

The Reality of His Birth

John 12: 27; 32

We are entering that wonderful time of year surrounding Christmas. No doubt it continues to generate a lot of excitement among young and old. Although we have heard it countless times, we never tire of hearing the marvelous account of our Lord's birth, recorded in Luke, chapter two. The eternal God of heaven, humbled Himself to be robed in flesh, born of a virgin womb. The lowly shepherds came and worshipped the Christ child. Later wise men from the East came, bearing gifts of gold, frankincense, and myrrh.

As miraculous and wonderful as the account of Jesus' birth is, we can't leave Him in the manger. While I rejoice that He was willing to come to this earth in the form of a man, I realize His birth alone was not sufficient. If we had Bethlehem, but no Calvary, we would yet be in our sin, eternally separated from God. Had Jesus not been willing to bear our sin, enduring the judgment we deserved on the cross, we would have no means of salvation. Had He not risen triumphantly from the grave, we would have no hope or assurance of eternal life. It cannot be disputed that Jesus came to earth with purpose – to die for the sin of humanity, reconciling us to God.

As we enter the Christmas season, I hope we are reminded of the reason for His birth. While it would be possible to celebrate Christmas without considering the cross, being reminded of His great sacrifice will certainly enhance our celebration. I want to consider these [affirmations](#) of Jesus as we think on: [The Reality of His Birth](#).

I. The Burden of Calvary (27) – *Now is my soul troubled; and what shall I say? Father, save me from this hour: but for this cause came I unto this hour.* As we begin to consider these profound statements, we need to be aware of their context. This immediately followed the Triumphant Entry. Jesus is nearing the end of His life here on earth. His crucifixion is just a few short days away. Jesus reveals the great burden He felt at this moment. Consider:

A. His Pain (27a) – *Now is my soul troubled.* This carries the idea of being “*agitated, pressured, heavy, weighed down, and greatly stressed.*” I am sure we all have been troubled in our spirit before, feeling the pressures and anxiety of current circumstances, but none have been burdened as Christ was. Bear in mind, He was God in flesh. He had never known sin; there had never been a single moment when His fellowship with the Father had been broken. He had lived a perfect, Spirit-filled life. He was well aware of the struggles He would soon face. Jesus knew He would bear the sin of the world in His body. He knew He would face the agonies of the cross and taste the wrath of God as the sacrifice for humanity.

- This was just the beginning of the burden Jesus would carry on our behalf. Not too far in His future, He would again be in agony while praying in the Garden of Gethsemane. [Matthew 26:38-39](#) – Then saith he unto them, *My soul is exceeding sorrowful, even unto death: tarry ye here, and watch with me.* ^[39] And he went a little further, and fell on his face, and prayed, saying, *O my Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me: nevertheless not as I will, but as thou wilt.* The agonies He felt were repulsive to His flesh. He dreaded the horrors to come. This was not a prayer of rebellion, but one of honesty before the Father. He knew there was no other means of salvation, but He dreaded the suffering to come. [Luke 22:44](#) – *And being in an agony he prayed more earnestly: and his sweat was as it were great drops of blood falling down to the ground.*

B. His Perception (27b) – *Now is my soul troubled; and what shall I say? Father, save me from this hour.* Jesus was well aware of the necessity of the cross. His sacrifice on the cross was in view from eternity past. Mankind would have sought every means possible to escape the horrors of a cruel cross. Jesus was one with the Father; He was God robed in flesh. He knew He had the ability to call for the angels of heaven in deliverance. [Matt.26:53](#) – *Thinkest thou that I cannot now pray to my Father, and he shall presently give me more than twelve legions of angels?*

- No doubt, as Jesus hung on the cross, the angels in heaven were prepared and waiting. Had Jesus given the order, they would have responded in obedience. However, Jesus was willing to obediently submit to the death of the cross for the redemption of humanity. He knew there was no other way for us to be saved from sin and reconciled to God! [Heb.12:2](#) – *Looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith; who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God.*

C. His Purpose (27c) – *but for this cause came I unto this hour.* Surely the disciples were struggling with these words of our Lord. He was the promised Messiah. They had hopes and ambitions of a renewed kingdom. They could not fathom the thought of Him dying on a cross and being removed from their presence. Jesus affirms that His death was the reason for His coming. He had lived His life for that moment. He had come to earth to give Himself as the sacrificial atonement for sin. Jesus was born to die. [Acts 2:23](#) – *Him, being delivered by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, ye have taken, and by wicked hands have crucified and slain.* [Isaiah 53:10](#) – *Yet it pleased the LORD to bruise him; he hath put him to grief: when thou shalt make his soul an offering for sin, he shall see his seed, he shall prolong his days, and the pleasure of the LORD shall prosper in his hand.*

