

Why Christmas, Why Jesus? God Loves Us – John 10:7-16

Jn 10:7-16. This is the 3rd week of our Christmas series titled *Why Christmas, Why Jesus?*

Shorthand for “Why do we *celebrate* Christmas” . . .

And “Why did Jesus come in the first place?”

And by answering those questions, I hope to accomplish two things.

For those of you who already *know* Jesus, I hope to increase your *love* for him.

And for those of you who *don't*, I hope you will. I hope you'll be saved.

And toward the end of our time together I'm going to give you an opportunity to do just that – to pray and be saved; to know Jesus *personally*. **(Outline)**

➤ So let's start with the bottom line: Jesus came at Christmas because God loves us. V7. [7] *So Jesus again said to them* [they didn't understand the first time], *“Truly, truly, I say to you, I am the door of the sheep* [or the door of the sheepfold he's just been talking about; a pen or enclosure for safety and shelter]. [8] *All who came before me are thieves and robbers* [most likely referring to the various political and religious leaders in the intertestamental period, who claimed divine backing in their effort to rule over Israel], *but the sheep did not listen to them*. [9] *I am the door* [he says]. *If anyone enters by me, he will be saved and will go in and out and find pasture*.

If anyone looks to Jesus, if anyone follows *him*, he will be saved and free. Saved and provided for.

If that's not love, I don't know what is. Because God didn't have to do *any* of it.

He didn't have to provide a *sheepfold*, a means of protecting us, and he didn't have to provide a *shepherd*, a means to save us.

But he did, because he loves us.

God loves us so much, he gave us Jesus . . .

1. To save our soul (v7-9)

The question is, from what? When Jesus said in v9, *“If anyone enters by me, he will be saved,”* what did he mean? Saved from what?

The answer is the *consequences* of sin, and the *power* of sin.

➤ God gave us Jesus to save us **from the consequences of sin**. Referring to hell.

If anyone enters by me, he will be saved from hell. That's the implication.

He'll be saved from that place of eternal suffering where . . .

The smoke of their torment goes up forever and ever [the Bible says], *and they have no rest, day or night*. (Rev 14:11a)

Saved from that place of *weeping and gnashing of teeth*. That place of *darkness* and isolation. (Mt 25:30)

It's not the *only* consequence of our sin and sinfulness, but it's certainly the worst.

Thankfully, God loves us so much, he gave us Jesus to *save* us from it. *Save* our soul from such a fate.

➤ Not only that, but he saves us **from the power of sin**.

Including the power of temptation. We don't *have* to succumb with Jesus in our life.

And the power of worldly desires. We don't *have* to indulge.

And the power of bondage. You *can* break free. You can be whole.

That's why we sing that little *chorus* at The Lord's Table.

Thank you Lord, for saving my soul. Thank you Lord, for making me whole.

It's a reminder of what he does.

➤ Why Christmas? Why Jesus? Because God loves us that much. So much, that he made a way to save our soul from the *consequences* of sin, and the *power* of sin.

Second, he gave us Jesus . . .

2. To give us life (v10)

God loves us so much, he gave us Jesus to give us life.

V10 – *The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy* [certainly an apt description of *Satan*, but also those who act on his *behalf*, people]. *I came that they may have life and have it abundantly*. Life forever, and life to the full.

Yet *another* indicator of his love. Because he didn't have to give us *either*.

He could have just saved our soul and let us languish. Barely scraping by for the rest of our days.

➤ But out of love, he gave us **eternal life**. Eternal.

For God so loved the world, that he gave his only Son, that whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life. (Jn 3:16)

God so *loves* you, that he gave his only *Son* for you.

So that, if you believe in him, in who he is and what he's done, you won't *perish*, but *have eternal life*. Life forever.

➤ And, **life to the full**.

I came that they may have life [v10] *and have it abundantly*. Have it to the full.

Full of what? God's grace. God's love. God's joy. God's peace. And the list goes on.

In fact, Jesus came that we might experience the fullness of God *himself*. God with us, *in* us.

Why Christmas? Because God loves us.

So much, that he made a way to save our soul and give us life. *His* life.

Third, God loves us so much, he gave us Jesus . . .

3. To die in our place (v11-15)

[11] *I am the good shepherd* [Jesus said]. *The good shepherd lays down his life for the sheep*. [12] *He who is a hired hand and not a shepherd, who does not own the sheep, sees the wolf coming and leaves the sheep and flees, and the wolf snatches them and scatters them*. [13] *He flees because he is a hired hand and cares nothing for the sheep*. [14] *I am the good shepherd. I know my own and my own know me, [15] just as the Father knows me and I know the Father; and I lay down my life for the sheep*.

