

THE PURPOSE OF CHRIST'S COMING

Luke 1:57-80

Through the years, the subject, "Why Christ Came To Earth", has engaged the thoughtful and earnest attention of theologians, historians, philosophers, and reformers. Even now, there is confusion in the minds of many regarding the purpose of Christ's coming to the 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 new ethical principles by which men were to mold their lives. But there is no need for any uncertainty concerning the purpose of Christ's coming. No one can mistake the meaning of plain and explicit words like, "This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptance, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners."

I. Christ Came On a Divine Mission.

He stepped down from His throne of glory, 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 man.

II. Christ Came To a Needy Place.

"Christ Jesus came into the world." This world to which He came is populated with sinners. When we refuse to render God the love and devotion due Him, we sin. When we take anything that does not belong to us, we sin. When we desire that which is not lawfully ours, we sin.

When Christ came to earth, the darkness of paganism overshadowed Palestine, and the dark places of the earth were full of cruelty. But with Christ came light to dispel this darkness, scatter cruelty, relieve the oppressed, and help the poor and needy.

III. Christ Came For a Great Work.

1. To Give Light.

What the sun is to the material world, that Christ is to us in the spiritual world. He is the Author or source of light. As the face of nature revives or withers according as the influence of the sun is increased or diminished, so the soul of man continues dead or is quickened according as the Sun of Righteousness withholds or imparts the invigorating rays.

Christ came to reveal God to men. By His coming He revealed the tender dispositions of God towards men, showing His great desire to rescue, to save, and to bless. Christ makes known what God is like and what He requires of men.

Christ also came to reveal man to Himself as He is, namely, a sinner before God. He shows him his sinfulness and helplessness and misery, and points out the way to pass from sin to salvation, or from death to life. He revealed the way to God and to Heaven. He revealed the way by which sinners might get rid of their sins and be saved from their power.

2. To Save Sinners.

"Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners." He did not come into the world to upbraid sinners. He did not come to punish sinners. He did not come to condemn sinners. He did not come to reform sinners, nor to help sinners to do better. But He did come to save them freely and fully. Christ came to save sinners from the penalty of their sins by bearing that penalty in His own body on the cross. Christ came to save sinners from the power of sin during their Christian lives here on this earth. Christ came to save sinners from the presence of sin. When He takes them home to be with Him, this will be accomplished.

Christ's coming into this world meant the dawning of a new day in human history. The world has never been the same since His coming. To the infant Christ, Zacharias gave the beautiful and suggestive name, "the Dayspring from on High". He was the eternal light not only of one home, but of all homes. This striking name impressively suggests the deep darkness of the world before Christ came, and the heavenly light of knowledge and purity and comfort and hope which He brought.

Christ's coming was like the dayspring in its beauty. That beauty was like that of the morning fresh and unexpected in its charm. He did not come as men expected. They looked for a conqueror. He came as an infant. And since His day childhood has taken on a new attractiveness and a new sacredness. Childhood has been elevated and glorified. Christ came with the beauty and the hopefulness of a little child and taught all men to see in His cradle the hope of a new and better day for the human race. Christ's coming was like the dayspring in its power. Think of the vast transformation which Christ has already effected upon the whole framework of human society, in its sympathies and in its charities and in its labors.

His coming was the doom of the dominion of man over man, which was called slavery. Christ did so much for the child as well as for the slave. Think of the terrible treatment of little children before Christ came, and even of the treatment they still receive in the dark places of the earth where He is still unknown.

Then think of how much the advent of Christ has meant to womanhood. Woman is no longer what she was so long, the mere servant or toy of men, but wherever the gospel of Christ is preached and wherever His spirit rules, she becomes the genuine companion of man and is restored to her native dignity and her true vocation.

Christ is to the spiritual health what the sun is to the physical health. Day by day He brings spiritual health to those who are diseased in soul, comfort to those who mourn, and rest to the weary and heavy-laden.

3. To Guide Us Into The Way Of Peace.

Christ came to guide our wandering, wayward feet into the way of peace. He desires that we shall have peace with God, peace with our fellowmen, and peace with ourselves.

Even in this Christmas season there are many who do not appreciate the great Gospel proclamation that the season brings with it, the message of salvation from on high, bringing deliverance and pardon to all who believe, joy and happiness to the world, and the assurance of eternal life to all who put their trust in Christ as their personal Saviour.