

Why Christmas, Why Jesus? We Need Him – Rom 3:9-18

Rom 3:9-18. This is the 4th and final week of our Christmas series titled *Why Christmas, Why Jesus?* Shorthand for “Why do we *celebrate* Christmas” . . .

And “Why did Jesus come in the first place?”

For those of you who already *know* him, who are already saved, I hope to increase your *love* for him; and gratitude.

And for those of you who *don't*, I hope you will. I hope you'll be *saved*. I hope you'll call on the name of the Lord and enter into a relationship with him.

In fact, toward the end of our time together I'm going to give you an opportunity to do just that – to pray and be saved.

➤ So let's start with the facts of Christmas. **(Intro)**

Jesus was born around 5BC. True. The result of a miscalculation in setting the calendar centuries later.

And born to a virgin in the town of Bethlehem, he was immediately worshipped as a king; whose kingdom would never end.

Which is why Herod the Great, the *reigning* king, had all the *babies* in Bethlehem killed. He was trying to protect his throne.

But Mary and Joseph *escaped* with Jesus, and fled to Egypt. Where they lived until Herod died ~4BC. And then returned, to settle near the Sea of Galilee . . .

In a town called Nazareth.

But it wasn't until the age of 30 that Jesus started his *formal* ministry. And spent the next 3 years traveling around Israel with his 12 Disciples, preaching and teaching. Saying the kingdom of God was at hand, and urging people to repent and believe.*****

But *that* came to a screeching halt when he was arrested and crucified on a cross.

Only to rise again 3 days later, appear to over 500 people with *many proofs*, and then ascend back to heaven 40 days after that.

Those are the *facts*.

➤ But facts without a purpose are like a movie without a point. Ever sat through one of those? It's the *purpose* Jesus came that matters. The why *behind* the what.

Namely, that we need him.

Why Christmas? Why Jesus? We need him. And we need him, because . . .

We're sinful and Jesus forgives (Rom 3:9-18)

Rom 3:9. The Apostle Paul is writing, and asks – *What then? Are we Jews any better off* [himself a Jew]?

He's just been talking about the advantages of having the Law and the prophets, and asks, “Are we any better off than the Gentiles or Greeks who *don't* have them?”

No, not at all [he says]. *For we have already charged* [already shown] *that all, both Jews and Greeks, are under sin, [10] as it is written: “None is righteous, no, not one* [as in, no one measures up to God's perfect standard of holiness]; *[11] no one understands; no one seeks for God* [not apart from his work in their life]. *[12] All have turned aside; together they have become worthless; no one does good* [not in the ultimate sense, of glorifying God in their heart], *not even one.” [13] “Their throat is an open grave* [exposing the

death and decay of their soul]; *they use their tongues to deceive.” “The venom of asps* [snakes] *is under their lips.” [14] “Their mouth is full of curses and bitterness.” [15] “Their feet are swift to shed blood; [16] in their paths are ruin and misery, [17] and the way of peace they have not known.” [18] “There is no fear of God before their eyes.”*

Apart from Jesus, that's all of us. We're sinful through and through.

Not only because of what we've done and do, but because of who we are. Our *sin nature*.

➤ Several years ago I met a guy who told me that he grew up in a God-fearing home, and went to a Bible-believing, Bible-preaching, Christ-exalting church much like ours. And never really went off the deep end in terms of rebellion or sin.

But it wasn't until age 17 that he came to Christ. And when I asked him why it took so long, if he grew up in such a solid home and church, he said . . .

“I didn't think I needed to. I thought I was fine. I didn't drink, I didn't smoke, and I didn't run with the crowd who did.”

In other words, he didn't think he *needed* forgiveness. In *his* mind he wasn't that bad. His sin nature was completely lost on him.

➤ Meanwhile, the Scripture is clear. *None is righteous, no, not one* (10). *All have turned aside* (12). All have turned away from God.

Fortunately, Jesus came to forgive. **(1 John 1:9)**

If we confess our sins [the Bible says], *he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.*

He's faithful and just to no longer hold our sins against us.

Faithful and just to create in us a *clean* heart and a *right* spirit.*****

If we admit it. Confess it.

We're sinful and Jesus forgives. That's the first reason we need him.

