

Immanuel

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[0 : 00] Now let's turn in our Bibles to the chapter of God's Word, which we read, the Gospel of Matthew chapter 1.

The Gospel of Matthew chapter 1, and as God would help us, I'd like to concentrate on verses 20 to 23.

Matthew chapter 1 at verse 20. But as he considered these things, behold, an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream.

Saint Joseph, son of David, do not fear to take Mary as your wife, for that which is conceived in her is from the Holy Spirit.

She will bear a son, and you shall call his name Jesus, for he will save his people from their sins.

[1 : 03] All this took place to fulfill what the Lord had spoken by the prophet. Behold, the virgin shall conceive and bear a son, and they shall call his name Emmanuel, which means God with us.

These verses are a birth announcement with a difference. A birth announcement with a difference. Do you find it strange that the angel here tells Joseph to call the child Jesus because it has been prophesied his name shall be Emmanuel?

Do you find that confusing? We read it. You will call his name Jesus, for it is prophesied his name will be, they shall call his name Emmanuel.

What is the explanation? Well, the explanation is very simply that both really mean the same thing.

[2 : 25] You cannot be saved from sin unless God is with you and unless God is in you.

Jesus means salvation or being saved from sin. Emmanuel means God with us.

Now, if anything sticks out there in its lists, sin separates from God. And that's what the human race did in the Garden of Eden at the very beginning, at what is called the fall of mankind, the fall of the human race.

We turned our back on God and said, we'll go it alone without you. We need God again.

Only if God is with us, only if Christ indwells us, are we able to be saved from sin.

[3 : 36] So here is God, who so loved the world, he wants to save us from our own sin. And in order to do so, he has to send his son, the Lord Jesus Christ, into the world to pay the price of our sin by being crucified upon a cross.

Now, isn't it salutary to note that Jesus Christ arrives from heaven into this world entirely unsolicited by those he came to save?

Nobody on earth cried out to God, please send us a savior from heaven.

It wasn't heard. And yet, the only voices singing when Christ comes into the world are the voices of those he did not come to save.

The angels. There's no verse in the Bible which says God so loved angels. The astonishing thing is God so loved the world.

[5 : 04] He sent his son. He gave his son to the horrific horrors of crucifixion. That we warns of the dust.

That we might be forgiven. That we might be saved. And he comes and indwells us. Now, if there is one thing that Christ's coming into this world, or Christ's incarnation as it is called, if there's one thing Christ's incarnation highlights, it's Christ's ability to identify with common people.

Christ, there's no one like Christ that can identify with common people. Just think about it. Just look, and this is the reason I read through all these names in the genealogy of Christ.

Look how Christ includes, includes in his genealogy, harlots and adulteresses.

Now, that is really quite astonishing. What have we got in the first chapter of Matthew, in the genealogy of Christ?

[6 : 31] We have a list of names of fathers, with four exceptions.

And the names of the wives that are mentioned, were either harlots, adulteresses, or a pagan Moabite.

Ruth, the Moabite S, is the only one that has not committed adultery or fornication. Now, tell me, in a list of fathers, why does the Spirit include four mothers?

In a list of fathers. No need to mention it. No need to mention the mothers. But you see, Levi, Matthew, is under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit when he writes.

And the Spirit jogs his elbow and says, put in Judah, the father of Zerah, by Tamar.

[7 : 45] Do you know what Tamar did? Do you know how she lived? You'll find it in Genesis chapter 38. Her harlot. You read there, the father of Boaz, by Rahab, a prostitute.

You read there, Obed, the father, by Ruth, a Moabite, who worshipped pagan gods. Was the Lord's, of course, but that's their past.

That's their history. And you have David, the father of Solomon, by the wife of Uriah. Oh, you say, do you need to put that bit in?

That sad, sad history of David. Do you need to record it on a list of fathers? What's the Spirit meaning? He's meaning this.

Christ. Christ can identify. Christ is not ashamed to call us brethren. Isn't that amazing?

[8 : 55] Isn't that wonderful? She's not given us hope. He's not ashamed to call us brothers and sisters. Despite our past. Maybe you're here today and you say, well, I could never be a Christian with my past.

Utter nonsense. Just read the first chapter of the New Testament and you have it there. God's anxiety, as it were, to let you know, I'm sending my son to save sinners.

