
What Child is This?

Isaiah 8:19-9:7

Christmas is about God's gift of salvation in His Son, Jesus Christ. Yet, today, Jesus is overshadowed by all the gifts, the busyness, and the merry-making.

Throughout history, man has always wanted a Savior, a deliverer, a peacemaker. But when God sent the Savior at precisely the right time (Isa. 49:8; Gal. 4:4-5; 2 Cor. 8:2), man refused Him (John 1:10-11) for they "love darkness rather than light because their deeds were evil" (John 3:19). Sinful man continues to celebrate in vain because his focus has been on the celebration rather than the Celebrant. Christians, however, can truly delight in celebrating Christmas because Jesus is at the center of their celebration. Let us be reminded of three reasons why the Child born in Bethlehem is special.

1. Because this Child is the One who _____ men from _____, we must _____ the light of His gospel.

In Isaiah's time, people were living in darkness and sin (2 Kings 18). Ahaz, the wicked king introduced idolatry to Israel. Isaiah came into this scene to warn and rebuke Ahaz of the impending judgment (Isaiah 8). Yet, Ahaz and the nation of Israel continued in idolatry (vv. 19ff; 1 Cor. 10:14; Psalm 96:5). Idolatry is sacrificing/worshiping demons (1 Cor. 10:20). But Jesus Christ was given to us to draw men out of darkness (Matt. 4:16; 1 Peter 2:9; John 12:36; Eph. 5:8; Colossians 1:13).

2. Because this Child is the One who _____ men from _____, we must _____ others the way of hope

Isaiah 9:1 says that there's coming a time when Israel's distress is going to end. Historically, God treated Naphtali and Zebulun with hatred and disapproval. Because of their sin of idolatry, God sent the Assyrians to wipe them out. Since then, that area is now known as Galilee. What was once a place of God's punishment now becomes a very special place of promise (v. 2). God's glory of salvation in the work of Jesus Christ began in Galilee. The light of the world shone in Galilee (Micah 7:8; John 8:12, 9:5; 12:46; John 1:4,9). Jesus fulfilled Isaiah's prophecy (Matt. 4:12).

3. Because this Child is the One who is _____ for _____, we must _____ in His rule over our lives

Isaiah shows the distinctiveness of the Child Christ in 9:6-7. He is the Messiah, the perfect Savior of the world. He is perfect because of His humanity, "a Child is born." (Hebrews 2:14; Phil 2:7-8). He became man to die in man's place by bearing man's sin. He became man to feel what we feel and be able to be sympathetic with us (Heb. 4:15ff). But He is also God, "a son is given," His name is called Immanuel, God with us (Isaiah 7:14).

Jesus is also called:

- Wonderful Counselor because He has the answer to man's confusion. He is the source of all truth (John 14:6) and He is all-knowing. He is wonderful in counsel (Isa. 28:29).
 - Mighty God. He is the all-powerful God who is the very source of your life and sustains you with His divine power (Psalm 45:6).
 - Everlasting Father. He is the Father of eternity; He is the father of eternal life for all who believe (John 3:16). Christ has Father-like attributes and Father-like qualities.
 - Prince of Peace. He is our peace who has broken down every wall (Eph. 2:14). He came to bring peace between a man and God (Rom. 5:1); peace in your heart (Phil. 4:7); and a coming peace in His Kingdom (Isa. 2:4). Christ's kingdom will be universal and eternal. He will order and establish it from that time forward, even forevermore.
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This Child in Mary's lap, this Baby Boy born in Bethlehem is born and given to those of us who believe. There is no Savior, there is no hope, there is no peace, there is no everlasting life, there is no wise counsel for those who do not receive and believe in Jesus Christ. But in the midst of this darkness, God offers the only hope, Jesus, His Son. He is the only Savior He provides for you. Have you received God's most precious gift in Jesus Christ? You can today!