

# Christmas All About His Son

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**Bible Text:** Romans 1:1-7  
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The book of Romans 1. We are in the middle of a three part Christmas series concerning this time, and we're learning that it's all about the Son of God. Romans 1, beginning in verse 1.

1 Paul, a bond-servant of Christ Jesus, called as an apostle, set apart for the gospel of God, 2 which He promised beforehand through His prophets in the holy Scriptures, 3 concerning His Son, who was born of a descendant of David according to the flesh, 4 who was declared the Son of God with power by the resurrection from the dead, according to the Spirit of holiness, Jesus Christ our Lord, 5 through whom we have received grace and apostleship to bring about the obedience of faith among all the Gentiles for His name's sake, 6 among whom you also are the called of Jesus Christ; 7 to all who are beloved of God in Rome, called as saints: Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

We're taking a look at three aspects of this passage, the first being in verse 2, that this gospel was "promised beforehand through His prophets in the holy Scriptures." This morning it will be verse 3, it is all about "concerning His Son, who was born of a descendant of David according to the flesh." And then Lord willing, next Lord's Day morning we'll finish in verse 4, "who was declared the Son of God with power by the resurrection from the dead."

The very foundation of Christmas which our culture is rapidly losing or has lost, is that Christmas is about Jesus Christ, the Son of God. It's not merely about him, it is him. Christmas is Christ and if you take Christ out of Christmas, then the whole season of Christmas has become nonsensical, meaning it has no meaning, it's just emptied of its very essence. We discussed that it's not about family or time off from work or really giving of gifts or hearing entertaining Christian music, it's certainly not about Santa or reindeer or snowmen or ritual or trees or food or a special Christmas service. All of these, some of these might be involved but they are not and they should not become preminent. Jesus Christ is Christmas. Christmas is Jesus Christ our Lord.

This past week, our number 1 national newspaper, "The Wall Street Journal," had a picture concerning the conflict between secular Christmas versus the true Christmas, that

is, the Christmas about his dear Son, and it had a picture at the top of this and it showed a very large image of Santa sitting on a throne with Christmas and gifts and wrappings all around him, and in a very small way but definitely sitting at the feet of Santa was the nativity scene. That's the way our culture sees Christmas and sad to say, in many minds it is a growing image even in the minds of those who profess the Son of God as their Lord and Savior.

God, himself, foretold this, verse 2, "He promised this beforehand through His prophets in the holy Scriptures." God breathed forth his words of promise through these prophets as they were moved by the Holy Spirit of God and these prophets wrote down God's own voice in the pages of our Old Testament. He promised this from ages past. It was promised from the downfall of Adam and Eve that a Son born of a woman, the seed of a woman would come and deliver us from our sins, and all down through those ages, the revelation of God ever increasing, foretold the city, the place, the person, his birth, who he was, God with us, Emmanuel, the Lord is the Savior.

It was all promised and foretold and the Jews understood this. When the wise men came and said, "Where is the King of kings to be born," they said, "Bethlehem, as foretold in the Scriptures." And the reason why this is so critical to us as New Testament believers is that there is a connection back into our Old Testament. Christianity is not a religion that started at the birth of Christ. Christianity is the completion of true Judaism rightly understood and so we have this to say, we say nothing, we speak nothing more than what Moses and all the prophets have foretold. Everything from Incarnation to resurrection was written down in the pages of our Bible and we spent a considerable amount of time last Lord's Day looking and rehearsing those prophecies.

How can such marvelous news of Emmanuel, God with us, be merely turned into a ritual of giving or family or Santa or just calling it a mere holiday? People actually tremble if you just say "Merry Christmas" to people today, and I had one person who I make a point of saying that, actually thanked me, that it was so refreshing to hear someone say "Merry Christmas," and that's not even talking about Jesus Christ, the Son of God, that's just saying "Merry Christmas," right, to people. They understood. This season is a wondrous opportunity to declare what God has promised beforehand, that is, the gospel of Jesus Christ, himself Incarnated in a nativity scene in a manger, born in Bethlehem. What a blessing that is.

