

Born To Save – Christmas 2015

Welcome to our Christmas services, especially if you're visiting with us; We trust you'll be encouraged and blessed; Not just in our worship, but in our study of God's Word Which I'd like to do now; Phil 2:5-8

- One of our tendencies at Christmas (**Intro**), and really with anything that's familiar in life, is to think about it only in terms of the facts; Like our marriages After several years of marriage our tendency is to stop thinking about the *love* we share and the *reasons* we were married, and think only about the facts "This is my wife, these are our kids, and we live at 14444 Waller Road; Just the facts

And Christmas is no different; It's either a time of lights, shopping, and Christmas trees . . Or angels, shepherds, and a baby; Either way, it's just the facts God became flesh, his name was Jesus, and he was born in a manger

- Which is important, but completely leaves out the *why*; And especially the implications for our lives; Yes, Jesus was *born*; Yes, it really happened But Christmas is *more* than that; More than just the *what*, it's about the *why* The *what* of Christmas, the facts of Christmas, only serve to *frame* the why; Like the frame of a beautiful oil painting; The *frame* isn't the focus, the painting is And so too with Christmas; The *what* isn't the thing, as much as the *why* It's the *why* of Christmas that's most important; B/c that's what bears on our lives

So let me encourage you to listen with a soft and open heart – even if you know the Christmas story inside and out B/c what you may *not* know, or fully appreciate, are the implications – the “why's” behind it all; And the first, is this

Jesus was born to serve – teaching us how to live

That's what passages like Phil 2:5-8 tell us

[5] *Have this mind among yourselves, which is yours in Christ Jesus* [in relationship with him], [6] *who, though he was in the form of God, did not count equality with God a thing to be grasped* [held on to], [7] *but emptied himself, by taking the form of a servant, being born in the likeness of men.* [8] *And being found in human form, he humbled himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross.* That's servanthood; Setting aside *your* desires, to fulfill someone else's

And Jesus did it; Even to the point of releasing the rightful privileges of his position And dying on a cross; Not for something *he* had done, but something we've done It's the *epitome* of servanthood; And one of the reasons Jesus was born

- But that's not where it *ends*; He didn't just come to serve; He came as an *example*, that we would do the same; An example – **teaching us how to live** Jesus was born to serve, that we might do the *same*, as a way of life

It's all over the Bible; And something Jesus *himself* said; Like in **Jn 13:13-15**, after washing the disciple's feet with a *towel* – [13] *You call me Teacher and Lord . . . And you are right, for so I am.* [14] *If I then, your Lord and Teacher, have washed your feet, you also ought to wash one another's feet.* [15] *For I have given you an example, that you also should do just as I have done to you.*

Jesus was born to serve, so that we would too; Not that *foot washing* is a mandate, but that *serving* is; Foot washing is merely the example he used An example of the *kind* of servanthood we should display in our lives Setting aside *our* desires, and *our* privileges, and *our* roles – to fulfill and meet them in others*****

That's the *1st* reason Jesus was born; It was to *serve* us, so that we might serve others That we might live as he lived, and follow his example

- I love the practice of Taylor University (**stack of towels photo**) in that respect Taylor is a Christian school in Indiana where our daughter/son-in-law go, and they give every one of their graduates a towel; “Here's your diploma, and here's your towel”

And they do that, to remind them of *Christ's* example, and his call on their *lives*, to serve; To live like he lived; “To live the towel” as they say Take a look at this **video** (J.R. Briggs)

- Welcome to the wing indeed; Pretty cool***** How about you? Are you following Jesus' example? Is your towel of servanthood wet and dirty with *use*? Or is it hanging on your wall as a badge of honor? I hope it's use; B/c Jesus was born to serve, that we might do the same

2nd . . .

