

December 4th, 2022
Special Delivery: Week 1

Question: Thinking about those gifts under the tree, how many either had a trick played on them or played one on your kid on Christmas morning?

I'll admit...I love Stories or Movie plots that have MIS-DIRECTION as a major part of the plot! It's a REVEAL that you talk about for years!

The same could be said of the Christmas Story! Talk about a story with Mis-Direction!

Luke 2:1-6 (KJV)

And it came to pass in those days, that there went out a decree from Caesar Augustus that all the world should be taxed. (And this taxing was first made when Cyrenius was governor of Syria.) And all went to be taxed, every one into his own city. And Joseph also went up from Galilee, out of the city of Nazareth, into Judaea, unto the city of David, which is called Bethlehem; (because he was of the house and lineage of David:) To be taxed with Mary his espoused wife, being great with child. And so it was, that, while they were there, the days were accomplished that she should be DELIVERED!

What a SPECIAL DELIVERY it was! This was the first time that GOD would be revealed to humanity physically.

What would it mean to now finally look into the face of God?

- Who would have ever expected God to be revealed as a fragile, little baby in need of human care?
- Who could have imagined that the King of the Universe was revealed first to barnyard animals?

God's elaborate plan was far different in Scope, but not in Purpose!

The ultimate reason He came was to SAVE US from our Sin! We needed Rescued.

We've all been there! Some not as bad, others much worse! But we've all needed to be rescued!

You may need Rescued this Christmas...

But maybe it's much deeper than that?

- A Marriage that needs Rescued
- A life of Singleness that's not ending
- The power of Addiction that won't break
- Grief, Loneliness, Depression...

The Great News of Christmas is... you can be Rescued!

I. Christmas is the BEGINNING of God's rescue plan for You!

Ephesians 1:7-8 (NIV)

In HIM we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, in accordance with the riches of God's grace that He lavished on us...

- A. The amazing thing was... this rescue plan wasn't thought up on the spot, but predicted centuries before!

More than 300 prophetic words were given so that we could know that what God promises, God fulfills!

If we are challenged to make predictions, we would keep them as generic as possible.

The Personal Challenge is... Do I feel the NEED to be rescued? Or, "No worries, I got this on my own!"

When we say that, what we're really saying is... What does Jesus have that I don't have? What can Jesus do that I can't do on my own?

The answer begins in this very Special Delivery:

Matthew 1:18-22 (NIV)

This is how the birth of Jesus the Messiah came about: His mother Mary was pledged to be married to Joseph, but before they came together, she was found to be pregnant through the Holy Spirit. Because Joseph her husband was faithful to the law, and yet did not want to expose her to public disgrace, he had in mind to divorce her quietly. But after he had considered this, an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream and said, "Joseph son of David, do not be afraid to take Mary home as your wife, because what is conceived in her *is from the Holy Spirit*. She will give birth to a son, and you are to give him the name Jesus, *because he will rescue people from their sins.*" All this took place to fulfill what the Lord had said through the prophet: "The virgin will conceive and give birth to a son, and they will call him Immanuel" (which means "God with us").

Is this Mis-Direction again?

Joseph had the right to go to the papers on this one, stream it on his podcast, instead he was determined to end the relationship with compassion and grace.

II. What's Significant about the Virgin Birth?

- A. Jesus escapes the sinful nature through the Work of the Holy Spirit! Fully human(sinless), but also Fully Divine!

1 John 3:5 (NIV)

But you know that he appeared so that he might take away our sins. And in him is no sin.

2 Corinthians 5:21 (NIV)

God made him *who had no sin* to be sin for us, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God.

Hebrews 4:15 (NIV)

For we do not have a high priest who is unable to empathize with our weaknesses, *but we have one who has been tempted in every way, just as we are*—yet he did not sin.

It was the Virgin Birth that initiated the Power of the Cross, and the Tombstone to be rolled away! Those would have been rendered Powerless, had not the opening act been based on the Virgin's Birth!

The Sin Issue:

Romans 3:23 (NIV)

... for all have SINNED...

Romans 5:12 NIV)

... sin through one man...

The Gift Revealed didn't look like the expected Gift, but was all sufficient to provide to you and me the greatest gift we could ever receive!

I'm not going to trick you or Hide the Gift this morning, my intention is to place it in front of you to UNWRAP!

What is your need of Rescue today? The Deliverer is HERE!