

"Why Jesus Came"

Hello, I'm Phil Sanders and this is "In Search of the Lord's Way," where we study God's Word. No one knows exactly when Jesus came into the world, but today we're going to learn from Jesus' own words and from other Scriptures the reason why. So stay tuned!

Welcome to In Search of the Lord's Way. For centuries people have celebrated the birth of Jesus, some during December and others in January, even though no one really knows what month Jesus was born. The Bible doesn't instruct us to celebrate the birth of Christ; this is merely a tradition of men. Though we don't know the time of His birth, we're so grateful that He loved us enough to make Himself known to us as the Son of God. He gave us hope, forgiveness, love, peace, and eternal life. I'm so thankful that the Scriptures teach us about Him, and I am thankful that you've joined us today. We want to be part of your life each week.

Keith Johnston Thomas wrote in 1912, that "If Christ had done His bare work in the carpenter's shop, the most shining example of manly perfection and splendid prospect of the Fatherhood of God and the Brotherhood of Man, culminating in the hope of life beyond, would not have been handed down to us." Our God got involved! He didn't ignore us and stay in heaven. Our God didn't leave us alone to wonder where we came from, why we're here, or what will happen to us when we die. We have Jesus, who came to seek and to save the lost!

If Jesus had remained in the carpenter's shop, we'd have never known Him. But Jesus, however, became the Savior of the world. His sacrifice on the cross for our sins touches each of us and offers us hope and eternal life. His sterling example challenges us to live holy lives of service, to make the world a better place. His teaching leads us to be more giving, more loving, and more kind. Because He forgave us, we also learned how to forgive others. He brought Jew and Gentile together; He is indeed the Prince of peace. And we thank God that Jesus came into the world!

Now if you'd like a free printed copy, or a CD of this lesson, simply mail your request to In Search of the Lord's Way, P.O. Box 371, Edmond, OK 73083 or send us an e-mail to searchtv@searchtv.org. Or, if you prefer, you may use our toll-free telephone number. Now we'll pay for the call. That number is 1-800-321-8633. We also stream this program on our website at www.searchtv.org.

The Edmond church will now worship in song, we'll read from John 1:14 to 18, and then we'll examine why Jesus came to earth.

Our reading today comes from the Gospel according to John, chapter 1, verses 14 to 18. "And the Word became flesh, and dwelt among us, and we saw His glory, glory as of the only begotten from the Father, full of grace and truth. John testified about Him and cried out, saying, "This was He of whom I said, 'He who comes after me has a higher rank than I, for He existed before me.'" For of His fullness we have all received, and grace upon grace. For the Law was given through Moses; grace and truth were realized through Jesus Christ. No one has seen God at any time; the only begotten God who is in the bosom of the Father, He has explained *Him*." That's a reading from God's holy word, in the Gospel according to John. Let's pray together. Father we're thankful that Jesus came to dwell among us, and that we be held Him. And Father we pray that our hearts will come to love Him, to believe in Him, and to serve Him. And may Your will be done on earth as it is heaven. In Jesus name, Amen!

The Bible says in John 1:1 through 4, "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was in the beginning with God. And all things came into being through Him, and apart from Him nothing came into being that has come into being. In Him was life, and the life was the Light of men." The Word was God, and He is eternal. He's always been and will always be. There's

never been a time when the Word, that is Jesus, didn't exist. He came into the world to bless us with life and light, and we can be thankful for that.

Now to find out what God is like, study Jesus. Jesus is indeed Immanuel, that is "God with us," according to Matthew 1 and verse 23. Jesus was born that we might know God personally and have a relationship with Him. What do we see when we look at the life of Christ? We see God's power and glory. He had power over nature, sickness, sin and death. We see amazing love, meekness, gentleness, holiness, justice, compassion, grace, mercy, loving-kindness, anger at sinful behavior, patience, and authority. We see in Christ God calling us to repent and to do His will.

The Bible says in John 1 and verse 14, "And the Word became flesh, and dwelt among us, and we saw His glory, glory as of the only begotten from the Father, full of grace and truth." Now Jesus has always been Divine, but He became flesh and dwelled among us. The word for "dwell" has the idea of pitching a tent, that is a temporary dwelling place. Since our flesh is temporary, Jesus became one of us and took on temporary flesh. Jesus felt pain, got hungry and thirsty, grew tired, and experienced physical death. We see His glory in the fact that in spite of the fact that He was God, He was willing to humble Himself to bless us.

Now Jesus as God's Son was still full of two divine characteristics: first, grace; and second, truth. Now the Bible says, "For you know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that though he was rich, yet for your sake he became poor, so that you by his poverty might become rich" (2 Corinthians 8 and verse 9). The Lord Jesus humbled himself and became obedient to His Father's will. He did this to save us from sin and to give us life. This is amazing grace!

