

Luke 2:8

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[0 : 0 0] And if you would open up your Bibles to Luke chapter 2. So children, get your mums or dads or whoever you're sending by to get them to open their Bibles up to Luke chapter 2. Who's up the earliest this morning? Any 7 o'clock? 7 o'clock? Hands up if you're up at 7 o'clock.

Half 6? Half 6? 6 o'clock? Chris Crannock! Half 5? 5?

See you, me soon as you've bounced. Half 4? Dawood, I'm impressed, I'm impressed, I'm impressed. Well done. Dawood gets the sweets. Come and see me later if I'm sweet.

That's good. That's very, very good. Okay, so look at verse 8. Look at verse 8. And the angel of the Lord appeared to them, that's the shepherds, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were filled with great fear. They were terrified.

Now that's no surprise, is it? And when you see angels in the Bible, angels give people the shock of their lives. They're afraid. People are afraid. So the angels say the most common command in the Bible.

[1 : 1 8] Fear not. Do not be afraid. That's what angels always say. Do not be afraid. Do not be afraid. For behold, I bring good news of great joy that will be for all the people.

For unto you is born this town in the city of David a Saviour, who is Christ the Lord. Now that is a really, really important statement.

It tells us, really, the who of Christmas and the why of Christmas. It tells us why Jesus came, and it tells us who Jesus is.

So look at the verse again. Any of the children, can you tell me here, he is born, what is he? Born in the city, the town of David a... What is he? Have a look what he is. Can anybody tell me?

It begins with... Ah, Jeremiah. That's right. A Saviour. Now the word Saviour, it's hard for some people. It's not easy for some people. But all it really means is rescuer.

[2 : 1 8] Alright? And how many of you have seen the teleporter? There's a teleporter called Helicopter Heroes. Has anybody seen it? One person has seen it. That ruins this illustration.

They're not even a child. Helicopter Heroes. Well, let me tell you, it's pretty simple, okay? A helicopter flies out at an air ambulance to rescue people. So maybe there's an accident on the motorway, and it's all jammed up, like it's been this week.

And the cars and the ambulances can't get through. So the helicopter flies, flies to the M1, and lowers down a rope, and lowers down a crew. And they do an amazing work.

And they rescue people. They lift people up, is it? They're like a saviour. Or maybe you've been at the seaside, and you see a helicopter, and fly out to the sea.

And you see him lower a winch down, and there's a man on the end of the rope, and he grabs the person, and then they lift him back up to the helicopter, and they rescue him. They are saviours.

[3 : 1 8] Maybe you've even seen that at the beach. It's quite amazing, isn't it? It's an amazing job. And afterwards, they interview the people, and the people are so pleased that they've been rescued. Somebody's in trouble.

Somebody's in danger. And somebody else is their saviour. Okay? And that helps us understand why Jesus came. He came to people who are in trouble.

He came to people who are in danger. And he comes as a rescuer. So Christmas is not just a nice story about a crib, and a stable, and the animals there.

It's far more important than that. Because it is all about God's rescue for the world. Now, have you ever thought about how strange it is? If you were in danger, and if you were in trouble, who would you send?

If you were thinking of sending somebody to do a rescue, who would you send? Who would you want to come and rescue you from danger? You wouldn't really want, would you, a little baby.

[4 : 24] So imagine you're trapped out at sea, alright? And you're there on the waves, and you're in danger. And out comes a tiny little baby.

Little Rebecca on her own. No, it's Rachel, isn't it? Just hold Rachel up for us, Maddie. Hold Rachel up for us. Oh, that's Rebecca, is it? I got it wrong. That's Rebecca.

So imagine you saw Rebecca paddling along on a little boat. It would be no help, would it? That wouldn't be a good saviour, would it? And yet, this baby is sent into the world to rescue.

Now, there's plenty of rescuers, aren't there? Who can tell me? This isn't a very good picture. I've got another one. Can anybody tell me who that is? Do you know who that is? Indiana. Oh, what? Who is it?

