

You shall call His name Jesus

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Preacher: Wayne Thiessen

- [0 : 0 0] Good morning. Merry Christmas. Is it a little early yet? We are privileged to celebrate the birthday, the birth of our Savior.
- It always brings about excitement as we get to this time of year, or at least it does for me, and I trust for you as well.
- And often I ponder why maybe more so than Easter or Pentecost. And as I kind of thought about that, you know, the first promise in Scripture that God would provide a Messiah was in Genesis chapter 3.
- And 4,000 years later, God brought it to pass. 4,000 years of Old Testament history. And so we have a reason to celebrate as God brought about the Savior.
- And of course later, the cross and the resurrection and the ascension. But it started with the birth as God revealed Himself to us.
- [1 : 2 8] And so, welcome here this morning as we have a message on this season. I'm going to start the message today and finish on Christmas morning, Lord willing.
- And I've entitled it, You Shall Call His Name Jesus. You Shall Call His Name Jesus. The Instructions from God.
- Did God do enough to reveal our sinfulness to us, our need of a Savior?
- Did God prepare the world to receive His Son? Is that a fair question? And the answer to that is why did God wait 4,000 years to bring about salvation?
- Why did all the believers before Christ hope in what was yet to come? And part of the answer is God was preparing the world to receive.
- [3 : 0 0] God was preparing our hearts to realize that we are sinful beyond help from within ourselves.
- He left no shadow of a doubt that mankind cannot redeem themselves. And so, my answer is, yes, God did do enough.
- Absolutely. And through all the time periods, the dispensations from creation to the birth. Everything God did revealed mankind needs help.
- We have fallen. We have fallen from grace. And so, from relationship with Him. And if that's the answer, the second question then that I have is, why do so many reject Him?
- Why do so many reject Him if He has prepared the world? If we think the world under Satan's influence is more aggressively than ever pushing away the meaning of Christmas?
- [4 : 2 9] There is greater effort every year, it seems like, to minimize the truth of the season.
- And even, sadly, in many Christian circles, Christmas is being watered down. As we attempt to humanize what God did to understand humanly.
- And the miracles involved in God bringing about salvation, we cannot all understand. But by faith, we accept God did these things.
- So, as we look at Matthew chapter 1, I kind of divided it into a couple of parts.

And so, God's prediction or prophecy of the coming Messiah. God's preparation for the Messiah.

[5 : 35] And then on Christmas morning, God's presentation of the Messiah. God's presentation of the Messiah. Lord willing. And so, we want to look at our passage.

And we're going to do it a little bit backwards. We're going to start with the last half of the passage that was read by Ben. As looking at the prophecy.

And so, verse 22. So, all this was done that it might be fulfilled, which was spoken by the Lord, through the prophet, saying, Behold, the virgin shall be with child and bear a son, and they shall call his name Emmanuel, which is translated, God with us.

And then Joseph, being aroused from sleep, did as the angel of the Lord commanded him, and took to him his wife. And so, Matthew, in his writing, ends this passage with saying, This, by the way, was prophetic.

It was prophesied in the Old Testament, and we have been prepared to receive it. We should know this.

[6 : 58] It's like Matthew is saying to the Jews, God has told us this would happen.

Our hearts need to be ready. And so, this prophecy is in Isaiah 7. And we're going to turn to a number of prophecies in the Old Testament just to see some of God's direct predictions.

Isaiah 7. Very familiar one. Isaiah 7. And verse 14.

And the backdrop here is, the context is King Ahaz, an Israel king, in Isaiah's day. And so, this is like 700 and some years before Christ.

He is facing war from the Syrians. By the way, the country of Syria collapsed here in the last weeks.

[8 : 11] But this same, the Syrians, they were coming against Israel, and as Ahaz turned to God, God gave him a promise.

And first, in verse 11, he says, the Lord says to Ahaz, ask a sign for yourself from the Lord your God. Ask it either in the depth or in the height above.

But Ahaz said, I will not ask, nor will I test the Lord. And then he said, hear now, O house of David, is it a small thing for you to weary man?

But will you weary my God also? Therefore, the Lord himself will give you a sign. Behold, the virgin shall conceive and bear a son and shall call his name Emmanuel.

Now what does the word Emmanuel mean? God with us. What was he telling King Ahaz? I will be with you through this conflict with Syria.

[9 : 30] I will not forsake you. I will not abandon you. And if we would just read Isaiah, perhaps we would not think ahead to the birth of Christ.