I will identify with sinners. So keen to sanctify them. So keen to save them from their sins. So keen to sanctify them.

Jesus can identify. Jesus can identify with those in extreme poverty. He was very, very poor, you know.

He didn't have a home. He didn't have a bed. He didn't have an income. It's said, it's not written in the Bible, but it's, tradition tells us that his father was bankrupt and he spent the first 30 years paying off his debt.

[10 : 16] Now as I say, that's not in the Bible. We don't know. We're told that. Secular history would say it. What the Bible does say extremely clearly is that they were very, very poor.

Very poor. Because the two turtle doves was what they came to present as a sacrifice. And that was only acceptable before God if you were extremely poor.

Christ can identify with the poor. Christ can identify with refugees. Just read the next chapter.

As a babe running, escaping for their life to Egypt. The flight there to Egypt. Christ can identify with asylum seekers and refugees.

Christ can, you know this, Christ can identify with those of whom there's a question mark over who their real father is.

[11 : 19] Can you imagine the local press? Virgin says the real father's God. Can you imagine the field day the skeptics had?

They questioned or they didn't. They didn't believe Mary. Question mark over who the father is.

Christ can identify. My friend, if Satan's saying to you Christ won't have you, tell him he's a liar. And tell him to read Matthew 1.

It's interesting. The very point, the very point where you might feel Christianity is not for you is very possibly the very point where Christ can most identify with you.

He's come to save all kinds and all types of sinners. Why do you think the angels are singing just now?

[12 : 27] He came to save humans, angels, are singing. Why? Well, salvation is for all. But I think the angels are singing because a 4,000 year old promise has now been fulfilled.

That promise made in the garden of Eden that the seed of the woman would bruise the head of the serpent is now fulfilled. isn't 4,000 years a long time to wait for a promise to be filled.

Are you complaining how long you have to wait for a new minister? My old congregation has now gone on for seven years. Is that long? The first promise was 4,000 years and been fulfilled.

filled. But you must remember this. With God one day is as a thousand years and a thousand years as one day.

96 hours he took to fulfill that 4,000 year promise. 96 hours in God's timepiece. That's God.

[13 : 51] That's the one we're dealing with. God is so different from you and me. So above us. Time is vitally important to you and me.

God can wait. God can wait. But I think the angels are rejoicing that a miracle was performed. They're singing. A 4,000 year old promise has been fulfilled. A miracle has been performed. And I don't think it's so much the miracle of a virgin birth.

Miracle though that is of course. I think the miracle is this. The miracle is God so loved the world. He passed by angels.

angels. No wonder angels desire to look into these things. when an angel in the period and the time past eternity when angels sinned.

[15 : 03] No one no savior was sought for for them. No hope. But for human beings God decided to pay the cost of giving his son to Calvary.

Isn't that wonderful? Isn't that worth singing about? You know we make preparations for a king. I live in Stonyfield on the road down to the Isle Air monument.

We'll be trying to get the counselors to give us a new road. trying for months. All of a sudden last week the road is tarmacked.

What for preparing for a future king? The prince going down to the Isle Air monument. We all make preparations for arrival of royalty but here's the king of kings and it's a stable.

It's a cow shed. But my friend that's nothing compared to where he ended. A cruel cross that God so loved the world he sent his son into this world.

[16 : 28] Now I want to go back to this what we mentioned at the very beginning. To call on Jesus because he'll save his people from their sins because it was prophesied that his name will be Emmanuel God which means God with us.

As we said earlier you cannot separate these two concepts. Jesus saves from sin. God and sin cannot go together.

Salvation is deliverance from sin. That's what salvation is. And we are saved by Christ coming to dwell in us.

To live in our hearts. So there's war with sin from that moment onwards. Now we ask a question in what sense does Christ save us from sin?

I want to mention briefly just four and they all begin with the letter P. Christ saves his people from the punishment of sin.

[17 : 50] God has sworn that sin must be punished by death. the wages of sin is death.

And as we were saying to the children God wanted to pay the price of our sin but God can't die. So God had to become man so that he could die.

But sin has to be paid for in blood. Do you think that's a bit over the top? a wee bit OTT?

Every sin? Death? Really? Yes. And if you think that's over the top, it tells us what you think of God. What you think of holiness. That's what it tells us. It is that abominable thing which God hates.

[18 : 54] sin has to be paid for. You see the fearful thing about sin is who it is against. Sin is against God. People define sin wrongly.