1 Timothy 1 verses 15 to 16 says, "It's a trustworthy statement, deserving full acceptance, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners, (and then he said) among whom I am foremost *of all*. Yet for this reason I found mercy, so that in me as the foremost, Jesus Christ might demonstrate His perfect patience as an example for those who would believe in Him for eternal life." Now Jesus came to save every person who comes to Him in faith and obeys His will. He is patient with us and gives us an opportunity to make changes in our lives.

Now out of grace and love for us, Jesus came to do the will of God. Hebrews 10 verses 4 to 7 says: "For it's impossible for the blood of bulls and goats to take away sins. Therefore, when Christ comes into the world, he said, 'Sacrifices and offerings you have not desired, but a body you have prepared for me; in burnt offerings and sin offerings you have taken no pleasure.' And then I said, 'Behold, I have come to do your will, O God, as it is written of me in the scroll of the book.'"

When Jesus prayed at Gethsemane, "Not my will but Yours be done," He was saying to His Father that He was willing to drink the cup, that is to die on the cruel cross. Such grace and such love is astounding! The Bible says in 1 Peter 2:24 that Jesus himself "bore our sins in His body on the cross, so that we might die to sin and live to righteousness; for by His wounds you were healed."

Now you remember that Scripture that we learned whenever we were children. John 3:16 and 17 which says, "For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten (or His only one of a kind) Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish, but have eternal life. For God did not send the Son into the world to judge the world, but that the world might be saved through Him." God the Father and our Lord Jesus are in the saving business. Jesus didn't come into the world to condemn but to save the world from the evil that sin brings. The Lord knew that we needed saving from sin and a path away from a sinful life. He forgave us and showed us the way out of evil. He lived a sinless life and showed us how to live and how to love.

The book of Galatians says that those who practice the works of the flesh or sin “shall not inherit the kingdom of God” (Galatians 5 verses 19 to 21). But Christ came to lead us out of that evil, fleshly life to a better life. Verses 22 to 24, the next verses, say, “But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control; and against such things there is no law. Now those who belong to Christ Jesus have crucified the flesh with its passions and desires.” Jesus came to show us a better way of living than that old sinful way that hurts everybody.

The Lord Jesus didn't merely come to give life, but to give it in abundance. The Lord said in John 10 and verse 10, that “The thief comes only to steal and to kill and destroy; but I came that they may have life, and have *it* abundantly.” The life that Christ gives lifts people up, and gives them hope, gives them joy, gives them peace, and teaches them to love. 1 John 4 verse 19 says, that “We love, because He first loved us.” We're transformed into new people by the blood of Christ. He gives us new life and a chance to start fresh as changed people.

The grace of God not only saves; it also teaches and trains us. Titus 2 verses 11 to 14 says, “For the grace of God has appeared, bringing salvation to all men, instructing us to deny ungodliness and worldly desires and to live sensibly, righteously and godly in the present age, looking for the blessed hope and the appearing of the glory of our great God and Savior, Christ Jesus, who gave Himself for us to redeem us from every lawless deed, and to purify for Himself a people for His own possession, zealous for good deeds.”

God's grace turns cold hearts into warm ones. It turns people who were once foolish and ungodly, and had those desires that were ungodly, into people who live sensibly, righteously and godly in the present age. You see their hearts don't wallow in the old and ugly life that they used to live. They're now ashamed of that life. They think about the coming of Jesus and live to bless other people. They look for opportunities to do good deeds. Wherever it goes, the grace of God enlarges people's hearts and transforms their lives to become compassionate and righteous.

The Lord doesn't leave people in the lost condition where He found them, oh no. God shows them in Christ Jesus what they can become! Jesus Christ first gave us grace to save us from sin and second, he gave us the truth to teach us how to live this victorious and abundant life! Jesus graciously tells us the spiritual truths that we need to hear, not simply stories that we like to hear. God had only one Son, and He was a preacher. He gave us the truth that sets us free (John 8 and verse 32). Jesus showed a great sense of urgency to preach repentance and truth to people.

Now the Bible reveals this urgency in Luke 4 verses 42 to 44. The Scripture says: When day came, Jesus left and went to a secluded place; and the crowds were searching for Him, and they came to Him and they tried to keep Him from going away from them. But He said to them, “I must preach the kingdom of God to the other cities also, for I was sent for this purpose.” So He kept on preaching in the synagogues of Judea. The Lord Jesus wanted everyone to hear his message. He spoke to anyone who was willing to listen. To God every person is important. And Jesus wants to save every soul.

Mark 2 verse 16 and 17 says: “When the scribes of the Pharisees saw that He was eating with the sinners and tax collectors, they said to His disciples, ‘Well why is He eating and drinking with tax collectors and sinners?’ And hearing *this*, Jesus said to them, ‘*it's* not those who are healthy who need a physician, but those who are sick; I didn't come to call the righteous, but sinners.’” You see Jesus came to make a difference in people's spiritual lives, to help the spiritually sick become well. Jesus knew that both grace and truth were needed to make a difference!