But God gave him a sign, literally meaning, I will be with you. I will be in your presence. And in Isaiah's day, the virgin gave birth.

And so on. This happened for real. But going back to Matthew 1, Matthew clearly shows the connection. It had a dual meaning in that it played out in Isaiah's day, in King Ahaz's day, and in Matthew's day, when the Lord was born.

The Lord, or God with us, is the meaning of Emmanuel. So very, very clear prophecy that God would bring this about, that he himself would come and tabernacle or dwell with mankind.

If you flip the page in Isaiah to chapter 9, it's the next one in Isaiah 9.

[11 : 01] And it's in response to the gloom and darkness of their day. Of Israel and the gloom of their day.

And maybe, you know, we look at Israel today. They have been victorious in their victories in warfare.

And yet, they are suppressed on every side. And they're feeling kind of the gloom of being the target of the whole world.

It seems like every country in the world would like to see them disappear. Well, in a sense, this prophecy in Isaiah, they felt the gloom back there.

And largely because of their own rebellion and sin turning against God. But there, Isaiah gets the message that there will come about a light into the world.

[12 : 03] And in verse 6 and 7 conclude that, for unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given, and the government will be upon his shoulder, and his name will be called Wonderful, Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.

It leaves no room for discretion. But this is not talking about God himself.

No human would fit this. Not in any time period. And so, of the increase of his government and peace, there will be no end upon the throne of David and over his kingdom to order it, establish it with judgment and justice.

From that time forward, even forever. And the zeal of the Lord of hosts will perform this. So this prophecy extends past the birth of Christ and looks forward to the millennial kingdom where Christ will set up his throne and the increase of his government and peace, there will be no end.

It's yet to come. So, for unto us a child is born. That's happened 2,000 years ago. And the end of that verse is yet to come.

[13 : 41] But it's the range of Christ's ministry to his people. So, prophetically, God has been preparing his people for this message.

Another very familiar one, Micah 5, verse 2, spelling out the location. I'm going to turn there, Micah 5, 2. Micah 5, 2.

And Micah speaks about the redemption of Israel. There's hope for you. God has a plan for you. And then in 5, verse 2, he says, But you, Bethlehem, Ephrathah, though you are little among the thousands of Judah, yet out of you shall come forth to me the one to be ruler in Israel, whose goings forth are of old from everlasting.

And as we look at the whole scene, how God brought things about, he picked, he showed his humility and in humble ways brought about the Savior.

And Bethlehem was not, did not have the glamour of Jerusalem. And it was a little town off to the side. There's a lot of history in Bethlehem in Scripture, and yet it was largely insignificant.

[15 : 28] And here the prophecy is that out of you, Bethlehem, though you are little, the Christ child will be born. Not in Jerusalem, not in the temple, not in a grand place, but in Bethlehem.

And as Jake shared, no room at the inn. In Bethlehem in a barn. in a cradle.

And so, God again being very specific. And later, as the wise men came to inquire, this is the Scripture that they went to.

Where will we find this king? The Christ child. And of course, it's accurate. And it totally prophesied.

Hosea 11, verse 1, turning back to Isaiah 11, 1. When Israel was a child, I loved him, and out of Egypt I called my son.

[16 : 36] And that too is prophetic. It has a double meaning in that when Israel was a child, the nation of Israel was a child, I loved him, and out of Egypt I called my son.

And so, when Egypt or when Israel was in its infancy or beginnings as a nation, God redeemed them out of Egypt, out of bondage.

As his firstborn, as God's chosen, he redeemed them out of Egypt. And he brought them out with a mighty hand. But then later, so from Moses' time, 1,500 years later, when God has Joseph flee to Egypt with the baby Jesus to escape Herod, and then when he returns upon Herod's death, Matthew 2 says, out of Egypt I have called my son.

And so, Isaiah and even the Red Sea crossing is prophetic of what God would do on Christmas time.

He would call his son out of Egypt. So, Israel was a prophetic symbol to Jesus coming out of Egypt.

[18 : 09] So, we see God has much prophecy in the Old Testament that was fulfilled. And so, teaching his people to know and to expect.

My awe of God goes up as I as the scriptures become clearer, as I realize the details that God has used to bring things about.

There's two verses I want to quickly reference. Deuteronomy 29.29. I should be able to quote it because it was a Bible school memory verse, but I don't quite trust myself.

Deuteronomy 29.9. He says, the secret things belong to the Lord or God, but those things which are revealed belong to us and to our children forever, that we may do all the works of this law.