Can you see who it is, Marius? Who do you think that is? He's got a whip. Indiana Jones. Have you seen the films? They're very good. They're better than The Hobbit, honestly, alright?

[5 : 26] They're great films, okay? They are great films. And he rescues people. He's got a whip, and there's a big stone that... He runs away from big stones, and he wears a hat, and he always rescues his hat.

He's a great character. He said, if I was in danger, that's who I'd want to come and rescue me. Indiana Jones. What about this guy? Who is that?

Who is that? Spider-Man. And what's Spider-Man's superpowers? He's got any superpowers? What can Spider-Man do? What does he do? He can climb walls.

What else does he do? Shoot webs. It's a funny superpower, isn't it? But he can rescue people, can't he? Can't he? Peter Parker. And he comes and he rescues the woman who...

I can't remember her name. He comes and rescues her, alright? Then... What about this man? Who's that? Who's that? No.

[6 : 28] Wait. Wait. It's not a very good book. Can you... Who's that, don't you? Superman. And what can Superman do? Anything. Anything. David says no.

What can Superman do? Okay. He can... He can save people. What else can he do, though? Yeah. He can fly. Can you do anything else?

He's quite strong, isn't he? If you were going to... If you were going to have someone to rescue you... Superman would be good, isn't he? You'd want him. Okay. What about this one? This is the last one. Who's that? This is. Do you see that?

Who's it, Noah? Mr. Incredible. That is right, isn't it? And what can Mr. Incredible do? What can Mr. Incredible do, let's see. He can push the train back.

He's very, very strong. And if you were in trouble... If you were in trouble, that's why... I think he would be even better than Indiana Jones, wouldn't he, Mr. Incredible? He would come and he would rescue. Now, let me tell you this.

[7 : 32] Okay? Listen to this. Indiana Jones... Spider-Man... Superman... And Mr. Incredible...

Are absolutely no use to rescue you. Or me. They are absolutely useless to save us.

For a lot of good reasons. One really, really important reason is this. Can you guess what reason it is? All right? Mr. Incredible... Mr. Incredible... Superman...

And... Spider-Man... And Indiana Jones... Are all... What are they all? Alistair. Fictional. That's right. They're made up, aren't they? I'm sorry if that ruins things.

But they're not real, are they? They are on films... Or they're on comics... But the big difference is this. What God's rescuer that we have come to celebrate and rejoice in today is real.

[8 : 30] He's real. He's not made up. Some people think that the Christmas story is made up. That it's invented by somebody who thought up a kind of nice story. And over time, some strange people like us think of it now that it's real.

But this really happened. Jesus was really born. If you look at chapter 2 and verse 1... In those days, a decree went out from Caesar Augustus that all the world should be registered.

This was the first registration when Quirinius was governor of Syria. What's that telling you? It happened in real history. Jesus was born. He was a man of history. Like Napoleon. Like William the Conqueror.

Like Winston Churchill. He is not invented. But he was really born 2,000 years ago. So here is a real baby. And sometimes... You know what? In the carols we give a false impression.

I love Away in a Manger. I think it's a lovely carol. I really do. But Jesus did cry, didn't he? And when it says no crying, he makes...

[9 : 29] Well... Jesus was a real baby. Jesus cried. And Jesus ate food. Jesus sometimes got ill. He did other things.

Didn't he? He was a real person. A real physical person. But not only was Jesus a real person. But there's a second reason why Jesus is the only one that can be a saviour. And that is because of what the angel said. So can you look at the verse again with me?

Look what it says. Verse 11. For unto you is born this day in the city of David a saviour who is...

Christ the Lord. What does that mean? Christ means God's King.

Christ is a real king. And the Lord means that he is God. So he is God's King. And he's God himself. And that is why Jesus could save human beings, men and women.

He was a real man and yet he was also really God. And that is what Christ is all about. It's all about the real God becoming a real man.

[10 : 32] And really coming to be our saviour. And that is why Jesus came. And if he had not been a real man and really God he wouldn't have been able to save anyone. So let's think about it for a minute.

