

## WHY CHRIST CAME TO EARTH

"This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptance, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners; of whom I am chief." I Timothy 1:15.

There is an art in brevity. Shakespeare, the great English writer, declared that "Brevity is the soul of wit" and Sophocles, the great Greek writer, declared that "A short saying oft contains much wisdom."

Paul was a master of brevity, but never more so than as he came closer to the end of his life. He knew how to pack great truths into small compass. Five times toward the close of his life in his pastoral epistles he presented faithful sayings--short and simple in statement but mighty in meaning. They are recorded in I Timothy 1:15, 3:1, 4:9; II Timothy 2:11 and Titus 3:8.

Our text's faithful saying has a scriptural setting of interest and instruction. As Dr. B. H. Carroll said, "The paragraph, 1:12-17, is one of the deepest, broadest, richest, and sweetest in the Holy Scriptures." It is an expression of Paul's gratitude to God for a gospel that could save the chief of sinners and give him the privilege and responsibility of preaching it to others, persecutor and blasphemer though he had been.

In the thinking of men great meaning and value are attached to sayings. Many of these sayings are condensed expressions of truth. Inspiration has given us many of these. Of those which were penned by Paul, this is one of the best known and most frequently quoted. These sayings had taken their place as Christian axioms. What is an axiom? An axiom is something that is so obvious it does not need proving. For instance, it is an axiom that the whole is greater than the part. Another axiom is, things that are equal to the same thing are equal to one another. You do not need to argue those statements. An axiom, therefore, is something that is true, always true, and does not need any proof. As soon as anyone heard an axiom, he would say, "It is perfectly obvious."

Let us look more closely at this axiom, and see what its contents are. Who came? "Christ Jesus came." Notice the order of the words, Christ Jesus. Christ means the Anointed One of God. He was God's Anointed Son, and He came from God, with God's blessing resting upon Him. Jesus is His human name. When Paul wrote, "Christ Jesus came into the world," he implied that Christ existed somewhere before He came here. Christ came from the bosom of the Father where He had been from eternity, the same in substance, and equal in power and glory. In giving Him to us God gave of His own very substance, life, character and love. Christ voluntarily left the glory which He had with the Father before the world was and came into the world with saving purpose and power. Only Christ could have been Jesus the Saviour.

Certain great doctrines are set forth in the trustworthy truth of our text which is certainly worthy of acceptance by all men:

### I. The Deity Of Christ.

Christ is the name which proves His Deity. His pre-existence is a cardinal doctrine in God's "plan of the ages." He Who was with God, and was God, came into the world He had created, and which Satan had corrupted. It was the supernatural Christ Who came into the world.

### II. The Humanity Of Christ.

Jesus is the name which proves His humanity. The emphasis on the Christ Who came into the world does not destroy the truth of His humanity as witnessed in His name "Jesus." God though He was, Christ became the man Jesus.

### III. The Incarnation Of Christ.

The doctrine of the Incarnation has a definite, large and vital place in the Christian system. It has to do with the union of the divine and the human. In the Incarnation, God, in Christ, came to be born of the virgin Mary, took residence in a human body and became partaker of human nature. In its metaphysical aspects it, of course, goes beyond us. "Great is the mystery of godliness; he who was manifested in the flesh." "And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us." Of course, the Incarnation was in order to make atonement. Through sin man had alienated himself from God. Between the holy God and sinful man was an impassable gulf--impassable, that is, from the human side. In His Incarnation Christ bridged this gulf.

#### IV. The Mission Of Christ.

God's Word tells us that in the fulness of time God sent His Son, born of a virgin, to redeem them that were under the law. Christ laid aside His infinite glory and consented to enter this world through the lowly door of Bethlehem's manger. He came to reveal the love of God, the grace of Christ, and the need of men. "Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners." In connection with this statement three things should be emphasized.

##### 1. Sin.

Sin is the most foul, hateful, hideous and loathsome thing in this world. Whether we say sin is transgression--overstepping the boundary between good and evil, or iniquity--an act inherently wrong whether expressly forbidden or not, or error--departure from the right, or missing the mark--failure to meet the divine standard, or trespassing--the intrusion of self-will into the sphere of divine authority, or lawlessness--which is spiritual anarchy, or unbelief--insult to divine veracity, still we know that sin, which originated with Satan and entered the world through Adam, was, and is, universal, Christ alone excepted. Sin darkens your understanding, defiles your conscience, ossifies your will, hardens your heart, and warps all the affections God wishes you to maintain.