2nd . . .

We're enemies and Jesus reconciles (Rom 5:9-11)

Did you know that? The first part? That because of your sin and God's wrath toward it, you were born his enemy? Turn the page to Rom 5:9-11.

[9] Since, therefore, we have now been justified by his blood [he's speaking to believers, those of us who are *already* forgiven and saved; since we've been declared righteous, justified, because of Christ's death on our behalf], *much more shall we be saved by him from the wrath of God* [implying we're his enemy; the very thing he states in v10].

[10] For if while we were enemies we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son, much more, now that we are reconciled, shall we be saved by his life. [In other words, Jesus reconciles us to God by his death, and saves us by his resurrection.] *[11] More than that, we also rejoice in God through our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom we have now received reconciliation.* [It's not just relief that we feel and experience when Jesus reconciles us, but joy. We rejoice in God.]

The point being: apart from faith in Jesus, we are and remain, enemies of God.

You are no friend of God if you haven't been reconciled to him through faith in his Son; faith in his death and resurrection on your behalf.

And you never win. You never *win* as an enemy of God. You never succeed.

You may *think* you are. You may *think* your future's bright.

But God is all-powerful, all-knowing, and everywhere present.

Which means there's not a single place you can go to *escape* him, nor a single thing you can do to thwart him as your enemy.

So why not relent? Before it's too late. Why not surrender?

Why not cross over from death to life, and win?

Why not be reconciled, and rest? It's why Jesus came.

Third . . .

We're enslaved and Jesus redeems (Rom 6:20-23)

Rom 6:20-23. Paul continues in his explanation of our need for Jesus, and uses slavery as a *metaphor*, to do so. To urge us to present ourselves as slaves of *righteousness* . . . Instead of slaves of sin.

[20] *For when you were slaves of sin* [before you believed in Jesus and *repented* of your sin], *you were free in regard to righteousness* [you had nothing to do with it]. [21] *But what fruit were you getting at that time from the things of which you are now ashamed?* [What good was the sin doing? What profit was there?] *For the end of those things is death.* [22] *But now that you have been set free from sin* [redeemed] *and have become slaves of God* [devoted to him], *the fruit you get leads to sanctification* [holiness] *and its end, eternal life.* [23] *For the wages of sin is death, but the free gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.* In relationship with him.

Apart from faith in Jesus and repentance of your sin, you're enslaved to it. In its grip.

And if your *own* life isn't proof enough, look no further than chapter 7. Where Paul *himself* laments his sin. Saying in v15 . . .

For I do not understand my own actions. For I do not do what I want, but I do the very thing I hate. He was enslaved.

And v19 – *For I do not do the good I want, but the evil I do not want is what I keep on doing.*

And then cries out in v24, “*Wretched man that I am! Who will deliver me from this body of death? Who will rescue me? Redeem me?*”

Thanks be to God through Jesus Christ our Lord! Jesus redeemed him.

And he'll redeem *you* if you want him to. It's why he came.

We're enslaved, but Jesus *gave himself for us to redeem us* (Titus 2:14). Gave his life as a ransom to *free* us. So that we can sing that old hymn by Fanny J. Crosby. (*Redeemed*)

“Redeemed how I love to proclaim it, redeemed by the blood of the Lamb.”

“Redeemed through his infinite mercy, His child and forever I am.”

That's why Jesus. He redeems us from the grip of sin, and delivers us to a life of righteousness. A life eternal. A life in him.

Aren't you *tired* of being enslaved? Tired of the sin, and the guilt, and the struggle? Only to do it all over again. Sin, guilt, struggle, repeat?

If so, turn to Jesus. Let him *redeem* you. It's why he came.

Fourth . . .

We're condemned and Jesus pardons (Rom 8:1)

On the heels of that famous verse in John 3:16, it says a few verses later (**John 3:18**) . . .

Whoever believes in him [referring to Jesus] *is not condemned* [is not judged as guilty; he's pardoned], *but whoever does not believe is condemned already* [currently under condemnation; and facing judgment], *because he has not believed in the name of the only Son of God.* (Jn 3:18)

He hasn't embraced the fact that Jesus is indeed what his name means – Savior.

