

The Little Lord Jesus

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[0 : 00] Well, thank you, Brother Greg. Have you enjoyed church so far this morning? Amen. I have as well. If you would take your Bibles with me and turn to Luke chapter 2.

I want to get you. Luke chapter 2 this morning.

We're going to talk about a subject, a phrase that you have probably heard already several times this Christmas. The little Lord Jesus.

The little Lord Jesus. What comes next, church? A sleep in the hay, right? Luke chapter 2. Let's talk about the little Lord Jesus.

Excuse me for a few moments. Boy, for some reason this isn't connecting.

[1 : 15] Can you advance us to the next slide? There we go. All right. Luke chapter 2 beginning in verse 1. Church, if you wouldn't mind joining me and standing if you're able to, let's do that out of honor of the Word of God this morning.

Beginning in verse 1. It came to pass in those days that a decree went out from Caesar to Augustus that all the world should be registered. This census first took place while Quirinius was governing Syria.

So all went to be registered, everyone to his own city. Joseph also went up from Galilee, out of the city of Nazareth into Judea, to the city of David, which is called Bethlehem.

Because he was of the house and lineage of David, to be registered with Mary, his betrothed wife, who was with child. So it was that while they were there, the days were completed for her to be delivered.

And she brought forth her firstborn son, and wrapped him in swaddling clothes, and laid him in the manger, because there was no room for them in the inn. Now there were in the same country shepherds living out in the fields, keeping watch over their flock by night.

[2 : 24] Behold, an angel of the Lord stood before them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were greatly afraid. Then the angel said to them, Do not be afraid, for behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy, which will be to all people.

For there is born to you this day in the city of David a Savior, who is Christ, would you say it with me, the Lord. Let's pray together.

God, I pray that we would see you for who you are. That our eyes would be directed heavenward, and we would get an accurate picture of the little Lord Jesus, emphasis being on Lord.

In Jesus' name we pray. Amen. You may be seated. Thank you for standing. I would like to challenge you to reframe your Christmas view of God just a little bit.

I love, and all of us can probably agree, that we love, around Christmas time, we hear all these Christmas carols sung, and Rudolph the Red-Nosed Reindeer is fun, and Jingle Bells is fun, and, you know, my favorite is the Christmas song, Chestnuts Roasting on an Open Fire.

[3 : 38] I don't think I've ever eaten a chestnut, but it sounds really fun and festive, and I love singing about them. I probably wouldn't even like them, but there you go.

Those songs are all fun, but the ones with the most power, the ones that really speak to us the most, are Hark to Herald Angels Sing, Joy to the World, Angels We Have Heard on High, the songs that tell the story of Christ's birth.

And we love that. But I do believe that oftentimes, that is where the world around us ends their view of Jesus.

It ends right there with His birth. It ends right there with Him lying in the manger. It ends with baby Jesus.

There's an old comedy movie with an actor named Will Ferrell who has a little line in there where he talks about eight pound, eight pound, four ounce little baby Jesus or something.

[4 : 46] He said, that's my favorite way to think of Jesus is that little eight pound, four ounce baby Jesus. Thinking, well, He did a whole lot after that. That's not really my, now I am so glad He came.

If He had never come, you and I would never have hope. But that's not where the story is. That was the beginning of our story with Jesus.

When God Himself humbled Himself, left Heaven's throne and came down and was born as a baby. But He didn't stay a baby, did He? Thank God He didn't stay a baby.

So my challenge to you, number one, don't keep Christ in the cradle. Don't keep Christ in the cradle. Let's celebrate that Jesus came and away in that manger He was born.

Let's celebrate that day, that starry night. We don't know if the stars were shining especially bright that night except the one star that guided the shepherds and guided the wise men, etc.

[5 : 50] But, you know, we can enjoy the trappings and the beauty and the celebration of that night. But then, let's move on.

And let's continue pointing ourselves, our families, and the world around us to the Jesus who then grew up.

The Jesus who did mighty miracles. The Jesus who healed people. The Jesus who loved people. The Jesus who did not show the religious partiality, the religious dividing lines that were so common back then and guess what?

Are still common today. Jesus wouldn't fit in many of our churches, would He? Jesus would probably not be welcome on committee sometimes.

Maybe He wouldn't be invited to come sit in our homes because He would go with publicans and sinners, the Bible says. Jesus showed the real, genuine love and grace of God.

[7 : 01] We talked about this last week. He was balanced, square in the middle, between grace and truth. He didn't go too far one way or too far the other way.

Jesus walked that perfect balance of showing the love of God and speaking the truth of the reality, the dangers of our own sin. But He didn't just condemn us.

He said, I didn't come to condemn the world. He said, I came so that the world could be saved. I came to offer a way of hope. I came to offer a way of salvation.

salvation. And so that is what Jesus came to do. It all started in the cradle, but it didn't stay there. So don't keep Christ in the cradle.

Would you turn with me quickly to the book of John, the Gospel of John. Jesus walked closely with John. He was called the apostle who Jesus loved.