So when we look at verse 3 and we're talking about this great gospel that changed the life of Saul who's now called Paul, he's delivered from the bondage of sin and death into being a bond-servant of Christ Jesus. He is set apart expressively for this gospel. And not only was it promised beforehand, but it deals with an amazing subject, verse 3, it is all "concerning His," what? "His Son," God's only begotten Son. The Incarnation of Jesus Christ of which this season is supposedly celebrating is not about Joseph, it's not about Mary, it's really not about the animals or in the manger or the little drummer boy. It's not about the star, as amazing as that might have been. It's really not even about the angels that cried "Glory to God in the highest! On earth, peace! God's good will toward men!" It's not about any of those things but it is all about the baby and who he is.

You'll notice that this Son comes from the Father. He is revealed in the holy Scripture. God is the author of this. God is the source of this. God is the sender of this. And you'll note in verse 3 that this gospel, this good news, is concerning "His Son," a Son "who was born of a descendant of David according to the flesh." God's own Son was born a Jew. He was the descendant of David and if I could be so bold, he was not born European like many of the pictures that you see. He was not born an American like some of the pictures that you see. He was not born Italian like many Roman Catholic pictures that you see. He was not born an African. He was not born an Asian. He was born a Jew and, folks, not only was he born a Jew, he took on the humanity, the descendant of David, but he will forever be a Jew, King of kings, Lord of lords. The one who is sitting on the throne right now according to being a descendant of David according to the flesh is a Jew forever and ever. Amen. Amen. He's not any other ethnicity other than Middle Eastern. His skin was probably of an olive brown complexion. He was distinctly Jewish in that home. This is the Son that which we give glory and honor to during these days.

Folks, those who were believers, those who believed those Old Testament Scriptures, understood that the essence of this life that was to come was the Son of God. He was to be born a baby and as was played in our offertory, there was no child like this child. There was no baby like this baby. He was tempted in all points like as we are, yet without sin. He took on himself not the seed, not the property, the nature of angels, but he took on himself the seed of Abraham. He took on humanity that he might save humanity. He was distinctly the seed of a woman for he was born through the labors of Mary. Believing people knew that God's gift to us was going to be a child, the government was to be upon his shoulders. He was to be called Counselor, Wonderful, the Almighty God, the Prince of Peace.

There was and is and will be no child like this child and the circumstances of his birth, not only were they foretold but the very circumstances of his birth were unusual and marvelous and wonderful in our eyes. In fact, it was miracles that brought to pass the very birth of Jesus Christ and the birth of the forerunner who was foretold by the prophet Malachi. The forerunner, John, was born to Elizabeth who was past childbearing years. Just like Sarah, right?

I remember years ago as we were missionaries overseas and we were dealing specifically with the Jewish population, I remember our neighbor who spent a lot of time in our house and that was probably an understatement, but spent a lot of time in our house and one day I wasn't there and she was sitting in the den there in a chair and I came walking in and she just burst out and said, "Well, you know, the one thing I don't understand about Christianity is this virgin birth stuff." And I said, "That's alright," I said, "and the only thing I don't understand about the nation of Israel is this being born of a woman past childbearing years stuff." And when I said that, she just looked at me like the light had gone on and this Jewish lady, as my wife and I were leaving that geographical area to come back to the States to be a pastor, that Jewish lady came and professed Jesus Christ as her Messiah.

This is a miracle, John born to Elizabeth, but it is even a greater miracle, it is a new thing that was foretold by the prophet Isaiah that a virgin would give birth, the Messiah, Emmanuel, God with us, would be born to Mary who had never ever known a man. A virgin. A body created inside of her. A body that would be like any other baby and yet not like any other baby. When that baby was born, the baby was born like any other baby was born. It had an umbilical cord. It was a labor for Mary. The babe was a human. It was a male baby. It was deity. And both of the parents received special revelation about this baby from the angel of the Lord. I would guarantee that your children were not announced by an angel of the Lord. This is certainly something unusual. There is no child like this. In fact, his name was given by an angel to Joseph. The angel said, "You shall call His name Jesus for He will save His people from their sins." This baby, the Son of God wrapped in humanity, was and is and will be the fulfillment of all the promises of God as given by the prophets of old and as given by the apostles of the new covenant.