When we were in Romania a few years back, one of the church planters told us he grew up shepherding sheep.

And went on to say that he never forgot the first few times his Dad put him in charge.

Because the sheep wouldn't listen to him. And we were like, “What?”

And he was like, “Ya. They were my *Dad's* sheep and only knew *his* voice. They didn't know mine. And I didn't know them.”

The exact opposite of Jesus. Who knows us perfectly, and intimately. Before we were ever born. He *knows* you.

The question is, do you know *him*? Do you know *his* voice. His love.
And do you *follow* him?
Good shepherd as he is, Jesus *knows* us.

➤ And, *died* for us. V11 and v15.
I lay down my life for the sheep he said. Twice.
Why? Because we need it, and he *loves* us. We're condemned, and he cares.
What else would compel him to do such a thing?

In fact, the Apostle Paul is clear about it. **Rom 5:8** – *God shows his love for us in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us.*
Compelled by his love, good shepherd that he is, he laid down his life for us. In our place.

➤ Which means 2 things:
(A) He suffered the *consequences* of our sin for us.
(B) He appeased God's *wrath* for us.
That's what it means that Jesus died in our place.

• **He suffered the consequences of our sin.**

He *saved* us from the consequences of our sin, by suffering them *himself*.
Referring to death. Like it says in Rom 6:23 – *the wages of sin is death*.
Not just physical death, but spiritual death. What the Bible calls the *second* death.
When those who aren't found written in the book of life, are thrown into the Lake of Fire. (Rev 20:6,14-15)
It's death and desertion. Death and torment. Forever.
The very things *Jesus* suffered when *he* died on the cross.

And they count for *you*, his suffering was *for you*, if you believe it. If you heed his call and follow his lead.
Jesus *saves* us from the consequences of our sin, by having *suffered* the consequences of our sin.

But that's not it, he also . . .

• **He appeased God's wrath for our sin.**

God loves us so much, he gave us Jesus to die in our place, in order to appease God's wrath for our sin.
1 John 4:10 is explicit in that sense. *In this is love, not that we have loved God but that he loved us and sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins.*
The appeasement of God's wrath. That's what the word propitiation means.*****

Holy as he is, sin makes God angry. And his wrath is not appeased or satisfied unless blood is shed; a life is sacrificed. Sin is that heinous to him.
And *loving* that he is, he gave his one and only Son to sacrifice his life *for* us. In our place. To appease his righteous anger, for *our* unrighteous sin.

And when we believe that, when we *embrace* Jesus' death on our behalf, it's done.

His wrath his gone. In a moment. Leaving only his love.

But if we don't believe in his death for us, if we don't embrace it as our own, his wrath remains. (Jn 3:36)
And we face nothing but *a fearful expectation of judgment and a fury of fire*. (Heb 10:26-27) (**Summary**)
Why Christmas? Why Jesus? Because God loves us that much.

And 4th, he wants . . .

4. To adopt us into his family (v16)

God loves us so much, he gave us Jesus, to adopt us as his children.

V16. After saying that he lays down his life for his sheep, he says . . .

[16] And I have other sheep that are not of this fold.
He was speaking primarily to Jews, to say there's a whole world out there. With a bunch of *other* people who are destined to be part of the family.
I must bring them also, and they will listen to my voice [in addition to you]. *So there will be one flock, one shepherd.* One family, one Father.

It's the same thought the Apostle Paul conveyed in **Gal 4:4-5**.

[4] When the fullness of time had come, God sent forth his Son, born of woman, born under the law [the Old Covenant], [5] to redeem those who were under the law [save them], so that we might receive adoption as sons. Adoption as daughters.

➤ Talk about love. God sent his Son to adopt us **as sons and daughters**.
To all who receive him, who believe in his name, he gives *the right to become children of God* (Jn 1:12). No longer orphans, but sons. No longer strays, but daughters.
Part of the family. Living in his presence and his house, forever and ever.
But you have to believe and receive.

I saw a sign on a church one time that said, "We're all God's children." You may have even *heard* that from time to time. "We're all God's children."
And it *sounds* good. Makes us *feel* good. But nothing could be further from the truth.

We're all God's *creation*, and we're all made in his *image* – but we're *not* all God's children. While our sin and sin nature remain, we're actually *enemies* of God.
God's children are only those who believe in *Jesus*, and receive him into their life.
Only those he adopts by virtue of his grace through their faith.