People say what's wrong with two people jumping into bed together if they're both happy about it?

What's wrong with it? Nobody's doing any harm. They're both happy. What's wrong with it?

It's against God. That's what's wrong with it. Sin isn't what we don't like. Sin is what God prohibits. And the punishment is death.

That God so loved the world he sent Jesus to die for us. I often think that Friday afternoon of the crucifixion there was three crosses and there was three people been crucified.

Not just one. Three. What was it that was different with the one in the middle? What was it that made the centurion cry out?

[20 : 08] The centurion who was probably the centurion in charge of crucifixions and that Friday happened to be crucifixion day and he looked at them and Jesus cried out with a loud voice it is finished and then the centurion said then truly he was the son of God now I know for sure he's the son of God why what made him think that why was it not the one on the left or the one on the right because being a centurion very familiar with crucifixions he knew that crucified men do not shout with a loud voice if crucified men speak at all it's an a whimper and they don't bow down their heads when they die they lift up their heads to gasp for breath but that one in the middle the centurion so he's different he's different he's the son of

God he is paying for sin and he dismissed his own spirit into thy hands I commend my spirit so Christ saves from sin in as much as he takes the punishment of sin but secondly he saves from sin from the power of sin the power of sin to dominate have you ever tried giving up sin isn't it difficult isn't it hard it's got a power and you and I just don't have the power to mortify it but Christ has Christ has and he delivers us from the power of sin to dominate our lives it still exists but it doesn't dominate

Christ dominates the Holy Spirit dominates and Christ saves his people from the power of sin to dominate their lives saves from the punishment he saves from the power thirdly he saves from the pleasure of sin in the last analysis in the last analysis why do you sin in the last analysis why do you sin do you get up have you ever I think it's John Piper that gave the illustration do you ever get up in the morning and say well I'm born in sin I'm shaping I better sin today I better do this and I better do that today I'm born a sinner is that the way you sin why do you sin because you think you'll enjoy it because you think it'll pay off you think it'll be worth it

Satan deceives us into thinking there's pleasure in it only Christ can take away that pleasure if you're here today and you're still enjoy sin you need Christ you need Christ to take away the pleasure of sin it needs a supernatural power and you do not have it you must ask Christ to come into your life and take away the pleasure which you get in sin Christ Christ alone can take away the punishment he's taken it away the good news of the gospel is not Jesus can save you but Jesus has reconciled sinners to Christ to God he has done it done the work finished but you must believe you must have faith in him you must trust him he alone can take away the punishment he alone can take away the power to dominate he alone can take away the pleasure which it gives us but fourthly Christ alone can take and save us from the presence of sin finally as long as we are in this world the presence of sin will remain but at death only at death are sinners released from the presence of sin and that is something we should be grateful for and that's what will make heaven so sweet so joyful so real so true delivered from the presence of sin and only Christ can do it and only Christ can do it because he died not because he was born he had to be born so that he could die but only Christ's death only

[25 : 59] Christ's work at Calvary can take away sin and that's why John the Baptist said behold the Lamb of God that takes away the sin of the world and you know this where does he take it where does he take our sin away to he takes it away to a place where it can never be found are you trying to get rid of some sin you've committed in your life and you can't get rid of it only Christ can take it away to a place where it cannot be found even by God God has sworn he will not find it again if it's in Christ because he took it away well as we close our final message essentially surely is this the world got it wrong about

Christ's birth didn't it how they get it wrong how they got it wrong about his birth how the world got it wrong about his life it misunderstood his life how the world got it wrong about his message they didn't understand his message they didn't know what he meant how the world got it wrong about his death how the world got it wrong about his resurrection how they got it wrong they didn't believe it but listen friends whatever whatever you do don't get it wrong about his return the world got it wrong about his birth his life his message his death his resurrection don't get it wrong about his return he's coming back he's coming back oh yes he's coming back a savior but not only a savior he's coming back to wind up history he's coming back to wind up history he's coming back to judge the world to claim his own as his own to take his people home to glory glory be among them be among them he's coming back to take his people home to glory be among them are you a sinner you're qualified for his salvation you'll call his name

Jesus for he will save his people from their sins may God the Holy Spirit make his truth his word effectual to every one of us let's bow our heads to Lord ament to each Außerdem b the everybody to sta vain bye oh all