[8 : 03] Jesus maybe, out of His 12 disciples, had a closer personal relationship with John than anyone else. And so in John chapter 18, chapter 18, Jesus is standing before Pilate.

We've jumped all the way 33 years later toward the end of Jesus' time on earth. And He's standing before the ruler Pilate. And He is facing charges of blasphemy.

Facing charges that would lead Him to punishment of death on a cross. And what happens? In verse 35, Pilate says, Your own nation and the chief priests, your chief priests, the Jewish religious leaders handed you over to Me.

What have you done? Verse 36, Jesus said, My kingdom is not of this world, said Jesus. If My kingdom were of this world, My servants would fight so that I wouldn't be handed over to the Jews. But as it is, My kingdom is not from here. Verse 37, So you're a king then? Pilate asked. You say that I'm a king, Jesus replied.

[9 : 19] I was born for this. And I have come into the world for this, to testify to the truth.

He said, I was born for this. I wasn't born just to stay a baby. I wasn't born just as a miracle of the virgin birth.

I wasn't born just to have the wise men come and the kings and give me gifts. I wasn't born just to have the shepherds see the angels appear and sing praises to God and be so overwhelmed and overcome that they follow the star to the manger and they bow and worship me.

I wasn't born just for that moment. He said, I was born to be a king. I was born to advance the kingdom of God on this earth. I was born to testify to the truth.

So Jesus himself gave us the picture of the reason, the purpose of his birth right here before Pilate testifying to everyone gathered there watching.

[10 : 26] He knew his crucifixion was right around the corner. He knew he was about to die. That sacrifice was about to happen and so he said, this is why I was born.

This was it. So don't keep Christ in the cradle. Let him go on in your heart, in your mind, and in your testimony to those around you.

Let him go on and live that purpose for why he came. Secondly, don't keep Christ on the cross.

Don't keep him on the cradle, but don't keep him on the cross.

Oftentimes, some of our more tradition-based religious practices around this world and churches will be guilty of this. And I'm not saying having a cross in your home is wrong.

I've got some crosses probably around in decoration celebrating that Jesus did come and lay down his life for us. But don't leave him there.

[11 : 32] Don't leave him there. The story didn't end in the cradle and the story, thank God, did not end on the cross.

So here's the point to ponder. Do I still see Jesus as the baby in the cradle or the dying man on the cross? Pause right there, would you? And go over to Romans. Romans chapter 6.

We're getting a little exercise turning the pages of the Word of God today and that's fine. If you didn't have one with you, a Bible with you, grab one from the pew or we have the Bible app on the phone, YouVersion.

Great resource and tool for people. Romans chapter 6 if you'd like to look on. Romans chapter 6 and verse 8. Here we go.

Romans 6 and verse 8. Now if we died with Christ, we believe that we will also live with him.

[12 : 33] Well that's good news. First of all, it's talking about us dying. So that's a little scary. Why are we talking about that on Christmas Eve? Right? If we died with Christ, we believe that we will also live with him.

Verse 9. Because we know that Christ, Jesus, having been raised from the dead, will not die again. Y'all, this is so important.

Jesus can't die for your sins again. Jesus' death, his one time death, that moment in history that has eclipsed every other moment in history.

So much so that our time, our year, our annual dividers, B.C.A.D., are centered around Christ Jesus himself.

Before Christ and Anno Domini in the year of our Lord. He is the central point of all human history.

[13 : 44] And that death, that culmination of his life on this earth, according to God's plan, the sacrifice of his one and only son on that cross, his blood pouring out to cleanse your sins away and cleanse my sins away, we will accept his offer of the free gift of eternal life.

That moment, that death, changed the game. That moment changed everything. And that moment was sufficient. It was enough for all of your bad things.

It was sufficient for all of your weaknesses. All of your shortcomings. All the ways that you don't measure up. All the issues your spouse has with you.

All the issues your kids have with you. All the issues you have with yourself. Jesus' death, his blood was enough to pay for it.

To cover it. To cleanse it and forgive it. that is why we celebrate him.

[15 : 03] That's why we sing these songs. That's why we gather on Sundays and worship him.

That's why we read his book. And that's why we listen to his advice. And we try to follow his leading in our lives because he paid everything.

He paid all of our debts. Jesus paid it all. But don't leave him on that cross. If he was dead then what good would he be to us now?

Why would we pray to a dead man? Why would we sing songs of praise to a dead man except to honor his memory? Folks, we're not honoring his memory. We're singing to him now because he is alive.

Don't keep Jesus on the cross. So do we still see him as the dying man on the cross? Or do I recognize now that Jesus is my resurrected king whose spirit lives inside me?

Remember what Pilate said? He said, oh, so you're a king? And Jesus said, this was the purpose while I was born. To be the king. He was already king of kings. He was already lord of lords.

[16 : 14] The Bible says that one day every knee will bow and every tongue will confess yours and mine and everyone else's. All those who say, oh, I'm an atheist. I'm agnostic. I don't really believe.

That's okay. One day you will. One day you'll see him face to face and one day your knee will bow and your tongue will join ours in confessing that Jesus Christ is Lord.

