

“SIN SAVIOR.”

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First Christian Reformed Church

November 27, 2016, 2016, 10:30 AM

Scripture Texts: Matthew 1:18-21

Introduction.

The sanctuary looks beautiful. I am especially grateful for the hours of preparation given by Rich and Coni Hoolsema, Jan Bos and Nancy Zylstra. It is my prayer that God will be glorified in all that we do as we celebrate this season. I look forward to celebrating our tenth advent season with you.

Today marks the first day of the Christian church calendar. All over the world today the Christian church is beginning their celebrations of one of the most central truths of the Christian faith, that astonishing miracle when God became a man in the person of Jesus of Nazareth.

Each advent season our worship planning team and I think and pray about a special theme to focus our thoughts in this season. This year our theme is Our Savior Comes. Advent is a great time to think about a Savior, after all advent is about our Savior coming into the world.

There have been many great leaders in history who have done some great things. And some of those great leaders have taken for themselves some lofty titles.

Alexander the Great and Herod the Great.

Robert the Magnificent who was father of William the Conqueror.

Richard the Lionhearted and Charles the Bold.

But when the Son of God came to earth God said call Him Savior.

His name shall be called Jesus because He will save His people from their sins. The name Jesus like its OT equivalent, Joshua, means the Lord saves. His name declares His mission on earth, His agenda. Jesus is the author of salvation.

Sin Savior.

But what kind of Savior is He? That's the question we will ask and answer over the next five weeks. This morning we consider our sin Savior.

Matthew's telling of the Christmas story introduces this great truth to us. The first implication of Jesus as Savior is that we are in need of saving, that we are somehow lost and need help.

Ephesians 2:1-4 You were dead in the trespasses and sins 2 in which you once walked, following the course of this world ... we all once lived in the passions of our flesh, carrying out the desires of the body and the mind, and were by nature children of wrath, like the rest of mankind.

Ephesians 2:11-12 Remember that at one time you Gentiles ... were at that time separated from Christ ... having no hope and without God in the world.

We are ruined, condemned to death and destruction. The entire human race is appointed to die. We are all cursed because our sin has lost us the privilege of life.

If there was someone who could live a righteous and holy life, then he would not need a Savior. But there is not even one such a person to be found, there is none who is righteous.

How does Jesus save us?

He makes a sin-offering. The people of God in the OT had a very clear picture of what a sin sacrifice looked like.

First, they understood that without the shedding of blood there was no forgiveness of sins and pardon of guilt. Without a sacrifice there was no satisfaction.

Second, they knew that their substitute had to be an unblemished, spotless lamb, one that had no defects. In other words the sacrifice had to be sinless itself so it could take the sinners place.

Third, the one offering the sacrifice would put his hands on the lamb, confess his sin, and transfer his sins to the lamb.

Finally, the priest would then kill the lamb and it would be completely consumed by fire.

A perfect victim, with no sin or guilt of its own took the place of the offender and died in his place. Every OT sacrifice was pointing toward and preparing the way for Jesus' sacrifice.

God's justice and righteousness and holiness demand that the price be paid. God's mercy and grace and compassion offer a way for the price to be paid by our substitute. God took His perfect Son Jesus and offered Him on the cross as a substitute for our sins.

What does Jesus save us from?

Let me start by answering in the negative. What does Jesus not save us from?

He doesn't save us from sorrow or conflict or affliction or trials or troubles or heartache or persecution or a cross. He doesn't save us from accidents or injury or sickness or even death.

He doesn't save us from enemies. That was a real disappointment to the Jews of the day. They were looking to their Messiah to be like Moses. As Moses freed his people from the bondage of the Egyptians, so they looked to the Messiah to free them from the Romans. But the Romans were not their greatest enemy, their sin was.

Jesus came to save us from the root cause of all those other things, from the things which caused our world to fall into chaos and calamity and crisis. Jesus deals with the disease and not all the symptoms.

Jesus came to save us from ourselves. We are our very worst enemy. He came to save us from our sin by His blood shed on the cross.

How great a sin Savior is He?

Jesus saves us from sin and its guilt and shame.

He forgives our sin and washes away our guilt with His atoning blood. Being freed from our guilt, God counts us as righteous as Christ. *We are clean.*

Psalm 51:2 Wash me thoroughly from my iniquity, and cleanse me from my sin!

7 Purge me with hyssop, and I shall be clean; wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow.

10 Create in me a clean heart, O God, and renew a right spirit within me.

Jesus saves us from the wrath of God.

I Thessalonians 1:10 Jesus who delivers us from the wrath to come.

I John 2:2 He Himself is the propitiation for our sins; and not for ours only, but also for those of the whole world.

Jesus' sacrifice has an effect on God just as much as it has an effect on us. It brings about a change in our relationship with God. God is no longer our enemy, we are no longer under a curse, we are long longer children of wrath. *We are accepted.*

There is a coming judgment when sin will one day be finally and completely judged. Christ's propitiation removes God's obligation to satisfy His justice by punishing us for our sin.

Romans 8:1 There is therefore now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus.

Jesus saves us from the wages of sin.