It's a verse that says that there are things that God keeps to himself that we do not understand, but there are other details God gives us that we may understand us and our children and why that we may obey him, that we may live in obedience to him.

[19 : 51] So God has revealed to us the things that we need to know. And then in Romans 15, we'll quickly turn there as well.

Romans 15. It's a verse that corresponds to verse 3 and 4, Romans 15.

For even Christ did not please himself, but as it is written, the reproaches of those who reproached you fell on me.

For whatever things were written before were written for our learning, that we through the patience and comfort of the scriptures might have hope.

So these things in the Old Testament are also written for us, that we might learn and realize the fulfillment of God's plan.

[21 : 03] And what does it do for us? It gives us hope. As we understand the scriptures, we're filled with hope. We realize the accuracy, the preciseness of God's keeping his word.

And so these are little nuggets in scripture that reveal how God has dealt with mankind. Let's turn back to Matthew chapter 1.

So that's the explanation in the second half of our passage. Behold, the virgin shall be with child and bear a son and they shall call his name Emmanuel.

But let's go back to verse 18. And this is God preparing the arrival of his son. Now the birth of Jesus Christ was as follows.

After his mother Mary was betrothed to Joseph, before they came together, she was found with child of the Holy Spirit. Then Joseph, her husband, being a just man and not wanting to make her a public example, was minded to put her away secretly.

[22 : 26] But while he thought about these things, behold, an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream, saying, Joseph, son of David, do not be afraid to take to you Mary, your wife, for that which is conceived in her is of the Holy Spirit.

And she will bring forth a son, and you shall call his name Jesus, for he will save his people from their sins. So we have the first part where God is now actively fulfilling his promises, his prophecies.

And as I looked at the birth of Christ and his childhood, or his infancy, I counted no less than nine interventions, all of them divine or miraculous surrounding Christmas season.

Nine of them. And there may be more, but as I prepared here, I counted nine of them. And I'm going to run through them, some of them just briefly mentioned.

But the first one, the first couple are in Luke chapter 1, and it's where the angel Gabriel first visits Zacharias.

[23 : 50] And it's Luke chapter 1, it's in verse 5 to 25. I'm not going to read this portion, but Zacharias being priest, him and Elizabeth, and being old in age and childless, childbearing years.

And we often kind of overlook that. But it's no less a miracle that they would give birth in their old age to the forerunner of Christ, John the Baptist.

It's no less of a miracle than Abraham and Sarah having a son Isaac. They were past childbearing years.

Jesus. And the same thing happened here as God brought that about. Why is that important that John the Baptist came? Because Malachi chapter 3, verse 1 tells us that God will send a forerunner to prepare the way for the Messiah.

So this was God's first intervention into mankind to bring it about. God's first life. And as we look at this, it's interesting that as Jesus took on becoming a man, becoming a human, being fully God and fully human, not only did God become like his creation, he used creation to bring it about.

[25 : 37] God's birth. And he moved his people at his will to bring about the events of this miraculous birth.

And so John the Baptist coming, as prophesied, was step one. And he used Zacharias and his wife Elizabeth in their old age.

And the second one is also in Luke 1, and I'm going to read verse 26 and on for a bit. Now, in the sixth month that the angel Gabriel was sent by God to a city of Galilee named Nazareth, to a virgin betrothed to a man whose name was Joseph of the house of David, the virgin's name was Mary.

And having come in, the angel said to her, Rejoice, highly favored one, the Lord is with you. Blessed are you among women. And when she saw him, she was troubled at his saying, and considered what manner of greeting this was.

And then the angel said to her, Do not be afraid, Mary, for you have found favor with God, and behold, you will conceive in your womb and bring forth a son and shall call his name Jesus.

[27 : 03] He will be great and will be called the son of the highest, and the Lord God will give him the throne of his father David.

And he will reign over the house of Jacob forever, and of his kingdom there will be no end. Now let's just pause there. Ladies, if God sent a messenger to you and said, you will bear my son, how would you respond?

The men can't answer this. How would we respond? and Mary very likely in her teens, very young, not ever having had children.

You know, it's something to think about. and this young lady obviously was in faith towards God.

The Savior had not been born yet, but she believed God. And when this angel came and gave her the message, her response was positive. She embraced it.

[28 : 38] And I think after the angel left, she had lots to think about. And so on. But how many of us would be overwhelmed? I will be the mother to God's perfect son?

But I'm human. But I will make mistakes. God, are you making a mistake? You know, those kind of thoughts.

Yet God chose Mary to be the mother to the Savior of mankind. Mary's response to the angel, how can this be since I do not know a man?