- One cannot properly view Christ apart from recognition of the purpose for His coming. Many are pleased to accept Jesus as the healer, the miracle worker, the water walker, a great teacher, or the humble babe, and yet most refuse to embrace Him as the crucified Lamb. I am

certainly thankful for all of the great miracles our Lord performed and the profound wisdom with which He spoke, but had He not been willing to die for my sin, I would not benefit from any of those attributes. Living a miraculous life was wonderful, but that alone would not have provided for our salvation. In order for us to be saved from sin and reconciled to God, Jesus had to die!

II. The Benefit of Calvary (32) – And I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all *men* unto me.

Although the disciples have yet to fully comprehend all that Jesus has said, Calvary is just a few, short days away. He is focused on the cross and the work of redemption. He reveals the great benefit of the cross for mankind. Consider:

A. The Person of the Cross (32) – Jesus declares that He must be lifted up from the earth, and that He will draw all men unto Himself. He does not refer to the sacrifice of another. He knew He alone could provide for the redemption of men. This was His cup to drink, and He knew He must drink it. He had come for this purpose, and He knew He must remain obedient to the end.

- As we consider the first advent, we must also consider the Man upon the cross. There was no other means of salvation. This was not a task that another could perform in His stead. Jesus is the sole means of salvation. There is no other way! There is no other Savior! He is not a good way of salvation. He is not the best way to obtain salvation. Jesus is the only way of salvation!
- We must never forget the personal sacrifice Jesus made on our behalf. He bore our sin and shame as He hung upon the cross. He drank the cup of God's wrath for us, enduring the judgment we deserved. He suffered in our place to obtain our salvation!

B. The Payment on the Cross (32) – And I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all *men* unto me.

Likely the disciples failed to understand the enormity of these words. Jesus was in fact referring to the coming crucifixion, where He would be lifted up, between heaven and earth, on a cruel cross for our sin. Jesus was well aware of the agony and punishment He would soon endure. He would be scourged mercilessly with a cat of nine tails, beaten beyond recognition. He would be nailed to a cross and crucified before His accusers. He would literally offer Himself as the payment for our sin. The innocent would die so the guilty could live.

- His coming to this earth was of humble means, but His death would be horrific. I do not share this today to disrupt pleasant thoughts of our Savior's birth, but to remind us of the great love and compassion He revealed for all mankind. He suffered unimaginably to secure our salvation. As we celebrate His birth, let us also be thankful for the great price He paid. [1 Peter 2:24](#) – *Who his own self bare our sins in his own body on the tree, that we, being dead to sins, should live unto righteousness: by whose stripes ye were healed.*

C. The Provision of the Cross (32b) – **And I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto me.** Jesus knew His coming death would provide the means of salvation for all who look to Him by faith. His payment would make the way of salvation for fallen man. While Calvary would be horrific, His obedience would provide salvation for those separated in sin. This was His purpose for coming and Jesus was pleased to provide for our salvation.

- As thoughts fill our heads of angels and shepherds around a manger in Bethlehem, may we also be reminded of a hill called Calvary? It was there that Jesus secured our salvation. It was there the ransom was paid and the wrath of God was satisfied. He died on the cross for our sin, providing the means of our salvation. What love was shown for us as our Lord bled and died in our place!

Conclusion: As we began to consider these verses, I spoke of the tragedy of leaving Jesus in the manger. That reveals the birth of our Savior, but it doesn't reveal His redeeming work. Jesus lived a sinless life and died for our sin. He purchased our redemption on the cross. Have you responded to the call for salvation? Do you know Jesus as your personal Lord and Savior? If so, rejoice in Him. If not, come to Him in faith and repentance.

While leaving Jesus in the manger is a tragedy, leaving Him on the cross is also a tragedy. His death on the cross was not the end. He rose triumphant over sin, death, and hell. Because of that we have the assurance of eternal life in Him. He is coming again for us. We have the promise of life beyond the grave. As you celebrate Christmas this year, take time to celebrate all that Jesus is!