

## Why Did My Savior Come to Earth?

The question in this article's title not only serves as the title of a favorite hymn, it provokes a myriad of powerful thoughts regarding the "whys" and the "wherefores" of Jesus' incarnation. Just exactly why did my Savior come to earth?

Jesus came to fulfill. "Think not that I am come to destroy the law, or the prophets: I am not come to destroy, but to fulfil." (Matthew 5:17). He expounded on this truth in the next sentence when He said, "For verily I say unto you, Till heaven and earth pass, one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the law, till all be fulfilled." (Matthew 5:18). Paul wrote in Romans 10:4, "For Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth." The word "end" there means, "termination."

Jesus came to call sinners to repentance. "But go ye and learn what [that] meaneth, I will have mercy, and not sacrifice: for I am not come to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance." (Matthew 9:13). The Pharisees to whom Jesus was speaking in this context considered everyone but themselves to be sinners. In His statement, Jesus clearly suggested the Pharisees' self-righteousness while at the same time implying a truth later stated by Paul that "all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God." (Romans 3:23).

Jesus came to bring a sword. "Think not that I am come to send peace on earth: I came not to send peace, but a sword. For I am come to set a man at variance against his father, and the daughter against her mother, and the daughter in law against her mother in law." (Matthew 10:34-35). He repeated this principle in kind in Luke 12:51ff. The standard for salvation that Jesus lifted up would cause great delight in the hearts of some and utter contempt in the hearts of others. Some of these opposing views would occur in a single household, thus fomenting conflict between family members who would follow Christ and those who would not. This verse is a great reminder that only those who obey Christ will be saved (Acts 4:12). If this is not the case, then there would be no division between those who obey and those who do not. All would be saved, regardless of their beliefs.

Jesus came to seek and to save that which was lost. "For the Son of man is come to seek and to save that which was lost." (Luke 19:10). This was said in the context of Jesus stating that He would go to the home of the wealthy chief of the publicans, Zacchaeus to dine. His words were met with disdain by some in the crowd because, again, Jesus was associating himself with "sinners." (Luke 19:7). Much to the chagrin of those who styled themselves "the righteous," Jesus came in the flesh for the purpose of retrieving the sheep who had gone astray, the silver coin that was lost and the prodigal who had forsaken his father's house (Luke 16).

Jesus came for judgment. "And Jesus said, For judgment I am come into this world, that they which see not might see; and that they which see might be made blind." (John 9:39). This is an interesting verse because we typically think of Jesus' first coming as having nothing whatsoever to do with judgment. We cite John 12:47 as evidence that all judgment would be reserved until His second coming. However, Jesus did make judgments while here in the flesh. His judgments were righteous (John 8:16) as they were based on God's Word. For example, in Matthew 22:29 He rebuked the Sadducees for their false teaching regarding the resurrection. He said, "Ye do err, not knowing the scriptures, nor the power of God." He judged that they were wrong. He told them they were wrong. He then proceeded to provide scriptural proof of their error. The Lord has authorized us to make these same judgments "according to righteousness" (John 7:24; Matthew 7:1-5).

Jesus came to give abundant life. "The thief cometh not, but for to steal, and to kill, and to destroy: I am come that they might have life, and that they might have [it] more abundantly." (John 10:10). Strong's Lexicon defines the word "abundantly" as "superior, extraordinary, surpassing, uncommon." In this world some people complain about their dull, ordinary lives. The life that Jesus gives through obedience to His Word is beyond compare.

Jesus came to save the world. "And if any man hear my words, and believe not, I judge him not: for I came not to judge the world, but to save the world. He that rejecteth me, and receiveth not my words, hath one that judgeth him: the word that I have spoken, the same shall judge him in the last day." (John 12:47-48). As was mentioned earlier, while judgments do indeed occur now as in the day of Jesus' fleshly walk, the final judgment is reserved for the end of time.

“Thanks be unto God for his unspeakable gift.” (II Corinthians 9:15).

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