

Born a Savior, Born a King

Philippians 2:5-11

What word comes to your mind when you hear the name "Jesus"?

Probably "Savior."

We know that the name Jesus means "the Lord saves" or "the Lord is salvation." The angel told Joseph, "you shall call His name JESUS, for He will save His people from their sins," (Matt. 1:21).

The angel announced to the shepherds, "For there is born to you this day in the city of David a Savior, who is Christ the Lord. (Luke 2:11 NKJV)

Imagine my surprise when I looked through the traditional Christmas carols and noticed something this week. I just assumed that Christmas songs would say a lot about Jesus as Savior. Instead, our Christmas songs say a lot about Jesus as the new-born King. And, they don't say as much about Jesus as Savior.

"Joy to the world the Lord is come; let earth receive her King..."

"...Noel, Noel, Born is the King of Israel."

"Hark! the herald angels sing, Glory to the newborn King..."

"O come all ye faithful ... come and behold Him, born the King of angels..."

"Angels from the realms of glory ... come and worship, worship Christ the newborn King"

"Angels we have heard on high...Come adore on bended knee, Christ the Lord the newborn King"

"The Birthday of a King"

"What child is this..This, this is Christ the King!"

"Silent Night, holy night, Darkness flies, all is light, Shepherds hear the angels sing, 'Alleluia! Hail the King! Christ the Savior is born.'"

"Good Christian men rejoice...Christ was born to save!"

"Come all ye people, come to the manger, Worship and adore Him, Sing all ye angels, kneel all ye shepherds, to the Christ our Savior"

Our choir has just sung the message that Jesus Christ was born a Savior, born a King. And the two cannot be separated from each other. Jesus is the Savior because He is the King, and He is King because He is the Savior.

Listen to how Paul describes Christmas, Jesus' coming to earth:

Philippians 2:5-11:

**5 Let this mind be in you which was also in Christ Jesus,
6 who, being in the form of God, did not consider it robbery to be equal with God,
7 but made Himself of no reputation, taking the form of a bondservant, and coming in the likeness of men.**

8 And being found in appearance as a man, He humbled Himself and became obedient to the point of death, even the death of the cross.
9 Therefore God also has highly exalted Him and given Him the name which is above every name,
10 that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of those in heaven, and of those on earth, and of those under the earth,
11 and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.

Who was Jesus before He came?

I want you to go with me on a journey for a few minutes. A journey that will take every bit of your imagination and wonder. I want you to picture heaven with me for a few minutes. Not the lame excuse for heaven that we've created in books and on TV. I'm not talking about fishing holes and golf courses and clouds and harps and things. I'm talking about the real, eternal dwelling place of almighty God.

Revelation 21 describes the beauty of what the New Jerusalem will one day look like when God creates it. John describes its indescribable beauty by putting it in terms we can relate to. He describes things like a street of gold. Twelve gates made of one pearl a piece. Foundations and walls constructed of every gemstone imaginable. What a wonderful place that will be. It will be a wonderful place that God will provide for us after the present heavens and earth are passed away. But when you look there on your own, I want you to notice something. The beauty of the place isn't the focus. As a matter of fact, John uses those words to describe the New Jerusalem for a very specific reason. He is telling us that even the most beautiful, costly and rare precious materials we can experience here on earth. Those things are common compared to the real, true, precious beauty we will experience there. The most precious thing you can imagine here on earth will barely be noticeable in the New Jerusalem. Why? Because we will be in the presence of true beauty. We will be in the presence of the triune God.

Revelation 21:23 says, **"The city had no need of the sun or of the moon to shine in it, for the glory of God illuminated it. The Lamb is its light."** Picture the most beautiful scene that you can imagine. Now, imagine that scene so overwhelmed by the beauty of the glory of God that it's not even noticeable. The song says it best, *"the things of earth will go strangely dim—in the light of His glory and grace."*

The glory of God is an unimaginably beautiful thing. Now imagine willingly giving that up. Imagine not only giving up the beauty of dwelling in God's glory, but giving up the fullest, most complete intimacy in a relationship that is possible. If you've ever had to spend time away from your spouse or your kids, you know how hard that can be. If you've ever lost a child or a spouse, you know how hard that is. But no matter how good our relationships are here on earth, they are all far from perfect. Now imagine the most perfect, intimate relationship possible. Three perfect, infinite persons, united fully and completely in one God. They are united so fully and completely that they are one essence. One God, three Persons, united in perfect relationship one to another. Eternally unbroken, unhindered, unchanged, unlimited. Until one quiet night in Bethlehem. The words, **"did not consider it robbery"** in verse 6 literally mean, "did not consider

it something to be grasped for or to desperately hold onto.” All the unimaginable beauty of dwelling in the glory of God. The perfectly complete and intimate Trinitarian relationship. Jesus said, “I’m willing to let it all go.” It’s the complete opposite picture of what Satan did, isn’t it? What did he do? He said, “I will be like the Most High.” Out of his pride, he tried to grasp something that wasn’t his. But out of Jesus’ humility, He thought it not robbery and willingly gave up what was rightfully His and His alone. From all eternity Jesus was with God and was God. That’s what that Baby in the manger came from. Jesus was the king. Now let’s see what He came to be.

How Did Jesus come?

