



THE BIRTH OF JESUS

It's now less than a month until Christmas; are you prepared?

Last time, I encouraged you to consider: what is so good about the promise of Mary's baby boy? This time, we focus on the birth of Mary's boy, Jesus.

Luke records the pronouncement of the angel: "Do not be afraid. I bring you good news that will cause great joy for all the people. Today in the town of David a Saviour has been born to you; he is the Messiah, the Lord. This will be a sign to you: You will find a baby wrapped in cloths and lying in a manger." (Luke 2:10-11)

The surprise of a heavenly being speaking to a group of shepherds tending their sheep and minding their own business must have been, well, pretty freaky! The story of Jesus' birth can draw a variety of reactions. In our day and age, I fear that indifference and irrelevance cause this wonder to wash over people. It is sad, given that this is the greatest of God's wonders, the fulfillment of the greatest of God's promises. As you read these words, what does the birth of Jesus mean for you?

We are taught from a young age that we can achieve anything we set our dreams upon, that anything is attainable. All we need to do is set our aim right, work hard and in time it can be ours. But is this really true? Are we able to achieve all we wish, all we need, in our own efforts? The heart of Jesus' birth is God's answer to that question: NO!

This Christmas, the greatest wonder may appear to be the awesome lights that adorn our homes, or even the opportunity to gather as a community at carols events and church services, which I

hope you may find time to do. Rather, the greatest wonder it is to remember and welcome Jesus, God's promised saviour. Despite our best efforts and intentions, we all need saving. We need Jesus to save us from our sin: our indifference to Jesus, our rebellion against God, our belief that we can live life without Him, the view that we are pretty ok and God will just accept us as we are with no need for God's forgiveness. We need Jesus to rule our lives as King. We need to find our purpose and meaning in Him.

The well-known carol 'Joy to the World' exhorts its listeners with these words: "Let earth receive her King; let every heart prepare Him room," meaning that each person is called to embrace Jesus Christ, as both Saviour and King.

This Christmas, I pray that you and your family would make room in your hearts and homes for Jesus.

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