



**An undenominational publication  
devoted to the teachings of Jesus and  
His apostles and dedicated to those who  
seek the truth.**

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# JOY TO THE WORLD!



**"I bring you good news of  
great joy that will be for  
all the people"  
(Luke 2:10).**

I would like to share a piece of glorious information that has blessed the world. It's a gift unlike any other. It is given out of love; you didn't do anything to earn it. The gift is Jesus our Lord.

Before eternity God planned to forgive human rebellion and sin by offering His only son Jesus as a sacrifice. The joy of reconciliation with God is a gift to celebrate; a reminder of God's unconditional love.

Jesus' entrance into the world as our Savior is a never-ending reminder of how much God truly loves us. What a wonderful story of love!

God sent joy into the world because the world can't produce that level of joy on its own.

We are living in a joyful time. Spread the joy to others every day. Find an inner rest for your soul. Treasure His peace. Life is worth living in the Lord.

God gave you the most precious gift of all — His Son. He will forgive your sins if you receive Him through obedient faith. Then show your joy by sharing Him with those you love.

**— Ellis Stanley, Minister  
Church of Christ, Bridgeport, Connecticut**

# THE PROMISED MESSIAH

**"We have found him of whom  
Moses in the Law and also  
the prophets wrote, Jesus of  
Nazareth"  
(John 1:45)**

The Old Testament is filled with prophecies of the coming Messiah. Details gathered from these prophecies should leave no doubt that Jesus of Nazareth is the Messiah who has come.

According to Genesis 49:10, the Messiah would come from the **tribe of Judah**. In 2 Samuel 7:12 the Messiah was to be a descendant of the **family of David**. He was to be **born in Bethlehem** (Micah 5:2). These three details alone disqualify most of the people who have ever been born from being the Messiah. If someone was from the tribe of Judah, and a descendant of David, but was not born in the town of Bethlehem, that person could not be the Messiah. The Messiah is also said to be **born of a virgin** (Isaiah 7:14). He would ride into Jerusalem on a **young donkey** (Zachariah 9:9). Psalms chapter 22 gives a number of details about the Messiah, including the predictions that His **feet and hands will be pierced**, and that some will **gamble for the Messiahs' clothes**. These are a few of the prophecies of the Messiah in the Old Testament.

Consider these details in relation to what the New Testament says about Jesus. In Luke 3:33 we learn that Jesus was from the **tribe of Judah**. Not only was he from the line of Judah, but Matthew 1:1 states he was also a **descendant of David**. Matthew says that Jesus was **born in Bethlehem** (Matthew 2:1). We learn from Luke 1:26-31 that Jesus was **born of a virgin**. When Jesus made his final entry into Jerusalem, He came riding on a **young donkey** (John 12:14, 15). The New Testament also confirms in John 19:23 that **soldiers gambled for the clothes** of Jesus. Furthermore, in Matthew 27:31 we find that His **hands and feet were pierced**.

Literally hundreds of Old Testament prophecies were fulfilled by Jesus! An honest examination of the facts for the life of Jesus should leave any unbiased person convinced that the Messiah has come.

— Jamie Kurpiel, Minister  
Church of Christ, Springfield, Vermont

# WHY I BELIEVE IN THE VIRGIN BIRTH

**"The virgin shall conceive and bear a son and shall call His name Immanuel" (Isaiah 7:14).**

**A prophecy made 700+ years before Jesus' birth**



The virgin birth of Jesus is one of the most sacred beliefs for Christians. But Jesus being born of a virgin “is a bit of a stretch” for some people’s thinking. After all “that’s not the way births happen,” if you know what I mean!

But let’s assume for a minute that there is a God. Let’s also concede that man has a problem called sin and all of us sin. I think we can agree on that much! You see, our sin problem totally messes up our relationship with God and there are consequences to that. Forgiveness and hope of heaven are completely wiped away without a way to pay for our sins. That’s why, from the moment sin was brought into the world, God had a plan to deal with it.

1 Peter 1:18-20 says, “You were ransomed from the futile ways inherited from your forefathers, not with perishable things such as silver or gold, but with the precious blood of Christ, like that of a lamb without blemish or spot. *He was foreknown before the foundation of the world*, but was made manifest in these last times for your sake.” God knew before “*the foundation of*

*the world*” that we were going to sin and would need His help if we were ever to have hope of being saved from our sins! Sending His Son into this world to become our Savior was the only way it was ever going to happen.

Isaiah the prophet lays it all out over 700 years before Jesus was born. “He was wounded for our transgressions; upon Him was the chastisement that brought us peace; and with His stripes we are healed.” No two human parents could have ever produced the perfect Son of God worthy of dying for our sins. Human parents can only produce a human son. The only way God could do exactly what needed to be done was to send His perfect Son, direct from eternity into Mary’s womb to become that perfect sacrifice. The virgin birth assures us that Jesus was both God and man. In the words of scripture: the Word who “was God” became “flesh” and lived among us (John 1:1-14).