➤ And when he does, we not only become sons and daughters, but we become heirs.
He adopts us **as heirs of his inheritance**.
Referring to those who stand to receive *some* of his blessing now, and the fullness of it in heaven. From the *place* he has prepared, to the *joy* that awaits . . .
To fellowship with Jesus face to face. He adopts us as heirs.

That's what **Rom 8:16-17** says. When we believe in Jesus and turn from our sin . . .

[16] The Spirit himself bears witness with our spirit that we are children of God, [17] and if children, then heirs—heirs of God and fellow heirs with Christ [crazy; we receive the same love, the same joy, and the same peace as Jesus], provided we suffer with him in order that we may also be glorified with him.

Provided we take up our cross and follow him. Do what he wants *regardless* of the cost. *Then* will our inheritance follow.

Cheap grace, cheap blessing is nowhere to be *found* in God's family.

Jesus *purchased* our inheritance, and we're to act like it, live like it. *****

But the point is this: we're his children. Never to be forsaken.

And recipients of an inheritance that's *literally* out of this world. (Summary)

Why Christmas? Why Jesus? Because God loves us.

So much, that he gave his one and only Son, to adopt others.

His one and only Son, to die in our place, save our soul, and give us life.

And if you want it, if you want to be saved, pray with me right now.

➤ **Prayer (floor)** – Just call out to him in the quietness of your heart, right where you sit.

“God, I believe. Like I’ve never believed before.”

“I believe in who Jesus is, and what he’s done. That he’s God in the flesh and died for my sins.”

“I believe that he paid my debt and appeased your wrath. I believe.”

“And I repent. I’m sorry for my sin that you died for. Please spare me from the consequences and break its power.”

“I receive you now as Lord of my life. Please save my soul, make me whole, give me life, and adopt me into your family.”

“I believe, I repent, and I receive.” (Response)

Pray (blank) – Father, thank you for loving us so much that you sent your one and only Son. You didn’t have to, and we don’t deserve it. But you did. So bless and protect those who just gave their life to you. Assure them of your salvation, knit our hearts together, and overwhelm them with the blessings of their inheritance as they live for you.

We praise God for those of you who were just saved. God bless you.

➤ And I want you to know that one of the ways we *commemorate* our salvation, and *remember* all that Jesus did, and *proclaim* it . . .

Is eating and drinking at **The Lord’s Table**. A practice Jesus started right before his death.

Saying things like, “***This is my body, which is for you.***” while holding a piece of bread.

And, “***This cup is the new covenant in my blood.***” (1 Cor 11:24-25)

A reference to the promise God made 600 years earlier through Jeremiah.

Behold, the days are coming, declares the LORD, when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel. Jer 31.

A *new* promise to forgive our iniquity and forget our sin. To be our God and take *us* to be his people. Adopt us. (Jer 31:31-34)

So when Jesus spoke these words, he was saying that his broken body and shed blood, his death, is the means of *fulfilling* that covenant. Fulfilling that promise.

The promise of salvation. And life. And adoption.

And by instructing us to eat and drink in the *same* way, he ensured that we would remember it all, and proclaim it all.

“*Do this* [he said], *as often as you drink it, in remembrance of me.*” (25)

“*For as often as you eat this bread and drink the cup, you proclaim the Lord's death until he comes.*” (26)

You declare the good news that God loves us so much, he gave us Jesus to save our soul and make us whole, until he returns to take us home.

One of the ways we *commemorate* our salvation, and remember all that Jesus *did*, and proclaim it to others, is eating and drinking at The Lord’s Table.

➤ So as we do that, let me encourage you to examine yourself. Get *right* with the Lord.

And commit to bear fruit in *keeping* with your repentance.

Because the Bible says if you eat and drink without considering your worthiness to participate, you’ll be guilty of showing disrespect and irreverence toward God . . .

And risk bringing judgment on yourself.

So come clean, and remember everything. Including God’s love to send Jesus in the first place.

And when the time comes, I’ll lead us in eating and drinking *together*.

➤ At the last supper, Jesus broke bread and said, “*This is my body, which is for you.*”

Meaning the bread we hold in our hands is symbolic of his *sacrifice* on our behalf. *For* us. “*Do this* [he said] *in remembrance of me.*”

And then, cup in hand, he said, “*This cup that is poured out for you is the new covenant in my blood.*”

Which means this cup, your cup, and what it contains, is symbolic of God’s promise of salvation, the new covenant, secured and guaranteed by Christ’s blood.

“*Do this* [he said], *as often as you drink it, in remembrance of me.*”

(Thank you Lord)

Prayer – Indeed, we’re thankful. And praise you for the love you showed, in sending Jesus at Christmas.