

THE REASON FOR CHRISTMAS

Jesus was born to save us from the penalty of our sins and give us real life – eternal life.

KEY POINTS

- ❖ The angel Gabriel was sent to deliver incredible news to Mary, and he added a purpose statement at the end of his announcement: "...call His name Jesus, **for He will save His people from their sins**" (Matthew 1:21).
- ❖ God Himself was speaking through Gabriel, letting Mary (and us) know the reason for the birth of the Christ-child.
- ❖ Many scriptures declare how Jesus impacts the lives of fallen human beings – us. For example:
 - John 1:4: **In Him [Jesus] was life, and the life was the light of men.**
 - John 3:15-17, 36: **...whoever believes in [Jesus] should not perish but have eternal life.** ¹⁶ For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that **whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life.** ¹⁷ For God did not send His Son into the world to condemn the world, but **that the world through Him might be saved.** ³⁶ **He who believes in the Son has everlasting life;** and he who does not believe the Son shall not see life, but the wrath of God abides on him."
 - John 6:35a: And **Jesus said** to them, "**I am the bread of life.**"
 - Romans 6:22-23: ...now **having been set free from sin**, and...become slaves of God, **you have your fruit to holiness, and the end, everlasting life.** ²³For the wages of sin is death, but **the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.**
- ❖ Through salvation, we move from condemnation—being under the penalty of death—to the wonderful hope of eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.
- ❖ This is the reason for Christmas!
- ❖ The mission of Jesus was to give life to humanity. Not just life in the mundane sense of merely existing, but *more abundant* life (John 10:10).
- ❖ For you who are wealthy and enjoying the best human life has to offer, the apostle Paul gives important instructions, found in his letter to his 'son' Timothy (6:17-19):

Command those who are rich in this present age not to be haughty, nor to trust in uncertain riches but in the living God, who gives us richly all things to enjoy. ¹⁸ Let them do good, that they be rich in good works, ready to give, willing to share,

KEY SCRIPTURES: Matthew 1:18-21; John 1:4, 3:14-17, 5:24-26, 6:32-35a, 10:10; Acts 11:18; Romans 6:22-23; 1 Timothy 6:17-19

¹⁹ storing up for themselves a good foundation for the time to come, **that they may lay hold on eternal life.**

- ❖ There is a plan and a purpose behind everything God does. Coming to earth as a human being was not a random act that happened by accident one day. He came on purpose to save us from our sins.
- ❖ Sin paints a rosy picture and is very enticing to our human nature. But it comes with an awful ultimate consequence – eternal death.
- ❖ Jesus came to give us the opportunity for a different, blessed outcome – eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.
- ❖ It's simple: those who believe in Jesus chose life. Those who reject Him chose death.
- ❖ We are living beings, with the God-given ability and freedom to choose how we live.
- ❖ We enjoy the good things life has to offer and thank God for the abilities He has given us to make a living for ourselves and our families. However, this is not the "real life!"
- ❖ Real life is found in Jesus—and only in Jesus. Living for Him and serving Him is all that really matters. He came that we might have life and have it more abundantly.
- ❖ This is the reason for Christmas: **Jesus wants us to live!**

DISCUSSION/REFLECTION TOOLS

1. Life is hard. But sin provides some pleasure (or people wouldn't choose to stay in it). What are some pleasures of sin?
2. Life in Jesus provides pleasure, although it also promises hardships. What are some pleasures of salvation?
3. Why do you think human beings are so prone to reject the pleasures of salvation and remain in/return to the pleasures of sin?
4. Discuss how life in Christ is "more abundant".
5. Do Christians truly believe that life in Christ is "more abundant" life? Share evidence supporting your opinion.

Prayer Time

Lord, let your Light shine through me. Help me live an abundant life. In Jesus' name, Amen.

WEEK OF SUNDAY, DECEMBER 16, 2018

NOTES

Meditate as you read through/listen to this week's message. If it helps, use symbols for your notes.

-  (Reminds me/Confirms)
-  (New idea)
-  (Think about)
-  (Do this)
-  (Speaks to my heart)
-  (Must share)

PRAYER NEEDS/THANKSGIVINGS

Go deeper with your Life Group family.
CONNECT-REFLECT-DISSECT THE WORD
Your Life Group ~ Your Lifeline

Start-up: What event in your life, so far, have you put the most planning into? How did it turn out in the end?