When we're born, we *start* our lives in a state of condemnation. Because our nature is sinful, and we don't trust Jesus for *anything*. Let alone salvation and life.

But when we do, when we *do* trust him, when we *do* believe in him, he *lifts* that condemnation and *relieves* our guilt. *Pardons* us.*****

Which is why Paul says in Rom 8:1, arguably the pinnacle of the entire Bible . . .

There is therefore now no condemnation [no guilty verdict, no judgment] *for those who are in Christ Jesus.* (Rom 8:1)

Those who are in *relationship* with him. Those who are safe and secure in his embrace. His charge. His presence.

No condemnation remains when you believe in Jesus. No judgment looms. No guilt applies.

You're saved. Safe. Pardoned.

If you believe.

How about it? Are you condemned, or pardoned? Honestly.

And last, are you lost or found? That's the final reason he came.

We're lost and Jesus saves. (Lk 19:10)

Implied by the angel in those famous words at his birth – *Unto you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, who is Christ the Lord.* (Lk 2:11)

And reiterated by the Apostle John *after* the fact. *We have seen and testify that the Father has sent his Son to be the Savior of the world.* (1 Jn 4:14)

It wasn't just anybody that God sent, but a Savior.

Implying, that we're in trouble; we're lost. And *need* saving.

Just like the presence of an ambulance implies that someone's hurt. Or the presence of a fire truck, that there's a fire. Or the presence of a plumber, that there's a clog.

God sent a Savior because we're lost, and need to be found. Need to be saved.

And sure enough, Jesus himself said so. **Luke 19:10.** *The Son of Man* [a title Jesus often used of himself] *came to seek and to save the lost.*

That's why Christmas. That's why Jesus. He came to seek and save the lost.

Which describes every single one of us.

Every single one of us is lost and needs to be found.

Every single one of us is wandering and needs help.
Every single one of us is drifting and needs rescue.
Every single one of us is grasping for something sure; desperate for something safe.

Why do you think so many *religions* have been invented over the centuries? Because people *long* for something secure, something certain.
Why do you think so many people go to such great expense to *amuse* themselves? And devote so much time to it? From gambling to video games.
Why do so many go to such extremes to *numb* themselves? With drink, or drugs, or TV.
Why? Because they're lost and need to be found. Desperate and need to be saved. *****

➤ I want to show you the testimony of someone in our church, who realized that 12 years ago this *week*.
It's a video we shot back in 2011, and captures so much of what I've been saying, I can't help but show it again. Take a look. (**God@Work video** – Nelson, 2011)

I'll never forget the Party with the Pastors shortly after that, when John introduced himself to me by saying, "Hey, do you know me?"
And I was like, "I don't think so."
And he was like, "I accepted Christ as my Savior Christmas Eve. You looked right at me." And so began a journey that continues to this day.
All because he admitted his need for Jesus. His need to be saved. His need to be found.

➤ How about you? Have you admitted *your* need? That *you're* lost?
I hope so. Because if you haven't, you're flirtin' with disaster.
Where the desert of your life will never end, and the water of life will never appear.
It'll just be one step of futility after another, while you convince yourself that the *next* mirage is real. The next relationship will satisfy. The next activity, fulfill.

The way to be found by the Savior who seeks, is to admit that you're lost; admit that you're sinful, enslaved, condemned. (**Summary**)
And then believe in Jesus, and call on him to save you.

If that's you, if you know that's *exactly* what you need to do, pray with me right now.

Prayer (floor) – Just call out to him in the quietness of your heart, right where you sit.
"God, I admit it. I admit that I'm lost and need to be found."
"I admit that I'm condemned and need to be pardoned."
"I admit that I'm sinful and need a Savior."

"And I believe Jesus is the one."
"I believe he died for my sins, to pay for my redemption, and pardon my guilt."
"I believe."

"So I'm calling on him right now."
"Jesus, please forgive me of my sins, save my soul, and take over my life."
"I confess you as Lord and Savior." (Response)

Pray – Lord, your grace never ceases to amaze me. Will you seal and protect those who just gave their life to you? Will you keep them from the evil one? Will you fill them with your Spirit and a desire for your Word? Knit our hearts together and connect us as one. And multiply our joy for all you've done. We pray, in Jesus name, amen.