

Jesus the Savior ▪ Matthew 1:18-25

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*For the next few weeks we will be in the Gospels with an Advent focus. The goal is to return to the simplicity of knowing and enjoying Jesus Christ.

Every true Christian is a worshiper of Jesus Christ.

Christians *believe* and *bow*.

- Worship is the right response to Jesus in Matthew's gospel. Matthew is framed with two powerful acts of worship.

1st. Magi (Mt. 2:1-2)

2nd. Disciples/post resurrection

Matthew 28:16-17 (ESV)

Now the eleven disciples went to Galilee, to the mountain to which Jesus had directed them. And when they saw him they worshiped him.

Big Idea in Matthew: Encountering the true Jesus ought to lead you to true worship.

When you see the true Jesus, you will Believe and Bow.

- We are going to look at the basic question today: Why do Christians worship Jesus Christ?
- The birth narrative in Matt. gives us our answers.
- This is a very vital story in Matthew and the NT.

It is the opening narrative; sets the tone for the rest of the Gospel...and helps answer our question about worship.

We worship Jesus for *how* he came to this earth (18-20)

- The best way to summarize Jesus' birth is in two words: ordinary and extraordinary.

Ordinary: Jesus had two human parents; Mary and Joseph.

- Mary had to go through the ordinary labor—Jesus grew in the womb like every ordinary child over the course of 9 months.
- Yet Matthew's birth narrative spends more time on Joseph than Mary (Joseph as Son of David—fulfillment).

Any preacher worth his salt should aim to be a Christ-centered preacher; every meal served up to sheep should have the rich fragrance and aroma of his glory!

...Though the spotlight of the story is not on Joseph, there is something we can learn from the first man we encounter in the NT: Joseph.

- › Joseph is the first model of manliness in the NT.
 - In order to understand Joseph's actions, we need to understand how ancient betrothals worked.

In Jewish culture, the betrothal was much different than our engagement.

It lasted about a year and the only way out of it was either by death, or divorce—can't just return the ring—

And to be clear, the couple did not live together or have intimacy during betrothal.

- According to the Law (Dt. 22)—any unfaithfulness was to be treated with the same force as adultery in the marriage.
- Joseph finds out Mary is pregnant and the only logical conclusion: Betrayal. She's been unfaithful.

Joseph has 4 standout character traits:

Just, Caring, Discerning, Courageous

He was Just (v19)— meaning he carefully and reverently observed God's Law. It shaped his thinking and actions. He did not go with his gut or feelings, but God's Word was his guide.

He cared for people (19b)— “unwilling to put her to shame” (used in Col. 2:15 expose to public ridicule)

- Joseph would have avoided a public hearing where he could humiliate her....instead planned to get divorce papers drawn up privately.

Joseph may have been countercultural in his day....he certainly he would be in ours.

People are highly skilled and seem to thrive on shaming, humiliating, exposing the faults of others....but that's not the way to godliness.

It seems like Joseph was already living the standard of Christ.

Matthew 7:12 ESV

“So whatever you wish that others would do to you, do also to them, for this is the Law and the Prophets.

- › Often the best way to be a Christian is just treat people the way we would want to be treated.

- Finally, obedience often has two ingredients found in v20: discernment & courage.

Obedience is the mark of God's people.

The Great Commission is built on it.

This is what true masculinity and leadership looks like:

—Devotion to living justly (guided by God's Law)

—Deep care for actual people

—Taking time to ponder, reflect (wisdom)

—Courage to act

The opposite describes a wimp.

—No moral standards

—Selfishness and impulsive decisions

—And being a coward...living in fear

Joseph would not be a perfect father—yet he was tasked with the most important job: adoptive father of God's Son.

And when God chose him, he chose a man, not a wimp.

Extraordinary:

- Mary's pregnancy is extraordinary. Supernatural. Miraculous. Of God.

From the Holy Spirit

Pregnancy discovery (v18)

Angel's words in Joseph's dream (v20)

Virgin Birth

- Isaiah passage (v23)
- This was first spoken to King Ahaz through the prophet Isaiah to prove God's saving presence; it finds ultimate fulfillment in Jesus.

This is one of the key points of the birth narrative: *Jesus' birth fulfills Scripture.*

*Fulfillment of God's purposes is key—*no word of God fails.*

Often people look at the virgin birth as they wonder why. Why did Jesus need to be born of a virgin? Was it so he would not have Original Sin imputed?

