



## Reclaiming Christmas

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### **Introduction:**

Reclaiming Christmas, celebrating more with less has been our theme throughout this Advent season. We have talked about hope, peace, joy and today we want to talk about doing more with less this Christmas because of our Savior. **1 John 4:14 (NLT)** Furthermore, we have seen with our own eyes and now testify that the Father sent his Son to be the Savior of the world. **Luke 2:11-12 (NLT)** The Savior—yes, the Messiah, the Lord—has been born today in Bethlehem, the city of David! And you will recognize him by this sign: You will find a baby wrapped snugly in strips of cloth, lying in a manger.”

Names have meaning. Some of you were named after your dad or mom, or a grandparent, or favorite uncle or aunt. Names are important. When we had our boys, we went through a process to choose a name for each of them that was strong, sounded good, had significance and both Julie and I liked. Names are important to the people of the Bible. The name Jesus means, “Jehovah our Savior”. It is the New Testament equivalent of the Hebrew name, Joshua, Yeshua or Hoshea. Jesus bore His name as an expression of the Savior-God that the New Testament says He is.

Jesus is the Name whereby we must be saved. **Acts 4:12 (NLT)** There is salvation in no one else! God has given no other name under heaven by which we must be saved. Jesus is the name that is to set the tone of everything a Christian does. **Colossians 3:17 (KJV)** And whatsoever ye do in word or deed, *do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God and the Father by him.* Jesus is the name at which, one day in the future, every knee shall bow. **Philippians 2:10-11 (NLT)** ...that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.

Isaiah predicted a coming messianic age marked by world peace. He saw a world government in the last days that would turn the eyes of the international community on Jerusalem. He also described the coming of a Servant-Ruler who would bring a mysterious blend of power and suffering.

So the name of Jesus or Messiah is significant. The New Jewish Encyclopedia defines the Messiah as a modified form of the Hebrew word, Mashiah meaning “anointed” applied in the Bible to a person appointed for such a function, such as a High Priest or King. Later the term Messiah came to express the belief that a redeemer will in the end bring salvation to the Jewish people and to the entire human race. The anticipation of national deliverance through a person anointed by God has been a theme of Judaism throughout the ages.

One of the prophecies about the Messiah who would come is that he would suffer – [Isaiah 53:2-8](#). If you were an oppressed and dispersed people hoping for a conquering king as the Jewish people were in AD 70 then [Isaiah 53](#) would not be very encouraging. Passages such as [Daniel 7:13-14](#) would be much more appealing. This regal and victorious description of Messiah has been the expectation of many people for Millennia. Jewish people of faith have held onto the tradition and promise of a deliverer, a Savior who would throw off the yoke of oppressive governments and establish an indestructible kingdom on earth.

Even the New Testament mirrors the hope of a Messiah seated on a throne: [Luke 1:32](#)

## I. Traits of the Savior - Messiah

When the angel announced to the shepherds that the Lord, the Savior had been born, he also announced that the sign of the Savior would be the baby lying in a manger with swaddling clothes. This was how they were to know they were looking at the Messiah. This was the anointed one of God who would bring them redemption, deliverance, healing and salvation. The picture of a baby helpless and new born, hardly conjures up the picture of a deliverer, a redeemer, the conquering one. How can one who seemed so helpless save others?

I was thinking about a Savior this week. What are the traits of the Savior and what is it that a Savior does? To me a Savior is:

- Brave – willing to stare at death, at harm for the sake of another.
- Strong - it takes strength to fight, to lift, to carry, to break through, to defend life.
- Loving – it takes love of life to save life.
- A Risk taker – it takes risking everything for someone else.
- A Protector – stand against intruders, stand for life, liberty.

As I thought about all this I realized that those who are saved, who experience salvation, have escaped from some disaster, from death; they have been helped when they were in a place where they were

not able to help themselves. The person who helped save them is the one we call a savior, a hero, a person who stood between that individual who doubtless would have perished without their intervention. One doesn't take lightly someone who brings them deliverance, one who snatches them from destruction, one who rescues them from certain death.

I thought of people who have been in avalanches, stuck on mountains, fallen into caverns, those in car accidents, fires, or someplace where they were helpless and their hero came along and saved them from death.

Every person has been there. Maybe not in a physical sense, but all human beings find themselves in the same position spiritually. It is a position of helplessness to rescue. It is in a position of certain death. It is in a position of danger and without one to rescue us, we would all perish.

God knew that there was no possible way we could save ourselves, so He spoke through prophets about a Savior. Listen to a couple of those prophecies that were spoken centuries before the fullness of time for Jesus to be born. **[Isaiah 43:10 \(NLT\)](#) But you are my witnesses, O Israel!” says the Lord. You are my servant. You have been chosen to know me, believe in me, and understand that I alone am God. There is no other God— there never has been, and there never will be. [Isaiah 59:20 \(NLT\)](#)**

**The Redeemer will come to Jerusalem to buy back those in Israel who have turned from their sins, says the Lord. [Jeremiah 23:5 \(NLT\)](#) For the time is coming, says the Lord, when I will raise up a righteous descendant from King David's line. He will be a King who rules with wisdom. He will do what is just and right throughout the land.**

## **II. Traits of the rescued**

**Thankfulness, purpose, service, sometimes overcoming fear, questions like, “Why me?” and determination to rescue others.**

There are times when people who have been rescued change careers or the focus of their lives after such an experience. They determine that their life was spared for a purpose and they want to do what they can to serve and save others who find themselves in similar situations.

My message to you this morning is this – a rescuer has come. The Savior is Christ the Lord. He fulfills all the traits of a Savior. He is brave; he has stared at death and defeated it. He is strong enough to overcome the consequences of your sin, whether by default or purpose. He risked His life, in fact, He died in the process of rescuing you, but He didn't

## **Conclusion:**

So how can we celebrate more with less this Christmas? Celebrate your salvation. Celebrate your hero, Jesus Christ. Celebrate the life you have in Him. Celebrate the Joy and Peace and Hope that His coming brings. In that way, you will truly have a MERRY CHRISTMAS and even though you may have less this Christmas, you will be able to celebrate His birth more than ever!

stay dead. He rose in victory to give you a hope and future. He is a protector, one who stands against intruders that would destroy your faith, your spiritual well being, your liberty. HE IS THE SAVIOR.

## **III. What should be our response?**

First of all we should be thankful for what He did to rescue us. Then we should serve others. We have a purpose for life. The purpose is not just for enjoying the life we have been given, but for bringing the Savior to those who are in similar circumstances as we were; lost, weak, dying, no way out. We are to share with others what a great Savior He is who can rescue each one who places their trust and faith in Christ alone.

We need to overcome our fears and quit asking questions like, “Why me?” and have the determination to use every means possible to bring the Savior to those who need His help and salvation. **[Luke 1:69 \(NLT\)](#) He has sent us a mighty Savior from the royal line of his servant David... [Zephaniah 3:17 \(NLT\)](#) For the Lord your God is living among you. He is a mighty savior. He will take delight in you with gladness. With his love, he will calm all your fears. He will rejoice over you with joyful songs.**