

Jesus the Messiah / COB / 12.22.13

Introduction

† Matthew 1.18-21 NLT: This is how Jesus the Messiah was born. His mother, Mary, was engaged to be married to Joseph. But before the marriage took place, while she was still a virgin, she became pregnant through the power of the Holy Spirit. ¹⁹ Joseph, her fiancé, was a good man and did not want to disgrace her publicly, so he decided to break the engagement quietly. ²⁰ As he considered this, an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream. “Joseph, son of David,” the angel said, “do not be afraid to take Mary as your wife. For the child within her was conceived by the Holy Spirit. ²¹ And she will have a son, and you are to name him Jesus, for he will save his people from their sins.”

- What is most interesting is what the baby is called at the beginning and the end of this paragraph.

Jesus the Messiah

† At the beginning, Matthew refers to the baby as “Jesus the Messiah.” Other translations say “Jesus Christ,” because Christ and Messiah mean the same thing, they just come from different languages. The Messiah or Christ was God’s “Anointed One,” about whom the Old Testament authors repeatedly had given prophecy.

- Over the course of many centuries, God revealed that this Messiah would come to speak as God’s greatest prophet, to mediate between God and mankind as God’s eternal high priest, and to reign on the throne of Israel and over the whole world as God’s chosen king.
- God also revealed that this Messiah would help flawed and sinful people – like you and me – to reconcile with a perfectly pure God, that this Messiah would forgive our sinful mistakes and cleanse us by dying to pay the penalty for our sins.
- Perhaps the most startling prophecy was that this Messiah would be both divine and human, both God and man. But this makes sense when you consider that throughout the Old Testament – even while God was revealing that a Messiah would come – God also continuously declared that God alone was the one who could save or deliver people, in God alone should we put our faith.

† The New Testament explains there is one God, but he has revealed himself to be three unique individuals completely in unity of essence: God the Father, Christ the Son, and the Holy Spirit.

- The Son of God came to be born as the baby Jesus, which we celebrate at Christmas. It is called the “incarnation,” because God came to earth to become flesh and dwell among us. The New Testament declares that Jesus is both the divine Son of God and the human Christ or Messiah.

Jesus

† At the end of our paragraph, the angel told Joseph, “You are to name him Jesus, for he will save his people from their sins.”

- The English name “Jesus” comes from the Greek name, Ἰησοῦς, which in turn comes from the Hebrew name יֵשׁוּעַ, a later form for יְהוֹשֻׁעַ, which we pronounce as Joshua. In Hebrew, Joshua meant, “Yahweh will save.”
- Yahweh was the name God gave himself in the Old Testament. So when Jesus was born, his name meant, “God will save,” and we celebrate that also with the birth of Jesus at Christmas: that the Son of God came to earth to be born as one of us, so that he would offer us salvation through his death on the cross and resurrection from the grave.

- Jesus lived the only perfectly pure human life, which made him a worthy sacrifice for mankind. Then he willingly took on the punishment for our sin when he died on the cross, which he could accomplish because he was the divine Son of God
 - When the angel appeared to the shepherds that first Christmas, the angel said to them, [Luke 2.10-11 NET] “Do not be afraid! Listen carefully, for I proclaim to you good news that brings great joy to all the people: Today your Savior is born in the city of David. He is Christ the Lord.”
- † Jesus offers us forgiveness, peace and reconciliation with God, and eternal life. All you have to do to receive this gift is believe in who Jesus is and what he accomplished for you.
- If you want to know more about Jesus, we have two invitations for you. First, take a look at this gospel presentation we handed out; it comes with pictures, like a children’s book; it’s a lot of fun! Take it home, read it over, and then call or email me if you have any questions.
 - Second, come back to learn with us, because on January 5th, we are going to start reading the gospel of John, verse by verse, to learn who Jesus is and what he did for us. We would love to have you come and learn with us.
 - If you know you are at the point where you want Jesus as your savior, if you want to put your faith entirely in him, then please come talk with me after the service. We will pray together and I will help you get started in your new relationship with God.
 - If you already have put your faith in Jesus, then all I can say is I hope you feel joy, peace, and love in your heart this Christmas! Our salvation is not just about going to Heaven instead of Hell, it is about having intimacy with God and empowerment from God right now in our daily lives. I hope you too will come to learn more about Jesus in January, in the hopes of developing a deeper faith and closer walk with Christ.
- † Let me pray...
- † Now, the praise team will come up to lead us in our last song. It is #125 in the hymnal if you want to look at it, but you might already know it: it is Joy to the World.
- When we finish the song, our program is over, but I hope you will not rush off. We have hot cocoa and coffee, some punch, and hundreds of various Christmas cookies. So stay a little while and enjoy the treats.
 - My name is Will Groben. I am the pastor here. I would love to meet you, but let me say right now how happy I am that you are here. Tuesday night at 7pm, we will be gathering again to sing some Christmas carols and light some candles, and you are welcome to join us then too.