

He is Christ the Lord

Luke 2:1-14, Is 53:1-6

TITLE

“The Special One” You’ve probably heard of this man Jose Mourning.

MOURINHO

He’s a football manager. He calls himself the special one because he believes he has outstanding talents for managing football teams. Not famed for his modesty then! He used to manage Chelsea before they sacked him because they thought he wasn’t special enough! He now manages Real Madrid who are finding him equally un-special.

The best way of gauging whether someone is special or not is if others find someone special. Even better, someone is special if God makes them special. And that was the announcement of the angels we read about this evening. They announced the coming of God’s special person. The Christ God’s anointed one

VERSE

That’s what the angel announced to the shepherds. *This very day in David's town your Saviour was born-- Christ the Lord!*

CHRIST, MESSIAH = THE ANOINTED ONE

Christ (Heb: the Messiah.) means “the anointed one”. In the OT people were anointed with oil when they were tasked by God to do a special job – a priest or king. One of the reasons we have readings from the OT at services like these is that hundreds of years before Jesus was born, the prophets foretold of a Messiah, a Christ, a special one. He would draw all nations to God, not just the Jews.

In fact there are over 300 prophecies in the OT relating to who the Messiah would be. It even went down as far as a description of His death on the cross. This passage always seemed enigmatic to the Jews because even though the prophecies spoke of an anointed one, we read of not just a king who draws the nations to himself, but also one who suffers deeply

IS 53

1 Who has believed our message and to whom has the arm of the LORD been revealed?

2 He grew up before him like a tender shoot, and like a root out of dry ground. He had no beauty or majesty to attract us to him, nothing in his appearance that we should desire him.

3 He was despised and rejected by mankind, a man of suffering, and familiar with pain.

Like one from whom people hide their faces he was despised, and we held him in low esteem. Surely he took up our pain and bore our suffering, yet we considered him punished by God, stricken by him, and afflicted.

But he was pierced for our transgressions, he was crushed for our iniquities; the punishment that brought us peace was on him, and by his wounds we are healed. 6 We all, like sheep, have gone astray, each of us has turned to our own way; and the LORD has laid on him the iniquity of us all.

These were words uttered hundreds of years before Jesus, yet they describe vividly what Jesus was all about.

The baby we celebrated this evening was the Messiah that was crucified. And why? We are described like sheep who have gone astray. We run away from God and got ourselves lost, doing our own thing in the way that we please.

Are you running from God tonight? You know you need answers to life, something to make sense of the world. But you’re resisting God for whatever reason. The answer isn’t in the baby but in the suffering of a Messiah – a God who has shared our humanity.

VV 1-3

Not the cushy humanity of 21st Century life, but someone who has been poor, a victim of injustice, who has seen sickness and inhumanity – a man of suffering and afflicted with pain. And maybe we’ve done up to as the passage described; just rejected Him as irrelevant to my life now, my circumstances.

HAND REACHING OUT

Look again at Jesus because He was God’s gift to us. He’s that hand reaching out to us, inviting us to know God, to find a relationship with Him. Jesus died that we could reconnect with God.

Many people do not explore Christianity because they feel they’re too bad for God. They will never match up to the mark. Perhaps it’s lifestyle, perhaps its guilt, perhaps it’s knowing that we are into things we shouldn’t be. Join the club! We’re all the same. We all have done things that displease God. Things that keep us from Him.

But God has done something about it! Apart from sharing our humanity so He knows exactly where we're coming from we read this Surely he took up our pain and bore our suffering. He dealt with the issues that have separated us from God – our sins – when He died on the cross. And the purpose was this – so that we could find forgiveness, so that we can deal with guilt, we could find strength to do the right thing and we could have an eternal hope.

And how do we find all that? By realising that the one who suffered for us has already dealt with the issue of our sin – and accepting God's offer of knowing Him and of finding the meaning of life and power to live as we follow Jesus.

The message of Christmas remains the same in 2010 as in that first Christmas. There is someone, a Saviour, Christ the Lord who has come that we might know God. He places His hand out to you this Christmas time. Will you take His?

Perhaps you're someone who one took God's hand and understood what this is all about, but perhaps you've let it all slip away over the years. God's message doesn't change and God's hand of acceptance still remains outstretched for you this Christmas time. Take it again and find the peace, the acceptance, the hope and the strength to live that walking with Jesus brings.

TITLE

Prayer

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