

Nativity Service

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[0 : 0 0] As was said at the start, this wonderful account of Jesus' birth comes from the first two chapters! of Jesus' life as authored by a certain Dr. Luke, who we all have heard of this year.

! And as we've heard so wonderfully from these guys, those two chapters, those two chapters, tell us all about Mary and Joseph, the angels in Bethlehem, and then where we have just arrived at, the shepherds. And then just before Luke moves into chapter 3 and gets into the rest of Jesus' life, he finishes the Christmas chapters by telling us that when Jesus was eight days old, Mary and Joseph, there's our Mary and Joseph, they took baby Jesus to the temple, to the church, same thing for today back then, so that they could dedicate, commit baby Jesus' life to God.

And Luke tells us that when they, Mary and Joseph, and baby Jesus, arrived at the temple, that an elderly gentleman, very old, had lived his whole, older than Gerald, if you can believe that, had lived his whole life in the temple, praying and seeking the Lord. And he was waiting there.

And Luke tells us that this Simeon character, when he sees Mary and Joseph and baby Jesus coming in, when the parents brought in the child Jesus, that Simeon took baby Jesus in his arms and praised God, saying, now don't miss what he says here, all of us, adults, everyone amongst us, don't miss what he says, because he says, sovereign Lord, as you have promised, you may now dismiss your servant in peace, for mine eyes have seen your salvation.

salvation. Mine eyes have seen your salvation. Salvation. Let's think about it for one second.

[2 : 5 9] Google says, salvation is the act of being saved from harm, destruction or loss. And I suppose the greatest form of loss that any particular person could be in is to be lost from our creator.

Lost from God. Because, think about it, we all begin life, from this age up, with no faith in God.

Those of us who believe in God, choose to do so as we grow up. But until one does, you are in effect lost from God.

Because by not believing in him, you can't know him. So one is lost. Lost from his presence. Lost from his friendship. From his home in heaven.

And so how? How does one get saved? From being lost from God. Well, it's very, very simple.

[4 : 1 4] You do the opposite. You believe. Believe in Jesus. Jesus is God. God on earth with us.

And so Simeon's words now make sense. Mine eyes have seen God's salvation. Because Jesus is God.

So if, if we believe in him, follow him, love him, then we're no longer lost from God.

And therefore, we also enter his home of heaven. Salvation. That's the salvation Simeon is talking about here.

And so having now laid eyes on Jesus, Simeon says, God, you can now take me home to heaven. And I always marvel when I read that part.

[5 : 14] Because for some people, their highest desire is to see the seven wonders of the world. or the highest peaks or even the whole world. Simeon wasn't so timid.

His absolute highest desire was to lay his eyes on the actual creator of the entire world.

Simeon looked for and found Jesus. And having found Jesus and having believed in him as God, he was now saved.

And since then, millions of people all across the world from every nation, tribe, and tongue have found peace, joy, and salvation by simply just believing in Jesus.

The Bible line that these guys so wonderfully finished on summarizes it all up. For God so loved the world, i.e.

[6 : 22] for God loves people, humanity, us in here right now, so, so much that he gave his only son, i.e. Jesus at Christmas time God's only son, that whoever believes in him, anyone, everyone, you, me, if we believe in Jesus as God, shall not perish.

We will no longer be lost. Lost from God, lost from his peace, lost from his forgiveness or his heaven. But have everlasting life, the last part of the line.

I.e. you will now be found. Be friends of God, be forgiven, go to heaven, be saved, have salvation. Jesus.

Jesus. The world has never known a heart so pure, a mind so clean, a character so flawless, an attitude so graceful, a personality so forgiving.

He was so merciful, he never missed an opportunity to forgive. No lie left his lips. No worldly distraction marred his God-based lifestyle.

[7 : 41] He reached out and helped when others recoiled and pushed back. He patiently endured when others gave up and quit. He persevered with the people society gave up on.

He was the loveliest, gentlest, most kindest and caring one to have ever walked the earth. So good, so peaceful, so kind, that historians summarized him up as as gentle as a lamb with no sin at all.

And the greatest and best news you will hear today is that he is still doing this today. From the heavens above, Jesus is still offering his friendship, offering his salvation to anyone and everyone who simply just believes.

and so this Christmas make your highest ambition to find God and to do so. All you simply need to do is have they finished with just believe.

Just believe. It was absolutely fantastic. I really enjoyed getting the grips of the Christmas stories for you guys. It was beautiful. Gerald's going to come up and round us off in some prayers for a moment and then we're going to have another couple of songs and then we'll let you guys go and have some fun again, okay?

[9 : 02] Although this is fun as well, isn't it? Just get myself organized here.

It's nice to know I'm still younger than Simeon. Okay, let's turn to God in prayer. Let's just pray together. Heavenly Father, we do thank you again for this morning.

We thank you for each child and we know that it's only as we receive Christ like a child with a simple faith that we can be saved.

Lord, Jesus came into the world, the light of the world, but the world did not receive him. But to all who did receive him, he gave the power to become children of God.

And Lord, all we have to do is believe in your name. Lord, we do pray for each child this morning who's here and those who can't be here with us. Lord, just pray that each one would find the saviour for themselves as they grow up.

[10 : 12] Lord, each one is precious to you and we do long to see them following Jesus for their whole lives. Lord, we commit them to you. Pray that as they grow older and perhaps one day move on from this church that they would remember the things that they've learned and Lord, that they would turn to you.

We do thank you for the work of the Sunday school teachers and leaders and for those in crew and for Cresce as well and we do pray that each child would be blessed by those who teach them and help them.

And Lord, we do pray that you continue to encourage those who serve the children in this way. and Lord, we thank you that you, when Jesus came into the world, he grew up and showed people.

He showed compassion to the poor, to the sick, to the needy and Lord, even today, we know who are needing help in one way or another. At this Christmas time, Lord, we realize many material things that people are in need, that people are poor, people are hungry, people are, from yourself.

Lord, in this area, in the city, throughout this country, Lord, there are people that somehow the message of Christmas would come to them, that they would learn that there is a saviour in the world who can save them and meet their needs, whatever they may be.

[11 : 41] Lord, we thank you for the distribution of the John's Gospels around the city and we do pray that many who receive those would read them and find in those Gospels the way of salvation that we've already heard, that all we have to do is to believe and we will become, we will be saved.

Lord, we pray for those who are sick and not with us today. We particularly remember Dorothy and William, but we know there were others too who are suffering from illness one way or another.

We just pray you'd bring peace, you'd bring comfort and wherever you're world, you'd bring healing. Lord, we thank you again for today. Thank you for the special time that it is when we remember the coming into the world of the Lord Jesus Christ.

And Lord, bless each one of us today as we go forward after this service. In Jesus' name we pray. Amen. Amen. A couple of beautiful worship songs here.

Glorious Light followed by Meek Blood. That we... One, two... Glorious Light see the dawn of salvation Angels in white filled the skies with their wondrous song Awakening earth with news of His birth Join the hymn of the highest heavens Long as the world thought the song of the angels And the music is drunk by a pouring...