The words “**made himself of no reputation**” literally mean “emptied Himself.” Jesus willingly chose to empty himself of His position in Heaven. He willingly chose to empty Himself of His dwelling place in the glory of God. He willingly chose to empty Himself of His completely intimate relationship. As God in the flesh, He willingly chose to limit His divine attributes. He limited His omnipresence. He was no longer everywhere at once. He limited His omnipotence. He became tired and hungry according to the limits of flesh. He limited His omniscience. While He was in flesh, He didn’t know everything. Because He had willingly emptied Himself, He did not know the day of His return.

God the Son, God incarnate, God in flesh was still God. But He chose to empty Himself. He chose to make Himself of no reputation. He left His rightful place in Heaven and traded it for a dirty, smelly barn. He traded being clothed in the glory of God to being clothed in scraps of material we poetically call “swaddling clothes.” He traded His omnipotence for the utter helplessness of a baby. He traded His omniscience for the mind of a baby. He traded his omnipresence for only being moved when someone picked Him up.

The One who spoke the universe into existence had to learn how to talk. The One who fills everything with His presence had to learn how to walk. The One who sustains creation with the power of His might had to build the strength to even hold up His head. He felt pain. He felt hunger. He felt thirst. He was hot at times and He was cold at times. He was tired. He wept. He was even tempted. Hebrews 4:15 says, “**For we have not an high priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin.**”

Did that mean that the baby in the manger was no longer God? Most definitely not. What it means is, God the Son didn’t selfishly grasp onto His place in heaven in the presence and glory of the Trinity. He emptied Himself of that position and place. He made himself of no reputation by limiting His divine attributes and became as we are. Still fully God. But He limited Himself to being fully man at the same time. When you look at the nativity scene, that’s what the Baby in the manger came from and what He came to be. Why in the world would He do that? Let’s look at verse 8 to see what the Baby came to do.

Why did Jesus come?

PHILIPPIANS 2:8

Christ did everything that He did for one purpose. He willingly left His glorious place in Heaven for one reason. He emptied Himself and became a man for one reason. Was it to die? Ultimately, yes. But it was really more than that, wasn’t it?

Because if that was the only thing, He could have just appeared on the scene right before He was crucified. What is the main focus of this verse? Yes, Jesus humbled Himself. That's important, but it's not the focus. Yes, Jesus died on the cross. Yes, that's very important, but it's not the focus of the verse. The focus of the verse is why He humbled Himself. Why He went to the cross. Because He was obedient. He was obedient to the will of the Father.

You remember that time right before He was betrayed and led away to be crucified. The time when He prayed in the garden of Gethsemane, **"Father, if thou be willing, remove this cup from me: nevertheless not my will, but thine, be done."** He humbled the will of His humanity and subjected it to the will of the Father. Jesus lived His life on earth in perfect submission and obedience to the Father. Even when that obedience led Him to death. Even when it not only led Him to death, but led Him to the most cruel, inhumane death you could even imagine. Even the death of the cross.

The Father's will is made clear in John 3:16, **"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."** God's love for you is so overwhelming that the Father willed for the Son to die so you wouldn't have to. Jesus did everything He did out of obedience to the Father. He emptied Himself. He was born of the virgin Mary. For 33 years He lived a perfect, sinless life. He willingly allowed Himself to be beaten, bruised, cursed, mocked and hung on a tree. All out of obedience to the Father. All because God loved you so much that He wanted you to be reconciled to Him. He came to be fully man and everything that entails. And he came to be obedient to the Father. Even though that obedience meant His death on the cross. Jesus came to be the Savior.

What is the Result of Jesus' coming?

Philippians 2:9

Because of that, the Father has bestowed on Him ultimate glory. Because of His perfect obedience, from all of eternity, Jesus Christ is exalted. His name is above every name that ever has been or ever will be. From swaddling clothes, hay and a feed trough. To dirty feet, sandals and no where to lay His head. To a crown of thorns, humiliating nakedness, and a cross. To being seated at the right hand of the Father. A place of honor. A place of exaltation. A place of glory. Because of His obedience, the baby in the manger is highly exalted by the Father throughout eternity. That's the Father's response, but creation has a response too. You can see it in verses 10-11:

PHILIPPIANS 2:10-11

When Jesus came the first time, He emptied Himself. He came in humility. He came in probably the most humble form possible. He came as the Baby in the manger. John 3:17 says, **"For God sent not his Son into the world to condemn the world; but that the world through him might be saved."** And how has the world received Him? Isaiah 53:3 says, **"He is despised and rejected of men; a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief: and we hid as it were our faces from him; he was despised, and we esteemed him not."**

Is it any different today? Does the world receive Him any different today? How about you? Do you receive Jesus any different today? Or do you hide your face from Him? Do you reject Him? Do you fail to give Him the esteem He requires?

There was a big difference between the way Jesus came the first time and the way He's coming back. When He comes back it's going to look like it does in verses 10-11. Every knee will bow and every tongue will confess that Jesus Christ is Lord.

You see, by the grace of God, He has given each of us a choice. Each person in here this morning will bow their knee before Christ. Each person in here this morning will publicly confess with your mouth that Jesus Christ is Lord. That is a fact. There is no doubt about it. You have no choice in that matter. But, by God's grace, you do have a choice as to how and when you will do that.

What is your response to Him today?