

SERMON NOTES

From *In Touch With Dr. Charles Stanley*



Our Savior, Who Is Christ the Lord

KEY PASSAGE: Luke 2:8-14 | SUPPORTING SCRIPTURES: Luke 24:47-49 | John 3:16; 8:18-19; 10:28-30; 14:9-11
Romans 10:9-10 | Ephesians 1:7-8 | Colossians 1:13-15; 2:2-4 | 1 Peter 1:8, 18-21

► SUMMARY

Although many people celebrate Christmas each year, relatively few of them understand exactly what happened two thousand years ago or who the baby born that night was.

Instead, people are preoccupied with shopping and all the other activities that have generally replaced the story of Jesus' birth. Even some of us who know Him as our Savior may be unfamiliar with the various terms and titles applied to Him. That's why it's important to re-examine His story, both to enrich our understanding of Jesus and to help us explain to others the true meaning of Christmas.

► SERMON POINTS

The Angelic Messenger

Oftentimes, the importance of an announcement is conveyed by the significance of the messenger, and that is certainly true of the first Christmas.

“In the same region there were some shepherds staying out in the fields and keeping watch over their flock by night. And an angel of the Lord suddenly stood before them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them; and they were terrible frightened. But the angel said to them, ‘Do not be afraid; for behold, I bring you good news of great joy which will be for all the people’” (Luke 2:8-10).

Clearly this was a message sent by God Himself through His angel. Furthermore, it was joyous news, which was rare in a world dominated by the Roman Empire. Yet for those of us who know Jesus as our Savior, we can identify with

the joy of this announcement because although we were not there, we feel the same way about Christ even now.

“And though you have not seen Him, you love Him, and though you do not see Him now, but believe in Him, you greatly rejoice with joy inexpressible and full of glory” (1 Pet. 1:8).

The grandeur of this event on Christmas night was further magnified when the angel making the announcement was joined by “a multitude of the heavenly host praising God” (Luke 2:13). The shepherds must have been stunned by this startling display of God's glory as angels filled the night sky as far as their eyes could see.

The Christmas Announcement

As impressive as the angelic host was, the announcement itself was even greater: “For today in the city of David there has been born for you a Savior, who is Christ the Lord” (v. 11). What may be confusing to those who have never heard the Christmas story is the introduction of these four titles, which all apply to the baby who had just been born—Savior, Son of God, Christ, and Lord. Furthermore, there are more names attributed to Him in other places in Scripture.

■ **Savior.** Jesus is called a Savior because He came to rescue people from the penalty of their sins. Since we have all sinned, we will all die and will deserve to be eternally condemned and punished for our sins by God the righteous Judge. Jesus came to save us from this condemnation.

• **1 Peter 1:18-19**, “You were not redeemed with perishable things like silver or gold from your futile way of life inherited from your forefathers, but with

precious blood, as of a lamb unblemished and spotless, the blood of Christ.”

- **Ephesians 1:7-8**, “In Him we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of our trespasses, according to the riches of His grace which He lavished on us.”

The only way to save us from this hopeless condition was for God the Father to send His only begotten Son to earth to be born of a virgin. Jesus lived a sinless life and offered Himself as a sacrifice for our sins by dying on the cross.

For all of us who have believed in Jesus Christ, God has “rescued us from the domain of darkness, and transferred us to the kingdom of His beloved Son, in whom we have redemption, the forgiveness of sins” (Col. 1:13-14). Jesus truly is our Savior.

- **Son of God.** This is another title that may confuse people. Although there is only one God, He exists in three persons—Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

- **Colossians 1:15**, “He (Jesus) is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of all creation.”

- **Luke 24:47-49**, After His resurrection, Jesus said “that repentance for forgiveness of sins would be proclaimed in His name to all the nations, beginning from Jerusalem. You are witnesses of these things. And behold, I am sending forth the promise of My Father upon you; but you are to stay in the city until you are clothed with power from on high.” In this passage the Holy Spirit is introduced as the “power from on high” who would enable Jesus’ disciples to speak, preach, and bear witness of Him.

- **Christ.** Jesus is also the Christ, which means the anointed one or Messiah.

- **Colossians 2:3.** We not only receive salvation through Jesus Christ, but in Him “are hidden all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge.”

- **Lord.** This term emphasizes Jesus’ deity. When He was explaining to the people why He came to earth, He often claimed equality with God the Father.

- **John 8:18-19**, “I am He who testifies about Myself, and the Father who sent Me testifies about Me.’ So they were saying to Him, ‘Where is Your Father?’ Jesus answered, ‘You know neither Me nor My Father; if you knew Me, you would know My Father also.’”

- **John 10:28-30**, “I give eternal life to them (My sheep), and they will never perish; and no one will snatch them out of My hand ... and no one is able to snatch them out of the Father’s hand. I and the Father are one.”

The acknowledgement of Jesus as Lord is so important that it’s required for salvation.

- **Romans 10:9-10**, “If you confess with your mouth Jesus as Lord, and believe in your heart that God raised Him from the dead, you will be saved; for with the heart a person believes, resulting in righteousness, and with the mouth he confesses, resulting in salvation.”

To comprehend what Christmas is all about and who Jesus is, we must also understand the Trinity because all three members of the Godhead are inseparably linked both in nature and in accomplishing our salvation.

- **God the Father** “so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him shall not perish, but have eternal life” (John 3:16).
- **God the Son** died on the cross to pay the penalty for mankind’s sins.
- **God the Spirit** opens people’s hearts to believe in Christ for the forgiveness of sins and the salvation of their souls.

► RESPONSE

- How does understanding the names and titles given to Jesus help you better comprehend who the baby in the manger was?
- How would you explain Christmas to someone who knows little or nothing about the true meaning of the holiday?

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