

The Incarnation

CHRISTMAS ACCORDING TO LUKE #3 – Pastor Gary Combs – December 21, 2025 – Luke 2:1-14

INTRO: Good morning church! We're continuing our series CHRISTMAS ACCORDING TO LUKE. Today we'll be looking at Luke 2:1-14 in a message entitled THE INCARNATION.

At the heart of Christmas is the incarnation, the miracle that God the Son took on human flesh. That's what the word 'incarnation' means. It means "in the flesh." Without ceasing to be fully God, He became fully man. The INFINITE became an INFANT. The ETERNAL ONE entered human history. At Christmas, we celebrate the staggering truth that the One who CREATED all things stepped into His own CREATION. God did not send a MESSAGE from heaven, He sent the MESSIAH, His one and only Son, Jesus Christ—God in the flesh!

Need: But here's the question: Why does the incarnation matter to us today? Why should it move our hearts and change the way we live? Because too often the true meaning of Christmas gets buried under shopping lists, wrapping paper, and holiday festivities. We enjoy the celebration, but miss the meaning. If we're not careful, we can celebrate Christmas and overlook Christ.

ILL: What about you? Have you overlooked Christ? Maybe you're feeling like Michelle did. She said she came to a place where she knew that "things had to change," but knew "something was still missing." She didn't know what it was until she turned to Jesus as Savior and Lord, that's when life change began to happen, that's when her burden of guilt and shame was lifted, that's when she found what was missing in her life!

Trans: Have you come to a place where you know things have to change? There's an emptiness in your life, you know something is missing? Don't overlook Christ. Let's turn to Luke's Gospel and see the miracle of the incarnation, how God stepped into our world. Born not in a palace, but in a stable. Not to a throne, but to a manger.

BODY: In the second chapter of Luke's gospel, he gave a historical account of the incarnation, describing the humble birth of God's Son and the angelic announcement to shepherds watching their flocks nearby. In this birth announcement, we can see the true meaning of Christmas revealed. How can we see the true meaning of Christmas revealed? The text gives **three divine titles** of Jesus that reveal the true meaning of Christmas.

Read Text: Luke 2:1-14 (ESV) ¹ In those days a decree went out from Caesar Augustus that all the world should be registered. ² This was the first registration when Quirinius was governor of Syria. ³ And all went to be registered, each to his own town. ⁴ And Joseph also went up from Galilee, from the town of Nazareth, to Judea, to the city of David, which is called Bethlehem, because he was of the house and lineage of David, ⁵ to be registered with Mary, his betrothed, who was with child. ⁶ And while they were there, the time came for her to give birth. ⁷ And she gave birth to her firstborn son and wrapped him in swaddling cloths and laid him in a manger, because there was no place for them in the inn. ⁸ And in the same region there were shepherds out in the field, keeping watch over their flock by night. ⁹ And an angel of the Lord appeared to them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were filled with great fear. ¹⁰ And the angel said to them, "Fear not, for behold, I bring you good news of great joy that will be for all the people. ¹¹ For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, who is Christ the Lord. ¹² And this will be a sign for you: you will find a baby wrapped in swaddling cloths and lying in a manger." ¹³ And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host praising God and saying, ¹⁴ "Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace among those with whom he is pleased!"

THREE TITLES OF JESUS THAT REVEAL THE TRUE MEANING OF CHRISTMAS:

1. **Savior.**

EXP: (11) Like a good historian, Dr. Luke has given us the time, place and setting of the birth of Jesus. But in v.11, he recounts to us the birth announcement of Jesus, given by the angelic host to the shepherds.

Luke 2:11 (ESV) For unto you is born this day in the city of David a **Savior**, who is Christ the Lord.

"Savior" (11) (σωτήρ, *sōtēr*) - savior, deliverer. Jesus was born to be our Savior.

"Good news" (10) (εὐαγγελίζω, *euangelizō*) - to bring good news, the gospel.

ARG: **Why do we need a Savior? To save us from sin and death!**

Romans 3:23 (ESV) for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God

Romans 6:23 (ESV) For the wages of sin is death, but the free gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.

Why did Jesus come into the world? To save sinners!

1 Timothy 1:15 (ESV) ... Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners

ILL: Imagine you're drowning in deep water. You don't need someone on the shore shouting advice, you need someone to jump in and pull you out. That's what Jesus did.

APP: Kings are born in palaces, but lambs are born in stables. Jesus is the Lamb of God. Christmas means our Savior, Jesus Christ is come. He came and died in our place to save sinners. Do you believe this?

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2. Christ.

EXP: (11) This is not His last name. It's His second title: "Christ," or in the Hebrew, "Messiah."

"**Christ**" (11) (Χριστός, *Christos*) - the Anointed One, the long awaited Messiah. Over 300 Messianic prophecies in the OT. Many of them involved His birth and identity... This points to His humanity.

"**Unto you**" (11) - This language reminds us of Isaiah's prophecy that a child would be born to Israel:

Isaiah 9:6 (NKJV) For unto us a Child is born, unto us a Son is given...

"**City of David**" (11) - Bethlehem, was the birthplace of David. And the OT prophets prophesied that the Messiah would be born to the line of David and in Bethlehem.

Micah 5:2 (HCSB) Bethlehem Ephrathah, you are small among the clans of Judah; One will come from you to be ruler over Israel for Me. His origin is from antiquity, from eternity.

ILL: In John 4, Jesus met a Samaritan woman at a well—an outcast with a broken past, drawing water alone in the heat of the day. In the middle of their conversation, she said something that revealed the deepest hope of her heart:

John 4:25-26 (ESV) The woman said to him, "I know that Messiah is coming (he who is called Christ). When he comes, he will tell us all things." Jesus said to her, "I who speak to you am he."

In that moment, the waiting ended. The promise became personal. The Messiah was no longer a hope for someday—He was standing right in front of her.

APP: That's what Christmas means. Christ has come. And like the woman at the well, we can discover that the answer to our deepest questions and concerns isn't a philosophy, but a Person, it isn't a religion, but a relationship with Christ Jesus. His coming reminds us that God keeps His promises. If He fulfilled His word to send the Messiah, He will also fulfill His promise to return again as King. Is your hope anchored in Him?

3. Lord.

EXP: (11) Look at v. 11 again. Notice the third title: "Lord."

"**Lord**" (11) (κύριος, *kurios*) - This speaks of His divinity. Jesus is God. He is King. He is Lord over all.

ARG: **This is the confession of those who would be saved: "Jesus is Lord!"**

Romans 10:9 (ESV) if you confess with your mouth that Jesus is Lord and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved.

ILL: Hold up a key ring and say, "Most of us have lots of keys. Imagine your life as a house with many rooms: finances, marriage, sexuality, time, future, habits. Many people are happy to give Jesus a 'key' to the Sunday room, maybe even the crisis room, but they keep certain doors locked. To call Him 'Lord' is to hand Him the whole ring. Christmas is not just about welcoming a baby; it's about surrendering to a King."

APP: Christmas calls not just for admiration, but for allegiance. Is Jesus Lord over every area of your life? He's either Lord of all, or not Lord at all. This Christmas, don't just talk about His lordship—live under it.

CONCLUSION: At the first Christmas, heaven delivered the most important announcement in human history.

- Savior — the One who rescues us from sin.
- Christ — the promised Messiah who fulfills every hope.
- Lord — the sovereign God who reigns forever.

The incarnation is more than theology, it's an invitation. "Unto you is born this day..." Unto you! For you!

So how will you respond? Will you receive Him as your Savior? Put your hope in Him as your Christ? Bow to Him as your Lord? Let's pray.