That was the first problem. Mary was a virgin. She was not married. She was betrothed, engaged. And that was her first this can't be.

And then the answer. the Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the highest will overshadow you. Therefore also that Holy One who is to be born will be called the Son of God.

[29 : 55] And then now indeed Elizabeth, your relative, has also conceived a son in her old age, and this is now the sixth month for who was called barren. For with God nothing will be impossible.

And what's Mary's answer? Behold the maidservant of the Lord. In other words, God, here I am at your service.

Do as you please. Let it be to me according to your word. And the angel departed. And so Mary, her life changed from being a normal teenage young maiden about to get married to becoming the mother of our Savior.

And so much to think about, much to change. And then as we think a little further on this, and as the angel left, and Mary is maybe thinking things through, what I envision is that in the weeks that followed, and as she realized all of a sudden, I don't know if she had morning sickness or not, but as she realized she's pregnant, then the awful thought, how and what will I tell Joseph?

Joseph? she was human. How will he believe me? For humanly, this makes no sense.

[31 : 43] The only human reason is that I cheated on him. And I think Mary, Scripture doesn't tell us, but it's very likely she dreaded.

How am I going to tell Joseph? How am I going to break this to him? How will he believe? And so Luke 1, or Matthew 1, of course, gives us some detail.

So that's the second miracle, both of them involving the angel Gabriel, bringing about the birth of the child. The third one is back to Matthew 1.

Matthew 1. And in verse 18 and 19, now the birth of Jesus Christ was as follows.

After his mother Mary was betrothed to Joseph, before they came together, she was found with child of the Holy Spirit. Then Joseph, her husband, being a just or upright man, and not wanting to make her a public example, was minded to put her away secretly.

[33 : 01] And so now Joseph is wrestling with this. And Mary has told him. And maybe it's obvious already physically that she is with child.

And he being a just man, one that has faith in God, he is now wrestling between believing Mary's story of this angel coming and being impregnated by the Holy Spirit, and humanity.

My parents, my friends, society, culture, all the evidence points Mary cheated on me.

And so Joseph goes through a dilemma. And as he's pondering and trying to work this out in his mind, what am I going to do?

Because to expose her publicly means Mary is shunned. And at that point, I don't believe the Romans allowed for stoning, but the Old Testament law would call for stoning.

- [34 : 22] And so it was drastic. And so Joseph decides, I can't do that. And so that tells us not only does he love Mary, he wants to believe her.
- He wants to believe her, and yet he needs a little help from God, because humanly this is impossible. And that's where God intercedes in the third miracle.
- said, And while he thought about these things, behold, an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream, saying, Joseph, son of David, do not be afraid to take to you Mary, your wife, for that which is conceived in her is of the Holy Spirit.
- So God intervenes and gives Joseph clarity, understanding, that he can do the right thing. And Mary was right.
- And now Joseph hears it for himself also from an angel. And so Joseph is now able to take Mary to be his wife.
- [35 : 36] Against all of culture and society, who would have demanded that you put her away, Joseph now decided to follow God and do what God asked him to do.
- To take this young woman pregnant to be his wife. And so faith is in the picture big time, as Joseph believes God and does as he says.
- As God used these human figures, it was not easy for them. He stretched them big time. And as God uses us, we get stretched.
- And it's always a test of faith. Will God provide and give strength for what he asks us to do?
- God and each one of us, we need to answer that. And I trust many, if not all of us, have already experienced it and maybe numerous times.
- [36 : 56] But God is faithful and he does provide when he asks us to do something. And it just grows us and matures us as he does that.
- So, Joseph was given understanding and enabling him to do what's right. And these things happened in preparation.
- Now, I'm just going to list and briefly mention the other scriptures centering around the birth that involve miracles.
- The shepherds in Luke 2, which we'll look at on Sunday, or not Sunday, on Christmas Day, on Wednesday, the shepherds got divine notice by the angels.
- there is a Savior born in Bethlehem. Is that a miracle? Absolutely. God divinely came down and spread the good tidings.
- [38 : 07] And the shepherds were the first to hear, and they went to worship, and when they worshipped, they went back and spread it around. The good news. So, that's number four.
- Luke 2 later on has Simeon, and it says the Holy Spirit revealed to him that he would not die till he would see the Savior.
- He was sure, wasn't he? He was confident. God had revealed it. Is that divine intervention? Absolutely. Yeah, and very likely Anna, the prophetess, the same way.
- We have less details there, but they knew as God had told them. In Matthew 2, 1, the wise men coming from the east, the astrologers, God said, what caused them to travel for months, to come and worship, to follow a star?
- Was that human? Absolutely not. God very clearly moved them to come and worship and to make that effort.
- [39 : 35] in my mind, it is no less of a miracle that these were motivated to go to a foreign country and to worship the newborn king, even though it may have been a full year or more later when they arrived.