What child is this that we're talking about, this baby that entered into this dark dark world? This baby was so precious, so miraculous that God moved the whole world. He moved the heart of Caesar Augustus to take a census and thereby set in motion the whole Roman Empire to go back to their native hometown. This was an amazing event. I mean, folks, God could've done, he could've just gone to Joseph and said, "Go back to Bethlehem." But he didn't do that. He moved the heart of this Gentile pagan ruler who thought that he was lord, he moved in the heart of that man to set in motion this type of census and hundreds of thousands of people had to travel and go register in the city of their nativity, and here's Mary, great with child, going from Nazareth to the city of Bethlehem, and when they get there, there's no room there, right? Where is the child going to be born?

Well, in the meantime the child is born. He's laid in a manger. No manger for a king. No throne to welcome him. No air-conditioned room and heated mansion but a manger. No perfume and fragrance of the finest oils that man can produce, but the fragrance of the animals that he, himself, created. This is the baby that has come into this world, and lo and behold, unknown to Mary and Joseph in that day, the temple shepherds who shepherded the sheep that were being prepared for sacrifice, saw the angel of the Lord come and announce this baby's birth. I'm sure that you sent out announcements about your baby but it was not by the angel of the Lord. You had to use United States postal service to do it. Here the angel of the Lord was shining glory, the majestic and majesty of God declared to those shepherds that, "In the city of David," that would have been Bethlehem, "there has been born for you a Savior who is the Messiah, the Lord, Christ the Lord," and upon saying that, all of heaven, the multitudes of heavenly hosts burst out in singing, saying, "Glory to God in the highest! On earth, peace, good will towards men!" And of course, I've said this probably every Christmas since I've been in the ministry, that what that glory is given, the glory to God in the highest, because on earth the Prince of Peace has been born, and that Prince of Peace is God's goodwill toward humanity. That's what the angels were rejoicing and proclaiming over.

Those temple shepherds ran to the city of Bethlehem. I want to ask you: how in the world did they find this baby in the midst of a town that was so populated there was no more

room for people in the inn? I propose to you that they found their way there by the gossip of the crowds. A baby was born. A baby in a manger. A baby. Are you not amazed? And the temple shepherds come and they find their way. We don't know exactly how that happened but they had to seek their way to find this baby and they found this baby and they were amazed at what they saw. Mary treasured up what these temple shepherds communicated to her in her heart. I've worded it this way: this was Mary's baby book, that she's writing down the events surrounding the birth of the dear Son of God. Folks, there's not been another baby like this baby.

Not only were the temple shepherds there and not only did they find their way and they worshiped him as God in human flesh, the only true God in his Son Jesus Christ, God giving the very greatest thing that he could give, his only begotten Son, but eight days later – did you catch that – the baby is eight days old and he's taken to the temple. I am sure that the umbilical cord had not fallen off. I'm sure that the babe was still there wrapped, as it were, in swaddling clothes and appropriate attire. That eight day old baby was taken to the temple of God in accordance to the law, that all the firstborn males were to be consecrated unto the Lord, and as the Spirit of God providentially moved Mary and Joseph and Jesus into that temple area, there was a man named Simeon who the Holy Spirit had directed to come to that location. And I can see it now as Mary and Joseph and Jesus come into that temple area and Simeon's coming into that temple area, and Simeon comes right up to Mary. I'm supposing that it's like every other person, that it's Mary that's holding the child. Joseph could've been holding the child but Simeon comes up to that child, takes the child out of the arms of his parents and declares, "This baby, this eight day old baby is God's salvation!" What would you think? "He is the glory of Israel! And He is the light to the Gentiles!" That man understood that two people, that middle wall of partition would fall down one day under a new covenant and that this baby, the King of kings and Lord of lords, this eight day old baby, it is him that is God's salvation. And folks, I just want to emphasize that he did not come and lift Mary up and say this is God's salvation. He takes the baby out of their arms and lifts the baby up and says, "This is God's salvation!"

