

**Is he worth it?
Luke 2:8-20**

How much should I **spend** on their **Christmas present**?

It's one of the **biggest** and **hardest** questions of the **festive** season.

Should I buy them something from **Poundland**? Or should I splash out and go to **Primark**?

I'm generally rubbish at buying presents all year round. However, at Christmas time my desperation levels are off the chart and so I become the **dream customer** for any shop assistant.

The reason we agonise over how much to spend on someone's Christmas present is because we know it is a sign of how much we **value** them.

Go **cheap** and the person will be offended.

Go **big** and our friend will feel loved.

Or let me put it like this. Behind the price tag on the ticket, beneath the number on the screen, there is a deeper question. **Are they worth it?** Is this person worthy of what I am planning to spend?

This Christmas we've been asked to **extend** the idea of **worthiness** to who we spend time with.

Professor Chris Whitty has asked us to **prioritise our social interactions**. What a phrase! He is asking us to choose who is worthy. To pick the events and people that are most important and to cancel everyone else.

At first sight this seems like such a **unique kind of decision**. When else have we been forced to choose who gets in our social circle?

Actually, this is the kind of decision we make every day.

No one has unlimited time and energy. No one is a superhero. We can't do everything. Which means we all have to choose what gets squeezed into our busy schedules.

What is it for you? **What** do you **worship** with your **time** and your **treasure**? Or maybe **who** do you worship?

- Your family?
- Your career?
- Sport?
- Hobby?

What about God? How often do we prioritise God in our social interactions?

The truth is that he frequently gets **squeezed out of our commitments**.

- For some it's because they don't believe in him
- For many others it's because they see him as irrelevant
 - Maybe they see him as a cosmic kill joy
 - Maybe they see him as irrelevant to our eternal destiny. Because surely if there is a God then we are nice people on the road to heaven regardless of our interaction with him now.

For the next few minutes I want to show us from **Luke chapter 2** why the **Lord Jesus Christ** is worthy of our worship.

Listen again to what happened to a bunch of shepherds 2000 years ago.

Read Luke 2:8-9.

Their reaction of **terror** is not our normal response to angels appearing on the stage of a school nativity. We normally go, aww how cute.

But they were **terrified**. The reason is that the glory of the Lord shone around them.

It's more than just surprise. It's that the arrival of the angel brought the purity and holiness of God into the presence of sinful humanity. This led to terror.

When we only hang out with other sinners we make ourselves feel better and we present ourselves as better than we are.

It's a bit like the football team I used to play for at university. I was in 6th team. When we played other teams of a similar standard we thought we were amazing. But when we encountered true talent we were shown up for the unskilled buffoons we really were.

Something similar happened to the shepherds when the angel appeared. **Purity came into contact with pollution** and the shepherds were scared out of their skins.

This is when the angel assured them. Listen again to his precious words. **Read Luke 2:10-11.**

Don't be afraid. Not because you are better than you feared. No, you are worse than you feared but the good news is that a Saviour has been born.

I love that we're told that he was born...

- **Today** – that is, on a particular day
- In the **town** of David – in a real place

What use is a Saviour to us?

What were you doing in December 2019? I was returning from a meeting in London and stopped off with my in-laws in Doncaster. I remember watching a news report of some virus that was causing some problems in China. If back then our government asked us to go and get an energy vaccine then I imagine most of us would have been reluctant and uncertain. But it's different now. We know there is a virus racing around our country and our desire is to survive it. The news of a vaccine was greeted with joy and delight.

Do you know there is a virus greater than covid racing round our world? It's called the virus of sinful rebellion against the God who gives us everything. **It is eternally deadly.** But the great news is that a Saviour has been born and that a Saviour has died. He went from the **crib** to the **cross** to sacrifice himself to save us from our sins.

Jesus is greater than any earthly vaccine. He is the Saviour who can keep us eternally save.

I know there are many **sin deniers** in our world. Many who say that we are all good people on the road to eternal bliss. Many who encourage others at the crematorium and say, he is in a better place.

But here's the truth of the Bible. Only Jesus can get us to a better place, both in the **future** and in the **present**.

- In the **future**
- In the **present**

Is he worth it? Is the Lord Jesus Christ worthy of our worship?

We are all so **busy** and **distracted**. Our calendars never have enough slots. Our to do lists never get empty.

Why should we prioritise Jesus in our social interactions?

We need him, both for **now** and for **eternity**.

Please don't misunderstand me. I didn't say we need more **rules** or more **restrictions** or more **religion**. No, we need a **real relationship** with Jesus Christ.

- As you listen to this you may be **intrigued**

If this is you then take note of the example of the shepherds.

Listen to how they responded to the news that a Saviour had been born. **Read Luke 2:15-16**.

Come and explore more about Jesus in the Bible

- As you listen to this you may be **delighted**

Yes, this is what I do believe. Listen to what the shepherds did after they met Jesus. **Read Luke 2:17**.

That's our mission. We don't want to keep good news to ourselves.

The inventors of the covid vaccines didn't stay silence. Neither should those who know about the sin vaccine.

- As you listen you may be **ready**

Ready to follow Jesus as your Lord for the very first time.

Ready to admit your sin and trust in Jesus as your precious Saviour.

Salvation is not automatic. Like the vaccine it is available but it needs to be received.

If this is you I want to give you an opportunity to do this right now. There are different ways of becoming a Christian but for today I want to invite you to **pray this prayer** on the screen. **It's very simple but hugely significant.**

Read words on prayer.

Jesus, I am amazed by your love for me. Thank you for sacrificing yourself so that I can be saved from my sins. From this point onwards, I want to trust you as my saviour and obey you as my king. Amen.

You can pray this whatever your background. This is a call to all the **unfaithful** to put their trust in Jesus.

Why don't you pray in the silence of your mind to God in heaven?
Pray the prayer.

If you have prayed it then please do tell someone and do come back next week and join us as we gather together to grow in our knowledge and love of Jesus. **Amen.**