

Message Series: **'The Arrival'**
Today's Talk: **'What's In a Name? Purpose'**
Scripture Source: **Matthew 1:18-25**
Date: Sunday, December 15, 2013
Speaker: John Garner

What's In a Name?

We choose the name of our child with careful thought. We rule out names for all sorts of reasons...the kid in public school that irritated us, the next door neighbour that scared us. Many names don't make the cut. We examine lists, think about the influence of people in our lives we value and then make a decision that we can live with...and hopefully the child will appreciate when they are older. Naming a child is a big deal, often with a story behind the process. Wasn't that true in your family circle?

Let's go back to the Christmas story. Matthew 1:18-25. Review briefly the historic event unfolding. Joseph learns that he and Mary won't be consulting a book of baby names, the top 10 boys names for their time. They will have no say in the selection. Vs. 21 "...you are to give him the name Jesus, because he will save his people from their sins." 'Jesus is the Greek form of Joshua, which means the LORD saves.'

Why was the name selected for them, by God? The name revealed the purpose of his arrival. "...because he will save his people from their sins." (The Message) What's in a name? A mission statement, a reason for being.

We Need a Saviour...Really?

For many people this is irrelevant language. The assertion that people need to be saved from their sins leave many people shaking their heads and dismissing the thought. What about you? Do you need a soul Saviour? We live in a culture where the word 'saviour' is thrown around loosely...sports teams look for a 'saviour', a player that will set them free from the curse of mediocrity and lead them to the promised land of achievement and championships. At times, troubled businesses look for a saviour-type business leader that will lead them from the threat of bankruptcy into a new era of profitability. The term 'saviour' is often used casually. Its spiritual meaning can be lost in the shuffle of busyness and secular thinking. But... the Bible and human experience affirms that sin is a real problem that has plagued humanity...and you and me since almost the beginning of time.

Let's Talk about Sin

What is sin? "An immoral act considered to be a transgression against divine law." A dictionary definition. The Bible uses different words and images to convey the idea of sin. Here are a few of the recurring images: waywardness and straying from the 'straight and narrow'. Isaiah 53:6

'missing the mark'

rebellion against authority

Ever had your conscience tell you that you have been guilty of violating a moral, ethical, spiritual, physical, or relational standard? A troubled conscience can be indicative of wayward attitudes and actions.

At Redeemer Bible Church your leaders and teachers believe and teach the Bible as God's word to humanity. The Bible teaches that each of us has a sin problem and have offended a holy, righteous, and just God. We have 'missed the mark' of God's standard of perfection.

Romans 3:23 "For all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God..."

Isaiah 59:2 "But your iniquities have separated you from your God; your sins have hidden his face from you, so that he will not hear."

Psalms 51:5 "Surely I was sinful at birth, sinful from the time my mother conceived me."

Let's go back for a moment to Romans 3:23. What 'standard' have we fallen short of? The character and conduct of God. Consider Luke 10:25-37. Jesus made it very clear that the ultimate standard of God is wrapped up in love...in word and action. Vss. 27-28. Have you ever failed to love? That fact confirms that we are sinners who need a Saviour.

A Saviour...from What?

The PENALTY of sin. The POWER of sin. The PRESENCE of sin. Remember why the baby was given the name he was? "...you are to give him the name Jesus, because he will save his people from their sins." Matthew 1:21

Jesus was born, he lived, and died on your behalf so that the PENALTY of sin would be paid in full.

Romans 6:23 "For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord."

Romans 3:23-26...read and explain.

At Redeemer Bible Church we believe we are accountable to a personal God for our attitudes and actions. We believe that when we violate God's laws, that at their core are 'laws of love'...for God, others, and ourselves, we incur a penalty. Enter Jesus, the One who lived a perfect life, died a sacrificial death to pay the debt we owed to God, and was raised again, triumphant over sin, death, and evil.

Do you need a Saviour from the penalty your sins incurred? Will you ask Him to save you from the punishment you have brought upon yourself? Simply confess your sins and let Him know that you are trusting in what Jesus Christ did for you on the cross 2000 years ago. If you have questions, please talk with us.

A saviour from what? The POWER of sin. Sinful attitudes and behaviours have a way of creating chaos and destruction in our lives...and affecting those around us. Illustrate: 1 Timothy 4:9-11.

Have you experienced the enslaving power of sin in your life? Addictive and destructive behaviours? Immaturity of mind and heart that took you places you never intended to go. Sinful behaviours can offer a 'pleasure hit' that gives us a rush...but when it wears off, guilt and increased yearning rush in and a destructive cycle is kicked in to gear. Illustrate...

But...when we give our lives over to the care and leadership of Christ, we are infused with power...power to think and live differently. We can become people who learn to live with wisdom, courage, love, and purpose. We are not left to fend for ourselves. 2 Peter 1:3-11 This is a profound promise folks. Profound. Do you believe that you can learn to live a far healthier and joyous life?

How do we experience the power of God to become more fully people of wisdom, righteousness, resilience and love? Following Jesus...obeying His words, trusting His promises.

His Purpose...Your Response

Jesus longs to be a Saviour to you. Is His purpose being lived out in my life and yours? Many of us are Christians...yet it is easy to become 'fast and loose' with sin...a failure to love God, others and ourselves. Do you need to pause this day and confess specific failures of love? Do you need to put an end to expressions of 'sloppy living'...ethically, morally, relationally, and physically? There is fresh forgiveness for you. 1 John 1:9

Will this be your day of beginning a relationship with Jesus, as Saviour and Leader of your life? He longs to be a Saviour...to people, including you. Remember Mozart's phrase...let it be your prayer, your reassurance today.

Further Study, Reflection & Response
Between Sundays: The Arrival – Week 2: 'What's in a Name? Purpose'
Matthew 1:18-25

1. Why is the naming of a child a big deal? Why was it to you if you had children? What's in a name?

2. What truths are behind the title/name, Saviour? What does that word mean? Check out your dictionary!

3. Why is it hard for people (including ourselves) to admit that we are sinners and need a Saviour? What are some specific reasons?

4. What is sin? Do a word search on the different words used for sin in the Bible. Rich and thought provoking imagery.

Three common images: waywardness and straying from a path, missing the mark, such as the bulls-eye of a target, rebellion against authority.

Which of these images have you most illustrated in your journey?

5. Read through Romans 3:23-26, look at a couple of translations. How does God actually provide salvation? What is the significance of the life and death of Jesus? In specifics

6. Jesus says people from the penalty, power, and one day from the presence of sin. Why is this meaningful for you? Romans 6:23, what other verses could you reflect upon?

7. As a follower of Jesus, do you need to address any 'sloppy living' issues? It is easy to drift subtly. Are there any 'drifts' you need to stop, and address? Any mid-course corrections required? Be as specific as required!