And after doing that, and after hearing the prophecy about this babe who would be opposed by those in that nation, Anna, the prophetess, spontaneously comes in and notes the commotion by some type of method, as she comes she hears and she too looks at that little eight day old baby and gives thanks to God, and she called that baby the redemption of Jerusalem. And she went to all the other believing Jews and she communicated that this day is all about the Son. It's all about the baby, isn't it? It's all about him.

Then the baby grew. We don't know exactly when this would have occurred. I think a good approximation that this would've been within the first year of our Savior's life on earth, but the baby grew and was visited by wise men of the East. This is absolutely astonishing. These wise men of the East were probably influenced by a man, a Jew named Daniel who wrote of his star, who communicated to those men, and was passed on. These wise men of the East traveled and came and they came to Herod and their question was not where is Mary, their question was, "Where is He who is born the King of the Jew?" That was their question.

Folks, they had come hundreds of miles. They didn't take an airplane. This was an urgent trip. It was dangerous to travel. There were robbers and marauders and others, and I'm sure they had a host of people there for protection. They were carrying treasures for this newborn King, this child, this Son of God, the one of the tribe of Judah, the lineage and loins of David. Why make such an expensive and time-consuming trip? They tell you, "We saw His star in the East." Folks, I want to ask you: did they have an understanding of who this baby is? When they came and followed that star and the star was over the location of that baby, when they came and they took their treasures of gold and frankincense and myrrh, they did not give them to Mary and Joseph. The Bible says that they fell at the feet of this baby and worshiped him. Did you hear that? They did not fall at the feet of Mary. They fell at the feet of him. This child, one year old, six months old, a year and a half old, amazing, isn't it? The child may not have even been weaned unto, you know, using facilities for himself or walking very well, right? And yet they fall down before this child. Did they have anything in the back of their mind, the possibility that this was God with us, and that this King of the Jews deserved worship and praise and honor and treasures and glory and power unto him forever and ever? I can assure you that your child was not welcomed into the world this way.

This baby was so special, this baby was so unusual in the history of mankind that the government of that day determined to kill him. Folks, the baby is hardly months old, right? He's really not old enough to either having done good or evil and the government, Herod, moved by Satan himself, desired to kill him and so he sent people to murder all the baby sons from two years and under, and the Lord himself had sent to Joseph a dream, he had sent Joseph and Mary and Jesus from Bethlehem to Egypt. Why Egypt? Could he not have protected him there? Yes or no? Could he not have destroyed the armies there? Why did he send him – are you ready for this – 430 miles? For some of us, that's a long trip in a car today. At best they had donkeys. At worst they walked on their, what? Their feet. If they could walk 20 miles a day, which would be a pretty good distance with, you know, the few possessions that they would have and the clothing that they would have and the women that they would have, and of course, you've got a baby, right, that you're taking care of, if you could average some 20 miles a day, it would've taken them anywhere from 20 to 30 days to travel that distance. Twenty miles a day on foot is a long ways. I have walked it before and it took me all day to do that, let alone 20 consecutive days of walking that far.

God protected them, both the wife and the family and the baby, and he did it because the Scripture had said, "Out of Egypt I have called My Son." Is it alright to travel 430 miles for the Scripture to be fulfilled? I say yes. He's protected and he's protected in that nation until Herod had died, and an angel comes back to Joseph and says, "Guess what? It's 430 miles back." And Joseph obeys. "Out of Egypt I have called My Son." Is there any child like this of any supernatural activity?