*The starting point of the why? Because a Prophecy 700 years prior said so!

So Jesus comes to this earth—ordinary and extraordinary. Yet there is one more aspect of how: humbly.

- › Everything about the birth story showcases the humility of Jesus

The fact that Jesus—the eternal Son of God— took on human flesh, not born in a palace, but to a displaced teenage family in very humble circumstances.

Royal Humility marked the Messiah.

Matthew 21:5 ESV

“Say to the daughter of Zion,
‘Behold, your king is coming to you,
humble, and mounted on a donkey,
on a colt, the foal of a beast of burden.’ ”

If there is something missing in this fallen world, it’s a shortage of humility.

One of the things that draws us to Jesus so much is his humility.

The one so exalted and worthy stoops, bows down—has to be served by human hands in his infancy and childhood.

It’s the humble nature of Jesus that invites us to follow him and his teaching:

Matthew 11:29 ESV

Take my yoke upon you, and learn from me, for I am gentle and lowly in heart, and you will find rest for your souls.

So we worship for how he came: ordinary, extraordinary, and humbly.

We worship Jesus for *why* he came to this earth (21-25)

- There are two main parts of the why. Both are tied to the names/titles that Jesus is given

Names carry significance.

I’m working through a book on Generations. The author makes an interesting observation about the most popular baby names in various generations.

For the boomer generation, there was more of a tendency to want to fit in with the crowd; society was more collective—few wanted to stand out and be strange.

So baby names that were pretty common: John. Michael. Christopher. Sarah. Elizabeth.

I think there were 3 other *Ryans* in my grade.

But as generations grew more individualist, so did the baby names.

It's common for millennial parents to choose a baby name that none of their friends have.

*The point is: parents choose a baby's name and it has a purpose.

For Mary and Joseph: they did not get to choose the Baby's name — God did....and for his own purpose.

- The name, *Jesus*: Heb. name (Yeshua) — Joshua. It means, "One who Saves".

Several significant ones in OT that point to Jesus:

—Moses's successor (Joshua, son of Nun) — leads God's people into Promised Land.

—Joshua the high priest (Zech. 6:11-13)

Zechariah 6:11–13 ESV

"Take from them silver and gold, and make a crown, and set it on the head of Joshua, the son of Jehozadak, the high priest. And say to him, 'Thus says the LORD of hosts, "Behold, the man whose name is the Branch: for he shall branch out from his place, and he shall build the temple of the LORD. It is he who shall build the temple of the LORD and shall bear royal honor, and shall sit and rule on his throne. And there shall be a priest on his throne, and the counsel of peace shall be between them both."

The Messiah came as High Priest and bearing Royal Honor.

Jesus is named for a specific mission:

- Saving his people. (21)
- First, many Jews were eager for God to send a Savior—but a different kind.

The Savior they were looking for would be a political Savior. He would be good at leading the military too. Military and Political skill to deliver from physical oppression of living under Roman Rule.

- But this verse tells us that that the saving work of Jesus targets a totally different area: our sins.

› *Jesus did not come to this earth to make salvation possible...but actual.*

It does not say: Jesus came to make salvation possible.

FOR HE WILL SAVE HIS PEOPLE—Not “random people” or “those people”, but his people!

Let's say you are in need of some help, so you text (or even call) some people to solicit the help. They respond. Possibly. Hopefully.

What good is that?

Jesus does not possibly, or hopefully save his people....he really does save them!

(John Gill) - “from all their sins, original and actual; from secret and open sins; from sins of heart, lip and life; from sins of omission and commission; from all that is in sin, and follows upon it; from the guilt, punishment, and damning power of it.”

Do you want to be saved from your sins? Original, actual, secret, open, guilt, punishment?

Want delivered from the “miry bog” of getting unstuck?

Then trust this awesome promise!

Believe in Jesus!

Believe his saving work never fails!

This is the reason we worship. Because his saving work does not fail!

2) Dwelling with his people (v23)

The second name/title Jesus is given is “Immanuel”.

God with us.

Conclusion:

This can only mean one thing—Jesus is God.

Not God at a distance, but God who is with us.

God who became like us; walked among us; died to save us.

Since Jesus is truly God, then there is only one true response.

Worship.

Encountering the true Jesus ought to lead us to one thing: true worship.

Let's return to the simplicity of knowing, enjoying, and worshiping Jesus.