And these wise men obeyed God, so it speaks of faith as well, as they made the effort and the expenses to journey all that distance.

And then as they come to Herod and then they're told in Bethlehem according to Micah, and then as they worship right after they are divinely, it says divinely warned in a dream not to return to Herod.

God intervenes again. And he says don't go back, Herod's going to kill him. Go home another way. God came down, intervened.

And then right after Joseph is warned by an angel, take the child and flee to Egypt. Another divine intervention as God spoke to him.

[40 : 57] And to protect his plan of salvation. And then after Herod dies and Joseph has in his heart to return to Judea, perhaps to Jerusalem, to reside, he is warned again in a dream not to go there but to go to Nazareth.

And like the prophet said, he will be called a Nazarene. And so that is a total of nine times surrounding this story where God came down upon mankind and gave them a message.

And so do we make light of this Christmas season or of God's plan here? We see miracles all the way through it.

And sometimes the biggest one is that he was able to use humanity to fulfill his purposes. As we close this morning, let's focus for a moment on the verse 21 in Matthew 1.

And she will bring forth a son and you shall call his name Jesus. And what does the word Jesus mean? Jesus. Jesus. Jesus.

[42 : 20] Jesus. Jesus. Jesus. Jesus. Jesus. Jesus. Jesus. Jesus. Jesus. Jesus. Jesus. Jesus. Jesus. Jesus. Jesus. Jesus. He saves. It literally means Jehovah is salvation.

He saves. I think in Hebrew it's pronounced Jesus. Jesus. And literally Jehovah is salvation.

And so she will bring forth a son. You shall call his name. Jehovah is salvation. Why? For he will save his people from their sins.

And as we think of Jesus as our Savior, perhaps it's good for us to think why do we want him as our Savior?

To save us from what? From a bad marriage? from ourselves?

[43 : 32] Okay. You know, I often hear various reasons. Well, if you turn to Jesus, he will save you from poverty.

Or he will save you from your addictions. sins. And the list would go on and on. But our text tells us, he will save you from your sins.

And if we look to Jesus for anything else but to rescue us from our sinful condition, from the penalty of our sin, then we're off track.

And there is a lot of teaching out there. If you come to Jesus, your problems are solved. Life will be smooth, a bed of roses. We are believers here this morning.

We know that's not true. And God does not take away all our troubles, but he sees us through them. But he came to save us from our sinful humanity, our condition of sin.

[44 : 56] Not only from our individual sins, but from the fact that we're sinners. And that we sin by our very nature, our fallen nature.

And that was Jesus' purpose. As we see that, as we recognize that, and as we break before God and bow to that, and turn to him, invite him as our savior of our sin, it's then that God restores us into a right relationship with him back to that who was lost in the garden, that Adam and Eve, as the head of mankind, experienced the fall, were restored back.

He shall save his people from their sin. And we're reminded of that. As we acknowledge that, peace, joy, hope, and love are restored.

we have tasted it. And the Advent readings that were done again this morning, those four words are there.

We have peace with God, we are now filled with joy, because our sin is forgiven, and we're restored with God, relationship-wise.

[46 : 39] And we now have hope for the future, and we are filled with the love of God. And so, out of that, all of a sudden, our marriages will strengthen.

God will help us with our struggles, our addictions, our issues. God will make us, with a little bit of pun, filthy rich with spiritual blessings.

With spiritual blessings. And some of God's children are wealthy financially as well. As his stewards.

but to all, God desires to restore us. And so, that is the purpose. So, as we just maybe ponder in these things, the question, what is Jesus to me?

Is he my savior from my sin, first and foremost? May the Lord bless you and keep you and strengthen you.

[48 : 09] Let's pray. Father, it is a privilege and a joyful one to celebrate Christmas.

It's not December 25th necessarily, but it's, it marks the event, Lord, where you brought about the savior of mankind. Thank you, Lord, for being so clear in revealing to us our sinfulness.

Lord, as we react in gratitude and thankfulness, may it motivate us to continue to spread the good news of why Jesus came, that others too may be able to make that decision to turn to Christ, the savior of the world.

We praise you, Father. We thank you in the name of your son. Amen.