Now Jesus came to bring the truth. John 1 and verse 17 says, “For the Law was given through Moses; but grace and truth were realized through Jesus Christ.” And in fact, Jesus could say to His

disciples in John 14 verse 6, "I am the way, and the truth, and the life; and no one comes to the Father but through Me." Now we can know the truth by listening to Jesus Christ. In John 18:37 Pontius Pilate asked Jesus, "'So You are a king?' And Jesus answered, 'You say *correctly* that I am a king. For this I have been born, and for this I have come into the world, to testify to the truth. And everyone who is of the truth hears My voice.'" My friend, whose voice are you listening to? Where are you turning for spiritual truth? I hope you're listening to Jesus by reading the Scripture.

Now if you want to know what is spiritually true, study what Jesus said. If you want to be "of the truth," listen to His voice. Read the words of Jesus in the New Testament. Learn what He teaches. He is full of truth. We're hearing many strange ideas in the religious world today. But John said in 1 John 4 and verse 1, "Beloved, do not believe every spirit, but test the spirits to see whether they are from God, because many false prophets have gone out into the world." I tell you, the best test, the very best test of right and wrong, the very best test of truth and error, is still found in the teaching of Jesus. If the Lord Jesus doesn't teach it, don't believe it. He is the measure of truth.

Some people think the words highlighted in red in their Bible are the only words that Jesus spoke. Well He certainly said these words, but the rest of the New Testament also contains the words of Jesus. Jesus made a promise to the apostles in John 16:12 to 13. He said, "I have many more things to say to you, but you cannot bear *them* now. But when He, the Spirit of truth, comes, He will guide you into all the truth; for He will not speak on His own initiative, but whatever He hears, He will speak; and He will disclose to you what is to come." In fact, all the New Testament comes from the Lord. Every word of it is God-breathed and utterly true.

Now I would hate for anyone, for anyone to miss the grace of Jesus Christ by missing the truth of Jesus Christ. You see, these two things, grace and truth, are intertwined, they're bound together and they are inseparable. You can't find the grace of Christ by ignoring His truth, and you can't find the truth of Christ by ignoring His grace. Now if we are to trust the grace and promises of Christ, we must find them in Scripture. Some people want grace from Christ, but they don't want His teaching. Oh my friend, you can't have one without the other. You need both. Let's pray together. Oh Heavenly Father, we're thankful that Your Son Jesus brought grace to save us, and truth to teach us. Help us to put our ears to him, to hear everything He says and to enjoy the grace that He offers. And may Your will be done on earth as it is in heaven. In Jesus name, Amen!

Since Jesus came to seek and save the lost, we can have hope. Your salvation in Christ came at a very great price. You weren't redeemed by silver or gold no, but by the blood of Jesus. That baby born in Nazareth so many years ago came to earth for the purpose of offering His body on the cross so that you might have the forgiveness of sins and eternal life. His birth was marvelous and miraculous, but His death captures our hearts and our souls. By his wounds we are healed.

Now since God raised Jesus from the dead and seated Him on the throne in heaven, far above all rule and authority, wouldn't it make sense to follow Him? He came to find you and to save you. Will you let Him? He's inviting you to have an abundant life here on earth and an eternal life in heaven. No one has ever loved you to the extent that Jesus loves you. He was willing to endure the utter pain, humiliation, and punishment of the cross so that your sins might be forgiven.

Now if you want Jesus as your Savior, you must also take Him as your Lord. You must trust Him and believe what He says is true. If you cannot trust Jesus but think He's mistaken in what He teaches on morals or doctrine, how can you trust His promises? You can't re-write Jesus' teaching on one point and then trust Him on another point. When you do that, you really don't believe in Jesus at all. You

believe in yourself and in your own wisdom. God wants us to trust in Jesus Christ in every step and decision we make. And when we do, His grace and truth surround us.

Have you come to Christ in faith, repentance, and baptism? Why not come to Him today? Believe in Him with all your heart, turn away from the evils and danger of sin, confess Jesus Christ as the Son of God, and be baptized in water in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins. Acts 22:16 says, "And now why do you wait? Rise and be baptized and wash away your sins, calling on his name." Won't you do that today?

Now if you'd like a free printed copy or a CD of this message, "Why Jesus Came," mail your request to In Search of the Lord's Way, P.O. Box 371, Edmond, OK 73083 or send an e-mail to searchtv@searchtv.org.

Or, you can call the Search office at 1-800-321-8633. Now all our programs also appear on our website at www.searchtv.org. If you'd like to access it there in a printed, audio, or video format, it's available. Please visit one of the churches of Christ in the area served by this station. They'd like you to come and visit with them, and worship with them, and so would we. Now we'll be back next week, the Lord willing. So we ask to tune in and encourage someone that you know, someone that you love, to also join us. Tell everyone about the Search program. Well as always we say, God bless you and we love you from all of us at In Search of the Lord's Way.