Jesus was born to die – offering us forgiveness of sins

The *what* of Christmas is that Jesus was born; The *why*, was to die Which is almost unthinkable; That God, the 2nd person of the Trinity, would become flesh, to actually die

But that's exactly what Jesus himself said – **Mt 20:28**

[28] *The Son of Man* [referring to himself] *came not to be served but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many* [a payment for many, an exchange for many]. Jesus was born – *to give his life as a ransom*

Which begs the question, why? Why a ransom? Why a payment? (**Heb 9:22**) B/c *without the shedding of blood there is no forgiveness of sins*; That's what Heb 9 says; Without one life being given for another . . . God continues to hold us responsible for our wrongdoing, and wrong thinking, and selfishness, and everything else

So Jesus was born, to give *his* life in exchange for ours, that we might be *relieved* of that responsibility; Forgiven Or as **Heb 9:26** says it – *He has appeared once for all at the end of the ages to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself.* Put away, meaning expunge, erase, forgive In which case, Jesus was born to die, for the purpose of **offering us forgiveness of sins**

- That's the 2nd why of Christmas – we have a sin problem, and Jesus came to solve it *All have sinned and fall short of the glory of God* (Rom 3:23) Every single one of us has sinned and missed the mark Every one of us is *infinitely* lacking with respect to God's standard of perfect holiness *None* of us are righteous in his sight; Not even one (Rom 3:10)

And if we say we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. (1 Jn 1:8)
Which compounds our problem

And what's worse, there's not a single thing we can do about it; Not a single thing we can do about our sin; B/c we're dead; That's what God says in the Bible
We're spiritually lifeless; Unable to help ourselves, and unforgiven by God

- But God, being rich in mercy, because of the great love with which he [loves] us – offers us forgiveness; He offers us a way out; A way up (Eph 2:4)
And does so, b/c of Jesus; B/c of his death in our place; His ransom, for our sin
Jesus was born to die, to offer us forgiveness of sins
- And all we have to do is ask; All we have to do is confess
Agreeing with God that we *have* sinned and are sin-full, and asking him to forgive us
That's all we have to do to receive the free offer of his forgiveness (**1 Jn 1:9**)
If we confess our sins [the Bible says], *he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.*
Jesus was born to die, so that you/I could be forgiven; And all we have to do, is ask****

- The question is, have you? Have you humbled yourself, admitted your sin, and ask God to forgive you?
If not, he holds you responsible; And in the end, will require *your* life as payment

If that's you, I'm going to give you an opportunity to pray with me at the end of the message; An opportunity to ask God for forgiveness . . .
And claim the ransom of Jesus, for *yourself*; It's why he was born

3rd . . .

Jesus was born to rise – so that we could have eternal life

He was born to die, and he was born to rise; As in rise from the dead, come back to life

1 Cor 15:3-8; The Apostle Paul is writing here, and in the previous verses he says to the church in Corinth that they have good reason to persevere in their faith . . .

[3] *For I delivered to you as of first importance what I also received: that Christ died for our sins in accordance with the Scriptures, [4] that he was buried, that he was raised on the third day in accordance with the Scriptures* (Ps 16:10), [5] *and that he appeared to Cephas, then to the twelve.*

[6] *Then he appeared to more than five hundred brothers at one time, most of whom are still alive, though some have fallen asleep. [7] Then he appeared to James* [the leader of the church in Jerusalem], *then to all the apostles. [8] Last of all, as to one untimely born* [referring to his salvation], *he appeared also to me* [Paul says].

Jesus was not only born to die, but to rise; He was never *destined* to stay in the grave; Nor could it hold him the Bible says (Act 2:24)

That's why Christmas is such a big deal; B/c the one who was born, still *lives*
We're not commemorating the birthday of someone who's *dead*; We're celebrating the *birth* of someone who *lives*; And always will

- And the point, is that we can too

Jesus was born to rise, so that we could too; So that we too can live forever
Or as the Bible says it – **so that we could have eternal life**

1 Cor 15:20-22; After asking and answering the question, "What if?" What *if* Christ didn't rise again? He says in v20 . . .

But in fact Christ has been raised from the dead, the firstfruits of those who have fallen asleep. Firstfruits, as in the guarantee that more will follow

That *others* who have died will *also* rise

Just like when we give the firstfruits of our money; It's a gift of faith, that more will follow

[21] *For as by a man came death* [referring to Adam; B/c he sinned, we sin; And b/c he died, we die], *by a man* [another man in this case, Jesus] *has come also the resurrection of the dead. [22] For as in Adam all die, so also in Christ shall all be made alive* [that's the eternal life part].

