

The Child | The Story of Christmas from the People Who Were Actually There #5

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The story of Christmas is often told from the viewpoint of the wise men, the shepherds, and Mary. But what about the child? We don't know what the baby Jesus thought about everything that happened at the time. But when Jesus grew up, he looked back from an adult perspective and explained the full meaning of his birth: he was born because broken people need a Savior.

Jesus Was Born So We Would Not Be Alone

We live in a dark, difficult world full of conflict, violence, and suffering – a world in which humanity is far from God. Jesus came to shine a divine light into this world's gloom. He did that by revealing God to us.

John 12:45-46 When you see me, you are seeing the one who sent me. I have come as a light to shine in this dark world, so that all who put their trust in me will no longer remain in the dark.

Jesus pointed out that when we see him, we see God the Father. This is because Jesus is God in human form. When he was born, God entered our bleak world. Jesus' birth gives us reason to hope, for God has not left us alone.

Everything in the world didn't suddenly change the instant Jesus was born. But light invaded the darkness like never before. Jesus showed up to reveal what truth and goodness look like. No matter how menacing the world is, he illuminates our lives with his presence.

Jesus Was Born to Heal Our Brokenness

The religious elites didn't like how Jesus spent time with people who were far from God. They themselves scorned religious outsiders and refused to be around them, fearing that disreputable people would taint them by their sin.

Mark 2:15-17 When the teachers of religious law who were Pharisees saw him eating with tax collectors and other sinners, they asked his disciples, "Why does he eat with such scum?" When Jesus heard this, he told them, "Healthy people don't need a doctor—sick people do. I have come to call not those who think they are righteous, but those who know they are sinners."

Jesus did not come to gather religious people into a holy huddle to prevent contamination by the world. He came to bring healing and wholeness to broken people. After all, it wasn't religious leaders who discovered the Messiah at his birth. It was foreigners – like the Wise

Men – and social outcasts – like the shepherds.

Don't let self-righteousness keep you from seeing your spiritual need and turning to Jesus. And don't let the self-righteousness of others deter you from hearing Jesus' invitation and receiving his love.

Jesus Was Born to Die for Our Benefit

As Jesus spoke to the crowds in Jerusalem a few days before his crucifixion, he knew that he was facing the appointed hour of his death (see verse 33).

John 12:27 Now my soul is deeply troubled. Should I pray, "Father, save me from this hour?" But this is the very reason I came!

It's not surprising that he was deeply troubled, or that he thought about finding a way to escape his fate. But Jesus knew that his suffering on the cross was the very reason he came. No one may have realized it at his birth, but Jesus was born to die. His death paid for our sins, so that we can be forgiven and reconciled to God. That's how he accomplished healing for broken sinners.

Jesus understood, looking back, why he was born. The baby in the manger is also the Savior on the cross. This is how much he cares for us. He gave his life so that we could know God. It makes sense to entrust your life and your eternity to him.

Discussion Questions:

1. *If baby Jesus could have talked, what do you think he might have said about all the events surrounding his birth?*
2. *Read [John 12:44-46](#). How does Jesus explain his birth in this passage?*
3. *In what ways is the world "dark"? How does Jesus illuminate the world?*
4. *Read [Mark 2:13-16](#). Why were the religious teachers upset about who Jesus went to dinner with?*
5. *What groups or classes are religious people today uncomfortable building relationships with? Why?*
6. *Read [Mark 2:17](#). What was Jesus' justification for hanging out with disreputable people? What kind of sickness and healing did he have in mind? What does this say about Jesus?*
7. *Did self-righteous people at some time ever turn you off toward God? If so, what happened?*
8. *Read [John 12:27](#) and 32-33. What was the impending "hour" that troubled Jesus so much?*
9. *Relating this back to [Mark 2](#), how did Jesus' death on the cross actually make it possible for broken people to be healed?*
10. *Write a personal action step based on this conversation.*