He does this by paying the penalty and ransoming us from death and delivering us from death to life.

Romans 6:23 For the wages of sin is death, but the free gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord. *We are out of debt.*

Jesus saves us from the continuing dominion of sin.

He does this by giving us His Holy Spirit in us, by the power of His grace in us.

This is God's equally gracious work of sanctification by which He who is in us delivers us from the grasp of him who is in the world, and enables us to walk in the paths of righteousness.

This means that while sin will always remain in us until we die, it will no longer have dominion over us or determine our identity or our destiny. We no longer have to be its slave, we have the power and the grace to take dominion over it. *We are free.*

Jesus is glorified by our daily dependence on Him and by our daily resisting of sin and Satan in the power of the Holy Spirit.

Everyday glorifies Christ as we show the power of Satan is defeated and his condemnation is no longer effective.

Every time a Christian repents and turns his back on sin, he brings glory to Christ and His cross and His power and His grace.

Never give up the fight to kill sin. Never stop hating it. Pray without ceasing against it.

Jesus saves us from the presence of sin.

In this life, He does this by taking us out of the world into the family of God, into fellowship with Him. *We are reconciled.*

Colossians 1:13-14 He has delivered us from the domain of darkness and transferred us to the kingdom of his beloved Son, 14 in whom we have redemption, the forgiveness of sins.

In the life to come, He does this by delivering us from hell and by giving us a glorious new body by which we can dwell with Him in heaven forever. *We are heaven-bound.*

Jesus saves us from all our great and many sins.

Remember that time Jesus encountered a man possessed by evil spirits and Jesus asked him, “What is your name?” He replied, “My name is Legion, for we are many” (Mark 5:9).

That is a picture of our own hearts. We are possessed with a legion of sins. Our sins are higher than our heads and more than the hairs of our heads. One sin often leads to others. We push one out the front door and ten more come in the back. Every day we start over and add countless more sins to our account.

All our hearts are desperately wicked. Our thoughts, our speech, our actions, our motives are all evil. Our hearts contain not even an ounce of goodness.

But the good news is Jesus can as easily cast out a legion of sins as He can a legion of demons. Even if it was possible for me to commit every sin committed by every sinner in the entire world, I would not need a greater Savior than the one I already have. Sufficient is the blood of Jesus.

There may be some here who are overwhelmed by your sin right now. Some for whom God has pulled back a veil to give you a much greater glimpse of your sinfulness and wickedness. You may be feeling your sins are too strong and too great and too many and you are lost.

If you are having those thoughts, those thoughts are lies that dishonor Jesus. Jesus has already won the victory, He has already nailed every one of your sins to the cross. Jesus has already paid the price for every one of them. Jesus means to glorify His sacrifice by showing you how great it is. Jesus wants to glorify His love for you by showing you how much He loves you. *We are forgiven.*

Even though your sins are named legion, Jesus is the Lamb of God given by God to take away the sins of the world.

Isaiah 1:18 Though your sins are like scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they are red like crimson, they shall become like wool.

Colossians 2:14-15 [Christ canceled] the record of debt that stood against us with its legal demands. This he set aside, nailing it to the cross. 15 He disarmed the rulers and authorities and put them to open shame, by triumphing over them in him.

What must I do to be saved from my sin?

Money cannot buy it, works cannot achieve it. In the simplest of terms, I must repent and believe. What does that mean?

To repent means to acknowledge and accept I am a sinner, I have sinned against a holy God and I justly deserve His holy and infinite wrath. I must acknowledge there is no good in me in me which would merit anything from God other than His condemnation and punishment.

We must lay all our sins on the Lamb Jesus and ask for His forgiveness of all our sins.

To believe means to acknowledge and accept Jesus is the Son of the Living God and He is my Savior from my sin, He shed His blood on a cross and died on a cross to pay for and forgive all my sins so I could be in paradise with Him.

To believe means to accept Jesus as not just the world's Savior, but as my Savior and to surrender my life to Him in faith, trust and obedience.

Blessed above all people are all those who trust in the name of Jesus.

Implications and application.

Jesus is known by many names and titles. King of kings, Lord of lords, the Good Shepherd, Lamb of God, Great High Priest, the Alpha and the Omega, the Living Word, Immanuel, the Great Physician, the Son of David, Redeemer, the Son of God.

But Jesus is the name God chose and told Joseph to give to Mary's son. This is the name above all names, this is the name most precious. Above all other names, this name declares who He is and what He came to do. He came to save His people from their sins.

This is cause for worship. This is cause for celebration. This is cause for remembering Him at His table. This is cause for sharing the good news with others this advent.

Prayer: Holy Father, by the power of the blood of Jesus, our Savior from sin, give us increasing victory over sin and Satan, resisting him that he will flee. Always make us to see the superior worth and pleasure of following Jesus rather than in following sinful pleasures and worldly passions.

Jesus, thank you for coming to earth as our Savior, for purchasing our forgiveness, for ransoming us from death, for fully satisfying the Father's wrath, for sanctifying us and securing for us an eternal inheritance kept in heaven for all who trust in you and long for you appearing.