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CHRIST'S PURPOSE IN COMING

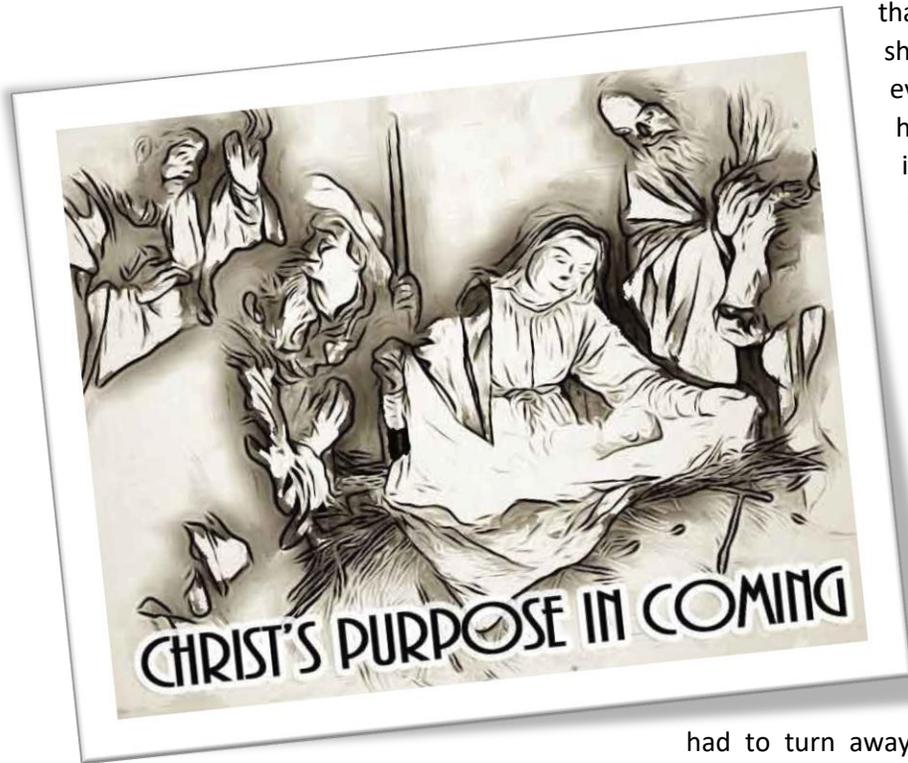
During the Christmas season, varying thoughts are expressed by people concerning what they find significant or purposeful in the season. You will often hear people say personally or you will hear the suggestion that people “find” the true meaning and spirit of Christmas. You can see it in the many “made-for-TV” movies, when it is about finding romance, reconnecting with a lost love, or marrying a prince or princess in some obscure British kingdom. For children, Santa Claus becomes the center of attention, and for many adults unfortunately, Christmas becomes an official season to drink and party.

We all know or should know that the true meaning of Christmas is about the coming of God incarnate, Jesus Christ. In the Scriptures, we are given the perspectives of the Old Testament prophets and the New Testament authors. But also to be included in that discussion is Christ's own words for the very purpose for which He came into this world through humble beginnings and lowliness. It's after Jesus' interaction with Zacchaeus that Jesus says these words in Luke 19:10, “For the Son of man is come to seek and to save that which was lost.”

I don't know that there is a more clarifying purpose statement in all of Scripture than this. If we truly want to get to the meaning of this season, as to why Jesus would leave heaven's glory to accept such a lowly estate among men, Jesus tells us in His own words that it is two-fold.

1. HE IS COME TO SEEK THE LOST.

For Him to seek the lost means there are those who are indeed lost. Who are those people? Quite frankly, it is everyone! The Bible says, “All have sinned and come short of the glory of God” (Rom. 3:23) and “There is none righteous, no, not one” (Rom. 3:10). Since no one is without sin, it means that He came for every person, for every person qualifies as being a sinner. Therefore, our confession needs to mirror



that undeniable truth that “All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned every one to his own way; and the LORD hath laid on him the iniquity of us all” (Isaiah 53:6). The blessing is that when one comes to this realization, God provides a remedy. He assures us that “If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.” (1John 1:9).

For Christ to seek the lost means His heart and His actions are all about this one endeavor. Consider the importance of what God is doing for mankind. The Lord pursued a relationship with Adam and Eve even when they broke that relationship through sin. He

had to turn away from man because of sin, but now through Christ, God once again turns to man with the offer of salvation through Christ so that the relationship can once again be reestablished. The Father is now seeking, pursuing, and waiting for everyone to turn back to Him. This is what we call “reconciliation.” Paul said, “We pray you in Christ’s stead, be ye reconciled to God” (2 Cor. 5:20).