[23] *But each in his own order: Christ the firstfruits* [which happened already], *then at his coming* [sometime in the future] *those who belong to Christ.*

Those who believe in him; Those who follow him; They too will rise again

- IOW Jesus was born to rise, so that we could too; So that we *too*, could live forever
Thoroughly enjoying the bliss of glory, and worshipping him with *all* the saints
Walking the streets of gold, and recounting his amazing grace
And never again struggling with the ravages of sin

That's the life, that awaits those who put their faith in Jesus; Who trust that b/c *he* rose, they will too; That b/c *he* lives, they will too
And it starts, the moment you believe; Your eternal life *starts*, the moment you surrender yourself to the one who was born to rise

Don't miss it; And don't miss out; B/c it's one of the biggest reasons Jesus was born

And then 4th . . .

Jesus was born to save – so that we could be spared from hell

The very thing the angel said to Joseph in a dream, just *before* Jesus was born

[Mary] *will bear a son, and you shall call his name Jesus, for he will save his people from their sins.*" (Mt 1:21); Jesus, b/c it *means* Savior

Or more literally – the Lord *is* salvation; IOW he embodies it; He was *born* to save

And once again, Jesus reiterated it (Lk 19:10); Saying that *the Son of Man came to seek and to save the lost. (Jn 3:17); Save the lost*
For God did not send his Son into the world to condemn the world, but in order that the world might be saved through him.

Over and over again, the Bible tells us that Jesus was born to save

- The question, is why; Why was he born to save? Or what do we need to be saved *from*?
And the answer, is hell; The condemnation of eternal separation from God – in torment, and evil, and futility; Hell

You see, Jesus wasn't born to *condemn* us as John 3:17 says, b/c we're *already* condemned; That's v18, the next verse; We're *born* condemned

Which means that hell is our *default*; That's where we're headed at the speed of light,
from the moment we're conceived
Determined by the sin *nature* we're born with, and the lack of belief we *live* with; Our
unbelief in Jesus*****

We *start* our lives, and most people *live* their lives, on a slippery slope toward hell
Constantly scrambling, but sliding ever closer to the precipice of eternal anguish/regret
That's the life we're born into

➤ In which case we need to be saved; And need a Savior to do it; The very reason Jesus
came; He was born to save – **so that we could be spared from hell**
Spared from the eternal death we're born to, and horrors we stand to face, and the
unimaginable suffering

Our greatest need in life, is a Savior to spare us from death
A Savior to forgive our sins; A Savior to give us life

And Jesus is the one; The Savior of the *world*, and yours personally . . .

If you repent of your sin, and trust him by faith

If you ask for forgiveness, and believe him to do it

If you love him and follow his example

It's the testimony of countless millions down through the ages, and the testimony of

Sam & Laurie Edge right here in our church; Take a look at this **video**

(**Summary**)

➤ The *what* of Christmas is that Jesus was born; The *why*, is that he was born to save
And I can't help but think that some of you need him
That you too need to be saved; That you too need to be forgiven of your sin, spared
from hell, and given life; Life to the full and life forever
Not so you can live however you want, but for *him*; A life of service and worship and
devotion

If that's you, if you need to be saved – pray with me right now; And get off the slippery
slope of condemnation, for good; And into the arms of Jesus, forever

Prayer – In the quietness of your own heart, just call out to Jesus with something like this

“Jesus, I believe you were born to save; And I need you to be my Savior

I believe you died in my place, and rose again so I could too; I believe

So will you forgive me of my sin? Will you wash me white as snow? I'm sorry for all
the things I've done; And I'm sorry for living in rebellion; Please forgive me

And come into my life, right now; I'm yours; And want to live for you, from now on

Jesus – I believe, I'm sorry, and I'm yours”

While we continue in prayer, if you just prayed with me will you raise your hand and
look at me, and wait for me to acknowledge you?

I'm not going to embarrass you or call you out, I just want to rejoice with you, and
encourage you, and pray for you as we close; Is there anyone?

➤ Before I close in prayer, take a minute and listen to this song (*A King Like This*)

Pray – Lord, how can we ever thank you enough for entering our world to save our souls?

Would you bless each and every person who just prayed to be saved? Would you
protect them and bring them joy? And would you fuel them by the truth of your Word?

Thank you for Christmas, and the salvation that's ours b/c of it; Amen