God. So he's now our resurrected king. And his spirit, if you have accepted him by faith in Jesus, turn from your sin and turn to Jesus, then his spirit lives inside you and he has now made all of his power, his peace, his love, his joy, wisdom, and grace freely available to you and to me. That's the good news of Christmas. Man, if he was still a baby, I don't know about y'all, I've had two go through the baby stage and not a whole lot they can do at that moment. Jesus was 100% God, he never gave that up, but he was also 100% man. Both combined at the same time, the theology world, they call it the hypostatic union. [17 : 28] Don't ask me to describe that, define that. I don't know why they call it that, but that's what it means, 100% man and 100% God. I've got my master's degree now so I can use that kind of stuff.

We have to believe that he's right because he has a master's degree. Anyway, he was 100% man and 100% God. And so as 100% man, he was a baby. You know that song says, no crying he makes? The Bible doesn't say that. I'm guessing he probably cried a time or two. I don't think he was talking when he was a baby. So don't leave him as a baby. He grew up. He did lay down his life for you and for me, but don't leave him on that cross. Three days later, what did he do? He rose. In just a few months, we'll celebrate that too. Man, we celebrate that every day. But we'll set a time, a special time around Easter to put our focus solely on the resurrection of our living Lord. [18 : 38] The little Lord Jesus was right to be called Lord. While he was walking on this earth, they called him Lord.

When he died on the cross, he was still Lord. during those three days in the grave, he was still Lord. And when he rose from the dead, showing all of his power, he proved that he can be Lord over everything. And so you recognize, right, church? You recognize that Jesus is Lord? How many of you would be able to lift your hand and say, testify together that Jesus is Lord? Can we do that? Can we join? Yes. Amen. Amen. That God receives glory from that. Now don't raise your hand on this one. But how many of you would say, he is indeed Lord of my life? He's Lord of my life. His spirit lives in me. I recognize that he's given me all his power, all his peace, all his love, his joy, his wisdom, and his grace. [19 : 51] freely without charge. He's Lord of my life. So that's the takeaway this morning. Let Jesus be Lord of my life.

That little Lord Jesus. What does that look like for you? Maybe for you, letting Jesus be Lord of your life means taking that first step and saying, I know that I am a sinner, and I know that Jesus wants to be my Savior. Savior. Maybe I've heard that story, or maybe I'm hearing it for the first time, but I recognize that Jesus laid down his throne in heaven, and came down, and was born of the Virgin Mary. And he grew up, and he did many miracles, and he proved himself as God to those who saw him here on earth, and he gained this big following, right? But then Jesus laid down his life on the cross, and he allowed the religious leaders of that day to crucify him. And then Jesus' following began to grow like nothing this world has ever seen. And churches began popping up, worshipping this man called Jesus. Why? [21 : 00] Because he didn't stay on that cross. Because he rose from the dead. And so now Jesus is alive today, and he matters for this church, and he matters for you, and he matters for the broken relationship that you have.

He can help that. Jesus can be Lord over that. He can make a difference if you give it to him. Jesus can make a difference for that need that you can't seem to meet. Jesus can make a difference for the thing in your life that seems hopeless, that you can't wrap your head around. Jesus is the answer. Why? Because he's king. Because he's Lord. He's got power over it all. He said all power is given to me in heaven and in earth, so you can go in that power. It's accessible to you. It's free to you. But you've got to make Jesus Lord of your life. We're not puppets on a string. He's not pulling us and forcing us to do exactly what he wants us to do. He gives us this little thing called free will. And when we go our own way, we receive the results of that. when we subject our will to his and make him Lord, then we receive the results of his lordship in our life.

[22 : 23] Let Jesus be Lord of your life. Maybe you need to turn to him for the forgiveness of your sins and become his child. Or maybe, maybe you've already done that and maybe you need to make him Lord over a specific thing in your life.

Maybe there's an addiction that you need to make him Lord over. Maybe there's a pride problem. Maybe there's an arrogance problem. Maybe there's a fear problem that you need to recognize that God is in control and make him Lord over that fear, over that worry.

Whatever it is, he said, my peace I leave with you. But you've got to make him Lord. The little Lord Jesus can be Lord of your life this morning.

Would you bow your heads with me? God, I thank you so much for your offer, your gift of lordship to us. You didn't just create us, you didn't just save us and forgive us and then abandon us.

You offered to walk with us, to give us that wisdom, to help us to walk under your authority, recognizing you as our father, as our friend, and as Lord over our decisions, as Lord over our emotions, as Lord over our bank accounts, as Lord over our families, our relationships.

[23 : 50] We can speak the power of Jesus into those things. God, I know that there are families here this morning who are just trying to make it through Christmas because it's a difficult time.

I know that there are people here in town that there's strained relationships. I know that there's financial hardships. I know that there are all kinds of problems that this world gives to us.

But God, I know that you're bigger than all of us. I know that you can hold our hand as we walk through those things. And you can make them easier to endure.

You can get us through. And then someday, we can look back and see why. Knowing that you brought us through for our good and for your glory.

God, I pray that there's somebody here this morning that would make you Lord of their life. And it's in Jesus' name I pray it. Amen.