is death or the process of death that we have a more gracious way of putting it – ageing. If we never sinned we would be perfect and never age. But only one sin starts the aging process and everyone ages which means everyone sins. Which is bad news but strangely its also good news. Since we need a Savior who can save us from our sins.

I didn't read the whole verse from Rom. 6:23 which says

“For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.”

The sending of Jesus into the world was a gift from God to us. A gift that results in eternal life. We can't have eternal life if we don't accept God's gift of salvation in Jesus who paid for our sins when He died as a sinless sacrifice on the cross.

Shepherds knew all about the need for sacrifices. They were raising sheep for sacrifices at the temple. Before Jesus came the only way you could have your sins forgiven was if you brought a spotless lamb to the temple who would die in your place. You would place your hands on its head, identifying that this lamb was dying for you because the wages of sin results in death. Death means separation. Our sins separate us from God but God loves us so much He doesn't want us to be separated. Since Jesus died in our place we need to confess that He is Christ the Lord, the true Saviour of the world, and the one who will return to earth and establish His rule as Lord from David's throne one day.

That's why He was born in the town of David yet died in Jerusalem the place where God said to bring your sacrifices.

To You

"Today in the town of David, a Saviour has been born to you; He is Christ the Lord."

"To you". Shepherds were just everyday people; sinners who needed saving just like us. Since everyone needs a Saviour no one has any advantage over anyone else. Because we're not saved by our good works but by God's good work in Jesus. No one is better than anyone else, we are all recipients of God's grace. None of us deserve a Saviour, yet God wants all of us to know Him and His Son Jesus. Belief is the proper response to this message. The angel said to the shepherds

¹² This will be a sign to you: You will find a baby wrapped in cloths and lying in a manger."

The angel was inviting them to find the Saviour for themselves. They would know Him by the way He was wrapped, in strips of cloth like a newborn lamb. How did they respond to God's message that the Saviour had finally come?

Let's go to Bethlehem and see this thing that has happened, which the Lord has told us about."

\They go and find the baby and see Him for themselves and return with joy glorifying and praising God for all the things they had heard and seen, which were just as they had been told.

Good News

The angels said this Jesus is the good news of great joy. Only Jesus can save us from our sins. *"I am the way the truth and the life, no man can come to the father except through Me"* (John 14:6). Each person needs to be saved from their sins and can be saved through Jesus. That's the good news of great joy. When we confess to God we are sinners and believe by faith that Jesus died for our sins and rose from the dead, God saves us. He is Christ – the Messiah as predicted in the Old Testament – the Lord. Equal with God. Master. One whom we will all bow down to.

The shepherds believed God's Words and acted on faith, resulting in joy that they wanted to share with others. In Ps. 34:8 we read *"Taste and see that the Lord is good; blessed are all who take refuge in Him."* Refuge is another way of saying salvation. Each one of us must taste and see that for ourselves. When we do, we find true joy in God.

The shepherds' circumstances may not have changed but their hearts changed and now they lived their lives with the joy of knowing that their sins were forgiven by faith in the Saviour who came and died for them. Jesus will return and take us to be with Him forever one day. That's what we are

waiting for. The kids reminded us this morning that Christmas is when God sent us a Saviour who can save us from our sins and give us a purposeful, joy-filled life of sharing this good news with others so they too can taste and see the goodness of God.

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If you have any comments or questions about this message please contact us at olivet@rideau.net