What a blessing that our all-powerful Heavenly Father loved us enough to send His Son just like He did.

**— Randy Gardner, Minister  
Upper Valley Church of Christ  
Quechee, Vermont**

# THE WORD BECAME FLESH



**JESUS THE MAN, MY FRIEND**  
(A PERSONAL NARRATIVE FROM  
**JOHN 20:24-29**,  
TOLD THROUGH THE  
APOSTLE THOMAS)

We had a story, my friend and I. He pushed my buttons in a different way, I was either all in (John 11:16) or wondering about it. He loved people and He loved to hold court around the dinner table; He would tell stories and laugh. It was infectious. He took me into scary places; many thought of Him as an outlaw. He touched my life; forehead against mine, arm around my shoulder, unexpected punch now and then. When they took Him I was confused, they beat Him and killed Him.

It was hard to describe what my friend looked like when He walked into the room where we were gathered. He had obviously received a severe beating and there was a deep penetrating wound in His side, crusted with dirt and dried blood. His hands were so

swollen He could not make a fist. He said to me, “put your hand into the wound in my side; put your finger in my hand.” You see, I had said I would not believe unless I put my finger into the mark of the nails and placed my hand in His side.

My hand went into the wound. My finger went into His hand. The friend I thought was dead, was alive! He had risen! I said to Him: “my Lord and my God!”

We, who have never felt His flesh, smelled the blood or seen the man, can come to believe! Jesus says: “blessed are those who have not seen yet have believed” (John 20:29).

— Mike Hammonds is an elder of the Church of Christ, Natick, Massachusetts



# RECONCILIATION WITH GOD

Before the fall, mankind was friends with God and everything was very good (Genesis 1:31)! Since then, our sins have separated us from God (Isaiah. 59:2). Our relationship with God is broken and we are not in a position to fix it. God saw that there was no mediator to intervene, so God took matters into His own hands and reconciled us to Himself through the death of Jesus Christ (Romans 5:10).

When people balance the checkbook, in banker's terms they are "reconciling" the balances. Marriage counselors serve as mediators to help couples "reconcile" their marriages. They help sort out the imbalances, or problems in their marriage, and to resolve or work out the problems.

Reconciliation deals with restoring our relationship with God. The problem is our sin. We have become spiritual adulterers (James 4:4). And worst of all, we are helpless to do anything about it. Therefore, God has sent His

Son to make atonement for our sins (1 John 4:10). Jesus offers forgiveness of our sins, and peace with God through reconciliation (Romans 5:1, 10).

He enlists us to help others through a ministry of reconciliation (2 Corinthians 5:18-20) and fellowship with God the Father and Christ the Son. Like the little child helping daddy fix the car, we are sharing in fellowship with God because of the peace that has been made between us. We are encouraged to tell others that the problem of sin has been dealt with and that Jesus offers us peace with God. We plead with people to be reconciled with God through the death of Jesus Christ. We invite and encourage them to obey the gospel and remain faithful until the end (Hebrews 3:14).

In Christ we have become friends with God. We experience fellowship with Him. In Christ, all is very good!

— Neal Noey, Minister  
Church of Christ, S. Paris, Maine

# HE IS COMING AGAIN!

# JESUS CHRIST

**"Behold, He is coming with the clouds,  
and every eye shall see Him"  
(Revelation 1:7)**

You know Jesus Christ came to earth 2,000 years ago. But did you know He is coming again? This Bible teaching is important. Are you prepared?

## **PROMISE OF JESUS**

"If I go to prepare a place for you, I will come again and take you to Myself, that where I am you may be also."

(John 14:3)

## **ANNOUNCED BY ANGELS**

"This Jesus who was taken up from you into heaven, will come in the same way as you saw Him go into heaven."

(Acts 1:11)

## **HE WILL COME BOTH AUDIBLY AND VISIBLY**

"The Lord Himself will descend from heaven with a cry of command, with the voice of the archangel and with the sound of the trumpet of God."

(1 Thessalonians 4:16)

## **IT WILL BE A SURPRISE!**

"Therefore you must be ready for the Son of Man is coming at an hour you do not expect."

(Matthew 24:44)

## **TO TAKE HIS PEOPLE TO HEAVEN**

"We will be caught up together in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air."

(1 Thessalonians 4:17)

## **TO JUDGE ALL MANKIND**

"Before Him will be gathered all the nations, and He will separate people one from another as a shepherd separates the sheep from the goats."

(Matthew 25:32)

## **BOOKS WILL BE OPENED**

"I saw the dead great and small standing before the throne and the books were opened....If anyone's name was not found written in the Book of Life, he was thrown into the lake of fire."

(Revelation 20:12,15)

## **PREPARE TO MEET JESUS!**

"He commands all people everywhere to repent because He has fixed a day on which He will judge the world."

(Acts 17:30-31)



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