

Series: **Christmas 2021**

Today's Title: ***"The Reason Jesus was Born"***

December 24, 2021 – *Matthew 2:16*

Objective: To help people know that Jesus was born to fix broken / sinful people.

God uses broken people.

Tonight, we've seen how God used broken people in the events of Jesus' birth.

The mistake people have made throughout history is thinking they're not good enough to be used by God.

People think God only uses people who have it all together.

If that were true, that God only uses people who have it all together...God would never have anyone to use!

Nobody is good enough for God.

Every person is a sinner.

Romans 3:23

"for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God..."

"all" includes all of us!

The good news is God uses broken people.

Question: Have you kept an arm's distance from God - to protect yourself - afraid that He will reject you - so you don't get close enough for that to happen?

If that is true for you - I'm really glad you're here tonight.

I want you to know that God loves you.

I want you to know that your sins - no matter how bad or how many - cannot shrink God's love for you.

I want you to know that even though we're all broken - God wants us - He wants a relationship with you - an eternal relationship with you.

This is why Jesus was born.

He was born - to pay the price for your sin - my sin - so we could have an eternal relationship with God.

In **Matthew's** birth narrative, we see one of the ugliest, most evil actions anyone could ever do.

Murder is bad enough - a horrific evil.

But when little babies and toddlers are murdered - we all recognize that is way past the line.

Pure evil.

Our verse tonight is not usually discussed around Christmas. You'll never find them on a Christmas card, or on an ornament.

They're not usually discussed any time of year, because they're horrific and most people don't know what to do with them.

I want you to understand 2 things about this verse.

The first thing I want you to know and understand is:

- 1) The spiritual battle between God and the Devil is real. It's a spiritual battle that plays out in the physical world.

The birth of Jesus was a direct threat to the Devil. All the way back in **Genesis 3**, God told the Devil that there would be great enmity - great conflict/hostility - between his people and the woman's "seed" (NASB) or offspring.

The Devil knew the prophecies about the Messiah - and he knew this baby boy born in Bethlehem was the promised One - the long-awaited Messiah.

So, the Devil tries to get rid of him ASAP.

The spiritual battle crosses over into the physical world.

Throughout history, the Devil has:

- Tried to wipe out humanity...
- Tried to wipe out the nation of Israel (Egyptian slavery, the book of Esther, Hitler, current hostile nations to Israel) ...
- He's tried to wipe out the royal line of King David...
- He tried to negate Jesus' qualifications to be the Messiah by the wilderness temptation.
- He tried to get Jesus to bypass the cross through Peter's protest about Jesus dying ("Get behind Me Satan" - Matt. 16:22-23) and at the last moment, with the temptations in the Garden of Gethsemane.
- Throughout the past 2,000 years, the Devil has worked to disable, discredit and he's worked to destroy the Church and its ability to share the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

In our verse today - we see a blatant way the Devil tried to get rid of Jesus - to fight against God's plan - by murdering Jesus.

Matthew 2:16

“Then Herod, when he saw that he had been tricked by the wise men, became furious, and he sent and killed all the male children in Bethlehem and in all that region who were two years old or under, according to the time that he had ascertained from the wise men.”

The spiritual battle is fought in the physical world - as Herod, attempting to kill Jesus - murders the innocents.

The second thing I want you to know and understand is:

2) Sin and evil are the reason Jesus was born.

Jesus was born because we are broken. Our world is broken!

Herod was not a good man.

He was unstable - emotionally and mentally unstable - extremely paranoid - and he was evil.

He murdered many of his advisors - he executed one of his wives and 3 of his sons.

vs. 2 - When the wise men showed up and asked, “Where is he who has been born king of the Jews?”, this freaked Herod out.

In Herod's mind, his only option was to get rid of this possible king, but he had to keep his murderous intent secret, so he told the wise men in **vs. 8**:

“Go and search diligently for the child, and when you have found him, bring me word, that I too may come and worship him.”

Worship was never his intent.

But the wise men were warned in a dream not to return to Herod, so when they left, they took another route - and left Herod waiting, with no specific location of the child.

Somewhere in Bethlehem was all Herod knew.

This is why our verse says,

“Then Herod, when he saw that he had been tricked by the wise men, became furious...”

In the Greek, “furious” is in the passive voice - which means his anger was in control of him. His anger was out of control - or better, was in control.

His solution?

“...and he sent and killed all the male children in Bethlehem and in all that region who were two years old or under...”

Scholars estimate, due to the population of Bethlehem at this time in history, that around 20-30 baby-toddler boys were murdered by Herod.

We have no way to know if that number is low...or high.

This shocks us, as it should.

But we need to realize our culture is just as evil - if not more evil.

In our nation - since 1973, it has been legal to murder 62,502,904 babies. (<https://christianliferesources.com/2021/01/19/u-s-abortion-statistics-by-year-1973-current/>)

Abortion is legalized infanticide.

We need to realize that evil does exist.

It's always easier to see evil in others - in what other people do, but hardest to see the evil and sin in our own life - in our own culture.

- Just look at history.
- Read the Bible and the history recorded in the pages of Scripture - and you'll see evil.
- Read books about history - books about historical figures - and you'll come face-to-face with evil - with sin.

Evil and sin exist...and this is why Jesus was born.

This is why God took on flesh - became incarnate.

To save us from our sins.

To be the perfect sacrifice.

Galatians 4:4-5 (NLT)

“But when the right time came, God sent His Son, born of a woman, subject to the law.

God sent Him (Jesus) to buy freedom for us who were slaves to the law, so that He (God the Father) could adopt us as His very own children.”

The birth of Jesus was part of God's plan of salvation.

His plan to redeem the world - humanity - from the death grip of sin and evil.

1 Timothy 1:15

“The saying is trustworthy and deserving of full acceptance, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners...”

As horrific as Herod’s murder of the innocents was - it is also a vivid reminder to us of the importance of Jesus’ birth.

It reminds us of the very reason Jesus took on flesh - to die on the cross - making atonement / payment for the sins of the world.

To have victory over evil...to fix what is broken!

This Christmas - if you’re a Christian - give thanks for Jesus and His sacrifice - worship Him - serve Him. Celebrate His birth - and rejoice in the reason He was born.

If you’re not a Christian - if you’ve never put your faith in Jesus - if you’ve never asked Him to forgive you of all your sins and to be your Savior - then bow your head and receive the greatest Christmas gift you will ever open - and ask Jesus to be your Savior - to forgive you of your sins.

That’s a gift He can’t wait to give you.

Close in prayer.