

The Case for Christ: The Birth of a Savior

A Bible Study Series of The Mt. Zion Church

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Check In Question: When, if ever, do you put up your Christmas tree and when, do you take yours down?



Introduction: As Christians, we often engage in assumptions regarding many practices and beliefs that we are not Biblically certain of their origin. Thus, we may be accurate in our action but ignorant as to why we do the action. For instance, we are told to commemorate Jesus' death on the cross by engaging in "breaking of bread and drinking of the fruit of the vine". Yet so many Christians cannot explain the deeper meaning of the practice (see Luke 22: 14-20).

We are at a disadvantage when we don't understand what we believe or when we cannot accurately explain what we believe. Further, scripture teaches in Hosea 4: 6

⁶My people are destroyed for lack of knowledge: because thou hast rejected knowledge, I will also reject thee, that thou shalt be no priest to me: seeing thou hast forgotten the law of thy God, I will also forget thy children.

In short, there is danger to our ability to live physically and spiritually for Christ because we lack knowledge (information) and understanding (clarity about what the information means for us). One area which many lack knowledge and understanding about is related to why Jesus is our savior. If we are to be effective as his followers, we must have a grounded understanding as to what we believe and in whom we believe. This series of lessons will assist Christians in understanding why Jesus qualified as The Christ (The anointed one of God). Leading up to the celebration of Jesus' birth, it seems to make sense that we are sure we are sure of what scripture says. Therefore, we will make a Case for Christ in these three lessons which follow! Happy learning!

I. The Need for A Savior

How do you know mankind needs a savior? And where can we find proof of that need?

If we are going to make a case that Jesus is the savior, we should first begin with an understanding of our need for a savior and God’s plan to provide one.

- Genesis 3: 1-9 Explains the Problem
- Genesis 3: 15 is God’s first hint of a solution

The war expressed in the term “enmity” (Genesis 3: 15) lets the reader know that (crush head and strike heel) is an ongoing battle that will be had between the seed or offspring of mankind and the enemy of mankind (not snakes) which is ultimately understood to be Satan. The imagery, however, immediately gives us a clue as to how the battle will end. To strike at the heel is to create a problem, but it is not a fatal blow to the one who has been attacked. To crush the head, however, is a move that ultimately will kill the one who receiving such a blow to their body. Thus, in God’s curse to the serpent, he indicates that ultimately the “seed of woman” will overcome the plan of the serpent.



1. Based on what we just learned, explain why we need a savior.

2. Explain the imagery God uses in his curse against the serpent for his role in the fall of man.

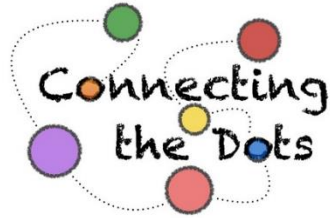
II. The Plan for A Savior: The Abraham Solution

Now that we understand the purpose of our savior, we need to further understand God's plan to send us a savior. This begins in Genesis 12: 1-8

1. What is God's Promise to Abram?

God Promised Abram the following
1.
2.
3.
4.
5.
6.

2. Has God kept his promise to Abraham's descendants? How do you know? Deuteronomy 7: 6-8, 2 Samuel 7: 12-13, and Acts 3: 25-26 (BUT READ THE WHOLE CHAPTER!!!)



Now let's take a look at Matthew 1:1 and 2-18. In verse 1 we identify the connection between Abraham whose name identifies Jesus as part of the promised family in general. We also see David's name which identifies Jesus in the direct lineage of the king. This gives us the connection back to God's promise of blessing the world through Abraham's family. In verses 2-18, Matthew constructs lineage up to Jesus. This identifying of the patriarchal line is the format which Jewish lineage is traced. Matthew writes to a Jewish audience with the intent to prove that Jesus fulfills the requirements as Messiah beginning with his lineage.

KEY UNDERSTANDING: Why does Jesus have to be a part of Abraham's lineage?

III. The Location of the Savior

Location, location, location.

Biblical prophecy requires that the savior be born in Bethlehem (Micah 5:2).

“But you, Bethlehem Ephrathah,
though you are small among the clans^[a] of Judah,
out of you will come for me
one who will be ruler over Israel,
whose origins are from of old,
from ancient times.”

But how does this occur since Joseph and Mary live in what city?



Did you know that the distance from Nazareth to Bethlehem is about 90 miles?

Why were they in Bethlehem? Luke 2: 1-5 gives us the answer. Why would Caesar Augustus want to have a census?

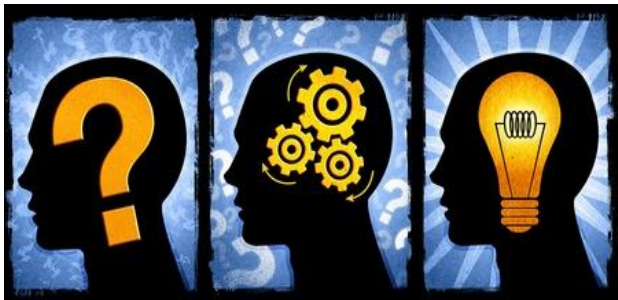
KEY THOUGHT: What does this tell us about God and things we often consider a coincidence?

CONCLUSION

The information we have learned today is an opportunity for us to have a deeper understanding and appreciation for what God has done to deliver (save) us from the penalty of sin. We believe that Jesus is the one and only son of God. We further believe that Jesus is the only method for mankind to acquire salvation. Jesus is the answer and is the reason for the season!

As we conclude this first lesson regarding the case for Christ, let us recap some of our learnings.

1. Why do we need a savior?
2. Where did God begin His plan (trick question)?
3. What identifying characteristics must the Messiah have to be “The One”?
4. Why is any of this important?



Deep thinker challenge: When was Jesus born? Bring some proof to the next lesson with scriptures to back up your thoughts.