This birth became the occasion of an intensity of grief and sorrow in which the wailing of parents could be heard. Herod sends the armies to destroy all the baby sons two years and under and, folks, there would have been hundreds of parents where the soldiers would

have barred down, came blasting in the door, grabbed that two year old and under male child, could have lifted it up with one arm, right, these burly, strong, Roman soldiers, and a sword right through that child. This, too, was in fulfillment of Scripture that had been foretold, but there was an intensity of grief and of sorrow and of pain associated with that child, just like today.

And this anointed child continued to grow. The Bible says that he grew, that is, physically. He also became strong and the Bible says that he was increasing in wisdom, and that the grace of God was upon him. What an anointed child this is. I would have loved to that had been said about me as I was growing up, but I was not a child like this child. This child was the Son of God.

And the last time that we hear of him as a child, he is sitting among the teachers in Jerusalem. He's 12 years old. Think about that, 12 years old. We in our culture, would not even call him a teenager yet. He's 12 years old sitting among the teachers. What is he doing? He is doing two things in that, and he is in the midst of them, in other words, the teachers are surrounded around him. That's how amazing this child was. The Bible says that the child was listening. That's a rare trait, isn't it? He's listening to the teachers but he's not just listening, he's asking them questions, questions about what? The Scriptures. That's what he's asking them about and the Bible says that those teachers that were surrounded around this child, this baby, it says that all who heard him was amazed at his understanding. Understanding of what? The Scriptures. They were amazed at his understanding and his – are you ready for this – his answers. Folks, he was not only listening and asking questions, they were so stunned they were asking questions from him.

What an amazing child. What a unique child. What a glorious majestic child. And folks, this is what Christmas is all about. It is only about him. All this other stuff with the culture are all things that try to distract us, to take our minds away from the true import of what has happened here. But there's another thing that is even more amazing about this baby. This baby is God. Don't let that slip off of your mind as, "Of course." John says of him that this baby was in the beginning; that he was with God and he was God. John says that that baby of whom the temple shepherds came to worship, of whom the wise men bowed their knee to, the one who was asking questions from the teachers and giving them the answers, this baby is the Creator of all things that you see and that you don't see.

You say, "Well, that's nothing." I say that's something. But I say something even more than that, the Bible says that this baby upholds all the creation by the word of his power. Scientists are looking for the God particle. We're looking for the God-man. Big difference, isn't it? This is the one who holds all things together. This baby is the firstborn of all the new creation. Life is in this baby. This baby is the glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father. This baby is the one that's full of grace and truth. This baby is the one who was given the Spirit of God without measure so that he could speak the words of God. Every word he spoke was God-breathed. Amazing, isn't it?

I daresay, your child isn't like this. I daresay, there's been no baby like this baby. This baby was foretold. This baby is glorious. This baby was announced by heaven. This baby gave glory to God in his birth. This baby caused human governments to be moved at his cry. This baby is the one that caused the murder, I don't mean cause as if he commanded it, I mean he's the cause because he's the Prince of Peace, he's the King of kings, he's the one that's going to come and subdue all things including the last enemy which is death, and the last enemy which is Satan himself. And the Bible says that to those who receive this baby as being the Messiah, as being the one who can save us from our sins, this one who is no mere human being but is the God-man, he is the Son of God in human flesh, that to those who receive this baby which is now the resurrected King of glory, amen, to them he gives the right to become the children of God because these people who believe are born not of blood nor of the will of the flesh nor of the will of man, but of God. And folks, these things that I'm preaching to you this morning, I am doing it because he is the subject of Christmas, he is the object of Christmas, he is Christmas itself. I'm preaching this to you so that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that in believing that, you may have life in his name.

You say, "What are you doing?" I'm preaching to you the gospel. This is the good news. What child is this? Jesus Christ, the Son of God. What child is this? The Lord of glory. What child is this? The everlasting King of kings. What child is this? God with us. What child is this? The Alpha and the Omega, the beginning and the end. What child is this? He is the Amen.

Let's pray.