

# A Savior, Who Is Christ the Lord (Luke 2:11)

**Big Idea:** Jesus is Savior, Messiah, and Lord.

I have a friend who is one of the godliest men I know. Every time I spend time with him I want to be more like him. He talks about the value of meditating on individual words in Scripture. For instance:

But this is the one to whom I will look:  
he who is humble and contrite in spirit  
and trembles at my word.

(Isaiah 66:2)

Tremble. That's such an interesting word. You could think about that for a long time. What does it mean to tremble? Sometimes it really helps to slow down and really camp on a word or phrase in Scripture.

Tonight I want to camp on one part of one verse in the passage we just read: "For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, who is Christ the Lord" (Luke 2:11).

One part of one verse that contains three titles for Jesus: Savior, Christ, and Lord. These titles were spoken by the angels to the shepherds announcing the birth of

Jesus. This combination of titles is unique. It appears nowhere else in Scripture. In describing Jesus this way, the angels help us understand who Jesus is.

You could spend a lot of time thinking about these three titles. Let's just spend a couple of minutes on each right now.

## **Savior**

First, this child is himself to be savior.

What is a savior? A savior delivers people from danger, from enemies. It's used one time to refer to a king in 2 Kings 13:5: "Therefore the LORD gave Israel a savior, so that they escaped from the hand of the Syrians..." It was used by Caesar Augustus, who's mentioned in verse 1. He promoted himself as "savior of the common folk" and "savior of the world." He tried to pass himself off as a savior who began a new era of peace, order, and prosperity, fulfilling the longings of humanity.

Mostly, though, it's used in the Bible of God.

So when the angels call Jesus a Savior, they mean that he rescues people from some danger. We need rescuing. What is the danger that Jesus rescues us from? Matthew 1:21 says, "She will bear a son, and you shall call his name Jesus, for he will save his people from their sins." Our sins are our greatest problem. Sin is like arsenic. It has catastrophic consequences. It destroys everything that it touches.

How do we know that sin is that catastrophic? I like what Fleming Rutledge writes.

How do we measure the size of a fire? By the number of firefighters and fire engines sent to fight against it. How do we measure the seriousness of a medical condition? By the amount of risk the doctors take in prescribing dangerous antibiotics or surgical procedures. How do we measure the gravity of sin and the incomparable vastness of God's love for us? By looking at the magnitude of what God has done for us in Jesus, the Son of God who became like a common criminal for our sake and in our place.

Our sin is a serious problem, so serious that God took drastic action to save us from our sins. He sent his Son Jesus to rescue us from the predicament of sin. Nobody else could do this.

Savior means that Jesus came to deliver us from our greatest problem, and to undo the effects of sin. Who is Jesus? A Savior who delivers us from sin.

## **Christ**

Secondly, Jesus is Christ. Christ is not Jesus' second name. Christ is actually a title which means Messiah, the anointed one, the chosen. An idea began to develop in Scripture. The idea is that God would send a king from the line of David who would reign over Israel in justice and righteousness forever. God gave promises all over the

Hebrew Scriptures that David's throne would be established forever, and that Israel would dwell in peace and security forever.

This, the angels say, is fulfilled in Jesus. He is the one promised throughout the Old Testament. He's come to sit on that eternal throne and to usher in the peace and security that this world needs.

But that's not all. There's one more term.

## **Lord**

This one is staggering. Luke has already used this term to refer to God repeatedly in chapter 1 (1:16, 46, 68, 76). Lord means that he is ruler, the sovereign, the Lord of the universe. In other words, this Messiah who was born is God himself.

Put this together and you have a composite picture. Who is Jesus? He is Savior: he rescues us from our sins. He is Messiah: the long-awaited King who reigns forever. He is Lord: he rules over all.

What's really amazing is that this Savior who is Christ the Lord is a baby. The Savior is not in a palace. He's an infant lying in a feeding trough in Bethlehem. It would have been shocking to see angels and to hear that a divine messianic ruler had been born. It would have been even more shocking to hear that he was lying in a manger, born to a young couple with limited means.

This, my friends, is Jesus.

Do you need rescue from your sins, from your regrets, from your tendency to do what you don't want to do? His name is Jesus.

Do you long for someone who bring in an end to injustice and cruelty and usher in peace and security? His name is Jesus.

Do you need a King who reigns, but also a King who serves? His name is Jesus.

You could spend a lot of time thinking about these three titles. This is Jesus, born in Bethlehem all those years ago. Jesus is Savior, Messiah, and Lord.

"On countless occasions, history has witnessed a baby become a King. Only once, however, has a King become a baby. O come let us adore him." (David Cassidy)