Sin puts the soul under the sentence of God to eternal wrath. "The wages of sin is death," meaning eternal separation from God in hell. There is nothing as terrible as that. Those who persist in rejecting Christ and who live without God on earth will be shut out from God through all eternity. In speaking to His sinful people God said, "Your iniquities have turned away these things, and your sins have withholden good things from you." Sin in the life of individuals or of nations causes God to withhold His greatest blessings.

There is abundant proof of sin in the world and its curse of man. People may think and talk lightly of sin, but the purpose of Christ's coming into the world shows how awful sin is and how terrible the condition of sinners. Sin is universal. Not one is free from it--no heart, no home, and no society.

##### 2. Saviour.

"Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners." It is regrettable that there is confusion in the minds of men regarding the purpose of Christ's coming to earth. Some think that He came to teach the "Fatherhood of God and the brotherhood of man." Some think that He came to set a beautiful example for mankind. Others think that He came to reorganize society along new lines. Still others think that He came to proclaim wise and sound philosophies and high moral ideals, by which men were to mold their lives. But, there is no need to speculate or guess or argue regarding, "Why Christ Came To Earth." There need not be any uncertainty about the purpose of Christ's coming to earth, for it is stated very plainly in our text. These plain and explicit words declare that it was His interest in sinners that induced Him to come to earth. He did not come to upbraid, condemn or punish sinners. He did not come to reform them or to help them. Instead, He came to save them freely and fully.

Christ's death on the cross was sacrificial, vicarious and substitutionary. He took the sinner's place under the law, assumed his responsibilities, discharged his debt

to the law, and graciously satisfied the demands of justice. Christ tasted death for every man. "And he is the propitiation for our sins: and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world." I John 2:2.

"There was no other good enough to pay the price of sin.  
He only could unlock the door of Heaven and let us in."

No blood except that of Christ could take away our sin and make it possible for God to receive us as righteous for His sake. Christ came to this earth to save sinners from the penalty of sin, the power of sin, and the presence of sin.

"He did not come to judge the world,  
He did not come to blame;  
He did not merely come to teach:  
It was to save He came.  
And when we call Him Saviour  
We call Him by His name."

### 3. Salvation.

It is easy to tell something about the size of a person by his task. Christ's task was the biggest the world has ever known--the salvation of sinners from their sins. With Him everything else was incidental. Nothing else mattered unless that was put at the center of all things. That is why the salvation of souls should be at the heart of every sermon, of every song, and of every program in the Lord's churches.

Salvation is received by all who put their trust in Christ. He will not save any who refuse to accept Him, but He will save freely, fully and forever all who will come to Him, acknowledge their sins, and put their trust in Him as their Saviour. If you have any desire to be saved, there is only one way to obtain salvation, and that is through a personal faith in Christ Who died on the cross for you. There is no salvation in any other. Unless you receive the salvation which He purchased and provided, you will remain lost and never enter heaven. Put your trust in the Saviour Who stood before God with all your sins upon Himself that you might stand before God with none of your sins upon yourself.

When the crew of the Squalus realized they had taken their last dive and that they were lying helpless at the bottom of the Atlantic Ocean, 240 feet below the surface, they sent up smoke flares and a buoy. Would one of the sister ships find them, and if so, could they be rescued? Their help must come from above. In agonizing silence they waited.

Soon after that fatal dive the submarine Sculpin set out in search. The red smudge was found, then the buoy. But twenty four hours passed before actual rescue work could be started. A giant ten-ton diving bell dipped and rose again and again, each time taking several men alive from those awful depths, until all thirty-three men who were alive in the submarine had been rescued.

When that huge diving bell came down for the Squalus crew, not one sailor refused to be rescued, but all gladly accepted the way to safety.

When the Sculpin sent down the ten-ton diving bell, not one of the thirty-three men said, "I will think it over," or "There are hypocrites on the Sculpin, and I do not want anything to do with them," or "I will wait for a more convenient season." Not one of them said, "I am in good condition as I am," or "There is too much to give up." Not one of them said, "I am waiting for a friend," or "I do not understand the workings of the diving bell," or "Sometime I will," or "I don't feel like being rescued," or "Tomorrow I will ask to be rescued." Not one of them found fault with the Sculpin crew, as some find fault with the preacher. Not one of them said, "I

can't hold out," or "Next year will be soon enough." All gladly and promptly accepted the way to safety.

The Lord Jesus Christ is here in saving power now, and He is saying to you who are not Christians, "Him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out." Accept Him now and be saved. Then, while we sing, come forward to confess Him publicly as your Saviour and to unite with the church.