2. HE IS COME TO SAVE THE LOST.

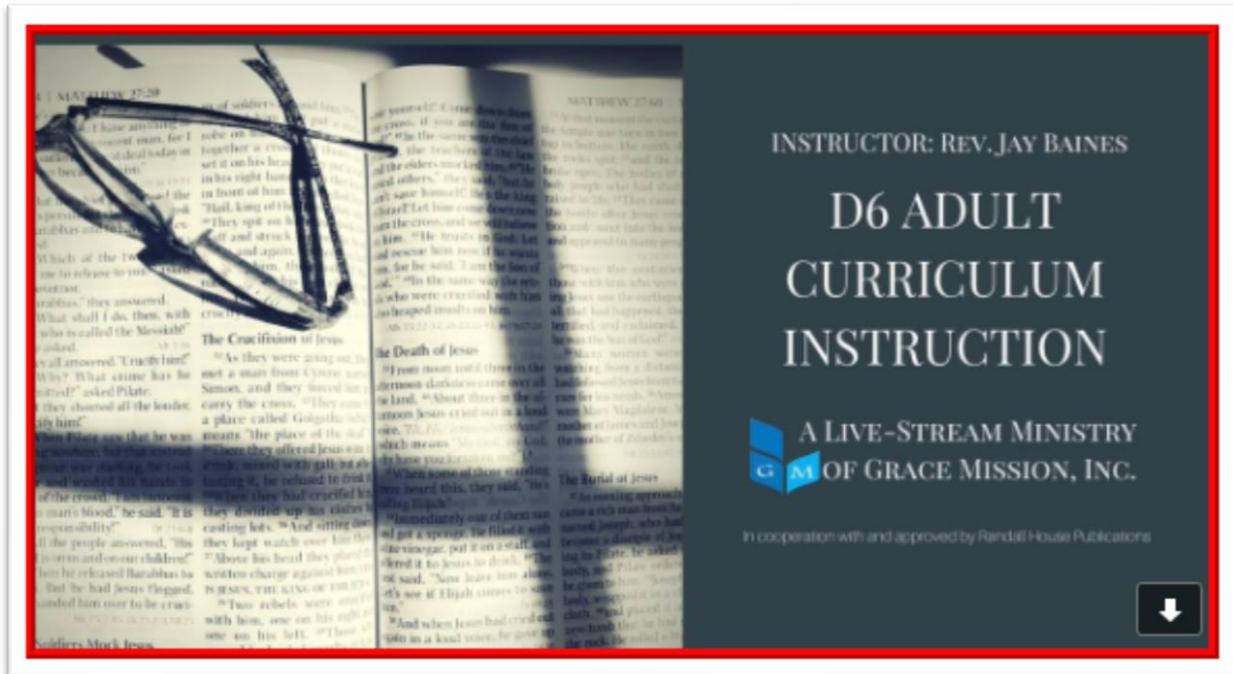
Our Scripture text makes it clear that Jesus seeks one purpose. He seeks the lost because He desires to save the lost. And Jesus saves only one way. Even though we don’t want to be offensive to people who might not yet understand, the Bible is clear that there is only one way of salvation. “Jesus saith unto him, I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me” (John 14:6) and “Neither is there salvation in any other: for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved” (Acts 14:12).

This must be a reminder to us about the Christmas season. May we never forget that Christmas is and always has been about Christ’s purpose in coming to this world: to seek and to save that which is lost. May God help us today not only to reassure our hearts that we have come to Him for His provided salvation, but that we are also carrying that singular message of salvation to a world so desperately in need of Him. Since it was and is His purpose, so must it be ours as His ambassadors of the gospel.

BIRTHDAY OFFERING FOR CHRIST



Check out this video explaining the offering for the GRACE Outreach Evangelistic Management Software Program. It's only 5 minutes!



Through the ministry of Grace Mission, we are beginning the new quarter's live stream instruction of the Randall House D6 Curriculum for adults. The new quarter begins December 2nd. We are working in cooperation with Randall House to make this possible, and Grace Mission is the only ministry approved to broadcast the stream live.

Pastor Jay Baines, who is also a Randall House board member, teaches the class each week. He does an excellent job in the curriculum instruction, and you will enjoy his interaction and discussion with live class members. The actual live stream begins at 9:15 AM each Sunday and ends at 10:00 AM (EST). Once the class has completed at 10:00, the instruction is immediately archived for churches that have their studies at 10:00 or later or during different time zones. The instruction stays up for one week.

UPCOMING EVENTS

- DECEMBER 3-5: NAFWB Leadership Conference, Nashville, TN
- DECEMBER 8: John Wheeler Northeast Quarterly
- DECEMBER 14: John Wheeler Southwest Quarterly
- DECEMBER 25: Christmas
- DECEMBER 29: Southwest Virginia Quarterly: West Wise
- JANUARY 1: New Year's Day
- JANUARY 5: Midway Quarterly
- JANUARY 12: John Wheeler, Northeast Quarterly
- JANUARY 12: Southwest Virginia, East Wise County
- JANUARY 19: Sunbright Association
- JANUARY 27: Each One Plant One Missions Offering
- FEBRUARY 1-2: Sandy Valley, Buchanan County
- FEBRUARY 2: Harmony Association
- FEBRUARY 2: Northern Virginia Conference
- FEBRUARY 4-5: VAFWB All Boards Meeting, Roanoke, VA

Each year on the last Sunday of January, we take up a statewide offering to help support the mission efforts in Virginia. This offering provides the VAFWB Mission Board with funding for their efforts in helping our state missionaries with special needs.

We ask for each FWB family in Virginia to give this once-a-year offering of \$12. If everyone participated, we could raise about \$16,000.

All pastors/churches in Virginia are receiving a mail-out from the promotional office which includes two card-stock flyers to post within the church as well as instructions and suggested announcements for each Sunday in January. All the information is also on the state website <https://vafwb.org>. You can also download the graphic for use in bulletins or presentations as well as the video advertisement you can play each in the service. The video is below, but you can follow the easy directions on the website to download it for your use. It's only one minute long.



VIRGINIA CHURCH LOOKING FOR A PASTOR

Calvary Free Will Baptist Church in Crewe, VA, is now actively looking for a pastor. The pulpit will be available in February, and the church is praying to have the pastorate filled near that time. If you are interested or know of a Free Will Baptist pastor who is, please make contact through the following email: genesis.moss@outlook.com.

The Grace Mission website is getting a complete makeover on New Year's Day, and it will be much more appealing visually. As we're advancing the GM outreach, the options for the general public will increase, but we will also have special content for our supporters (both church and individuals) through member pages.

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