

December 12, 2021 James Gallaher Advent: Jesus will return.

Jesus was born into a world in chaos and born into obscurity as very few people were there. But this was the predicted coming with thousands of years of prophecy up to this moment. The first was uttered to Adam and Eve in the garden in the words of One who will come to restore all that sin had broken.

How often our focus is on this small part of this story - the birth of Jesus. Yet, the birth was not the beginning but the fulfillment of God's plan of restoration - to restore the broken relationship from the result of sin. This birth often viewed as the beginning, is the fulfillment of what had been promised. We can't begin or end at the birth of Jesus. Jews were told to look for the Messiah as are we told to look for a King. The Jews had grown weary of anticipating the Messiah, so no one was prepared when He came and they missed it.

The New Testament gives us the same warning of the returning of this King. Jesus went back to Heaven to prepare for us. The NT tells us to be ready. **Matthew 24:44** *For this reason you must be ready as well; for the Son of Man is coming at an hour when you do not think He will.* **Isaiah 9:6** *For a Child will be born to us, a Son will be given to us, And the government will rest on His shoulders; And His name will be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Eternal Father, Prince of Peace.*

When Jesus returns, He will return as victorious King as is promised. Are you prepared? What if this was the moment of His return? Would it be a surprise? Would you be upset?

What came before Jesus' birth is important and so is what came after.

- Jesus birth gave way to His life;
- His life gave way to His death;
- His death gave way to His burial;
- His burial gave way to His resurrection;
- His resurrection gave way to His appearing;
- His appearing gave way to His ascension;
- His ascension gives way to His return;
- At this moment, we are waiting for His return with His Word to us... *Be prepared.*

Have you made Jesus Lord of your life? There is a Savior, Jesus, who died, who rose again with victory for each one of us. Jesus paid for our sins - sins that we are guilty of. We need Jesus and to submit our lives to Him. **John 10:9-10** *that if you confess with your mouth Jesus as Lord, and believe in your heart that God raised Him from the dead, you will be saved; for with the heart a person believes, resulting in righteousness, and with the mouth, he confesses, resulting in salvation.* Salvation involves a recognition that He is God and we are not. We are sinners and cannot do anything to pay for our sins, but Jesus laid down His life as a payment for our sin.

John 1:12 *But as many as received Him, to them He gave the right to become children of God, to those who believe in His name.*

Is your life chaotic? Are you worried about what is to come? Do you feel like your life wasn't supposed to be this way? Jesus came to change us. Can we allow transformation to restore and rebuild the broken relationships in our lives? Jesus came to save, restore, redeem and transform. What needs to be transformed today? Where are you in need of a breakthrough from God? in a job? a relationship? something deep within?

We celebrate Jesus' birth and His life but it's not the complete picture. Salvation is at the forefront just like Jesus' birth but Jesus came to give so much more - abundant life. **John 10:10** *...I came so that they would have life, and have it abundantly.* Abundant life is with transformation; it's constantly making our lives look more like His. We want to become more and more like Him.

Scripture instructs us to be prepared. The beginning is to know where each of our eternity stands, to accept the perfect peace that Jesus Christ offers. You can know you have eternal life by confessing Jesus as Lord. We can be certain as we ask God to forgive us and become Lord of our lives. Make this your prayer:

Dear Lord Jesus, I believe that You are the Son of God. I believe that on that cross You took my guilt, my sin, my shame, and You died for it. You faced hell for me so I wouldn't have to and You rose again to give me a place in heaven, a purpose on earth, and a relationship with the Father. Today, Lord Jesus, I turn from my sins to be born again. And now God is my Father, Jesus is my Savior, and the Holy Spirit is my helper, and heaven is my home. Amen

Are you prepared for His return?

We are all in need of transformation - what does God want to change in your life?

How can we help others to see that celebrating Jesus' birth is fulfillment and also about His coming again?