

The Story
JUST WHO WAS BORN?
Selected
March 16, 2014

INTRODUCTION

a. **Why are we singing Christmas Carols in March?**

1. Last week in "The Story" we came to the end of the Old Testament and today we begin looking at the New Testament with the birth of the Savior

b. **It has been 400 years since Malachi had promised that a messenger would come.** That messenger is John the Baptist and he announces the coming of the Savior

c. **So today we are celebrating Christmas, It is a turning point in God's Upper Story**

1. From the beginning the Story has been pointing to the One who would come and once for all draw us back to the Father.

2. The promised messiah, the savior, who would sit on David's throne has been born

3. **Here is where God's Upper Story intersects with His Lower Story at the birth of Jesus Christ, the God-man.** God's redemptive story approaches its climax as the Son of God from eternity past becomes the Son of Man for eternity future.

d. **So we must ask, "Just Who was Born?"**

f. In the next few moments I want us to consider how this baby is identified and what does that mean.

I. CLUES FROM THE STORY

a. **The promise of a coming savior began Genesis and continued throughout the Old Testament**

b. Isaiah the prophet gave us a clear identity

1. **Isaiah 9:6**, the prophet called him: **Wonderful, Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.**

2. In **Isaiah 7:14** the prophet calls him **Immanuel, God with us**

c. **As the New Testament unfolds:**

1. The Wisemen called him the **King of the Jews**

2. The Angels called him **Savior**

3. John called him **the Word or Logos**

4. Mary was visited by an angel and told her son would be the **"Son of the Most High"**
- **"Immanuel"**

5. Joseph was visited by an angel and told to call him, **"Jesus"**

6. God called him **SON**

II. WHO WAS BORN

a. **The Savior was born and his name is Jesus**

b. Let's take a closer look at the name Jesus

1. Bill Gaither helped to begin the modern "praise" song movement. One of his early songs was, "Jesus, There's Just Something About That Name"

2. The chorus we sang **"You Are Emmanuel"** - **"The Rock that will not fall, Messiah, Long awaited One, The Healer of our Hearts and the Mighty King of Kings - You are Emmanuel"**

3. There is something in the name Jesus

c. **Names were then given to signify the purpose, the function or character of the child.**

1. Jesus literally meaning "Savior" allows us to see the heart of God, and the purpose of Jesus.

2. **Matthew 1:21** reveals all this: **"You shall call his name, JESUS, for He shall save His people from their sins."**

d. The name of Jesus identified His mission and to whom the mission is directed, **"His people..."**

1. The birth of Jesus has everything to do with restoring our relationship with God
2. We are in slavery to sin and need a Savior - One to pay the price to buy us out of slavery

3. The birth of Jesus begins God's final work of salvation for us

f. John in his biography of Jesus declares that Jesus is God Incarnate, **John 1:14** - "The Word became flesh and dwelt among us"

III. JESUS WAS BORN

a. What did it mean for Jesus to be Immanuel (God with us)

1. **The incarnation (God becoming a man) reveals that God was not content just to be with us but also wanted to be one of us**

2. Jesus is the God/Man – both fully God and fully Man

3. He came to do for us what we could not do for ourselves, pay the price for our sins

b. Jesus is unique in all of history. The Bible reveals some interesting characteristics of Jesus that set Him apart from all others

1. Before you write off the Bible as being just like any other book, remember that it claims to be God breathed or literally God's Word

2. We know bibliographically that what we have is what was written and so we are compelled to deal with what it says

c. The Biblical record shows that:

1. Jesus claimed to be God

a. On a number of occasions Jesus claimed to be God

1. John 10:27-30 (I and the Father are One)

2. Jesus says to Philip - "Seen me you have seen the Father" (John 14:8-

10)
3. When the High Priest asked if He was the Messiah, Jesus agreed (Matthew 26:63-64)

4. The Jews crucified Him for making himself equal with God - Blasphemy

to them

2. Jesus received worship as God

a. Had Jesus not been God in the flesh, He would not have allowed people to worship him against the expressed law of God

b. The wise men came and worshipped Him

c. When during a storm Jesus came walking on the water those in the boat worshipped Him (Matt. 14:22-33)

d. In his letter to the church in Philippi, Paul wrote these words: Philip. 2:9-11 - *"Therefore God exalted him to the highest place and gave him the name that is above every name, that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father."*

3. You cannot ignore the facts - Jesus claimed to be God and He received worship as God

IV. JESUS' DEMANDS ON US

a. Jesus' claim to be God is no small thing

1. No other leader of a world religion claimed to be God themselves - Some of their followers may have deified them but they did not claim it for themselves

2. Some have claimed to be God but their lives showed the lie of their words

3. If Jesus claimed to be God then He cannot be just a Good Moral Teacher

b. His claim to be God sets Jesus in a class all by himself

1. He is either God or he is not - No gray area here - In our culture it may not matter what a leader says and does but no so in Jesus' case - He was either God as he claimed or he was a liar or a madman

2. Jesus removed all middle ground - You either accept him as God or reject him

c. **In the face of arguments** that Jesus was just a man and a good moral teacher but not God, C.S. Lewis said it this way, *“A man who was merely a man and said the sort of things Jesus said wouldn’t be a great moral teacher. He would either be a lunatic on the level of a man who says he’s a poached egg - or else he would be the devil of hell; you must take your choice. Either this was, and is, the Son of God, or else a mad man or something worse. You can shut Him up for a demon or you can fall at His feet and call Him Lord and God. But don’t come up with any patronizing nonsense about His being a great moral teacher. He hasn’t left that alternative open to us.”* (from *The Case For Christianity*)

d. **Pascal, the French physicist and philosopher** put it this way, *“There is a God-shaped vacuum in the heart of every man that cannot be filled by any created thing, but only by God the Creator, made known through His Son, Jesus Christ”*

e. **St. Augustine** said, *“Thou hast made us for Thyself O Lord and our hearts are restless until they find their rest in Thee.”*

f. **The alternatives are clear for you today:**

1. Jesus is either the **Lord** as He claimed or else a **Liar** or **Lunatic**

2. You will leave here today having chosen one of those three - they are the only choices open to you

g. **It is never too late to invite Jesus into our lives.** We don’t have to clean up our act first. He comes in even at the 2 minute warning of life.

1. It was not too late for Abraham at 100 years of age,

2. Not too late for Moses after 40 years in the desert,

3. Not too late for Jonah running from God,

4. Not too late for Saul of Tarsus who persecuted Christians and who met Christ on the Damascus road.

5. Not too late for Peter who denied Jesus or for Thomas who doubted Jesus.

f. **It’s not too late for you to meet Jesus**—the Word, our King and Savior. He comes to common folk—a common carpenter, a common virgin girl, common shepherds.

g. **You can pray, “Jesus. Please come in and make my heart your home”**

g. **Just Who Was Born?**

1. What did the angels say? *“I bring you the most joyful news ever announced, A Savior is born and He is for everyone and he is CHRIST THE LORD*

h. Have you chosen to follow Him today?

BOW WITH ME IN PRAYER

8:30 #138 “GO TELL IT ON THE MOUNTAIN”

11:00 “JOY TO THE WORLD”