Let's think. If Jesus had just been a real man. Could he have saved us? If he was just a man? Now if he was just a real man he couldn't have saved us.

Let me tell you why. Because he would have needed saving. Because all just people, all just men and women are sinners. We've fallen short of God's glory.

Jesus would have needed saving. Because all just people are just sinners. If Jesus hadn't really been God. Then he would have told lies.

He would have lost his temper. He would have disobeyed his mum and dad. He would have been selfish with his toys. And when he grew up he would have been nasty to other people. Like we all are sometimes.

[11 : 30] But Jesus never was a liar. He was never selfish. He was never greedy. He always loved people. Because he wasn't just a real man.

He was a real man. And he was also really God. But listen. Let's think for a minute. Supposing he'd just been God.

And not a real man. Supposing he hadn't been born in Bethlehem. He just kind of came down from heaven like the angels did. He could have done that, couldn't he?

Could have done that. He didn't have to be born. But if Jesus had just been God. Really God. And not a real man. He couldn't have been our saviour.

You see Jesus has got to be our substitute. So if you've got somebody who's going to be your substitute. He's got to be like you hasn't he? He's got to be like you. Let's think.

[12 : 27] Next summer is the World Cup. Is it? Football World Cup. And let's imagine England gets to the final. And they're playing Brazil in the final. And they're losing 3-0 in the final.

The World Cup final. And let's imagine the manager Roy Hodgson. He decides this team is hopeless. I'm going to make a substitute. So he puts up Wayne Ruby's number on the board. And takes him off. And he sends on a dog. The dog runs onto the field. And starts chasing the ball around. Would that work?

Would that work James? No it wouldn't would it? There'd be lots of trouble. Or supposing he holds up. He holds up Wayne Ruby's number. And Wayne Ruby walks off.

And he goes to put his hand out there. And there's a donkey. Dressed in an English shirt. And the donkey comes onto the field. And he trots onto the field. With an England shirt. An England shorts on. And you say.

[13 : 25] That is ridiculous isn't it? It's such a silly illustration. It would never work. Because a donkey. Or a dog. Cannot be a substitute. For a real human being.

Only a real person. Can be a substitute. To save real people. Only a real person.

Can save real people. So he had to be a real person. But he also had to be God. To be a perfect person. And that is why Jesus.

Is the only one who can be our saviour. Because nobody else can save you. Your mum and dad. Well they love you very much. Don't they? And they might want to rescue you.

But because ultimately. They are humans. Just like you and me. They need saving too. Let me let you into a secret.

[14 : 22] Your mum and dad. They do bad things. As well. Like you and like me. I can't save you. No priest. No vicar.

No religious leader. Can save you. The only one who can save you. Has to be both God. And man. And that is the Lord Jesus. So how did Jesus save us?

Well the perfect man. Was nailed to a cross. They put nails. Through his hands. And his feet. So the little baby. Who was born on the crib.

Was born to die. And it's hard to think like that. Isn't it? We look at a little baby. Hopefully Martin will have that baby. Maybe she'll be in church on Sunday. Who knows. And you think.

Oh. Aren't they living. They look so innocent. Don't they? Well the Lord Jesus. He is innocent. But those arms. Those tiny little arms. With those tiny.

[15 : 20] Tiny little fingers. That babies have. Those arms. Would eventually. Be nailed to a cross. And that wasn't a mistake.

It wasn't a mistake. God planned it that way. That was how God. Was going to rescue. You and me. Through the Lord Jesus. And Jesus died there.

The perfect man. Who could take our place. Because he was perfect. He could die for our sins. And the real God. Was so amazing. So strong. That he could take on himself.

All the wrong of his people. And because he was God. He was able to do that. He was able to bear the punishment. Because he was God. And only God could do that. He became the rescuer.

By laying down his life for us. What an amazing God. Doesn't he love us? How could we ever doubt. That he loves us. Sometimes we do don't we? Does God care about me?

[16 : 18] Does God care about my life? And the things that have gone wrong? The stuff that I'm going through. How could God love me? Well look back to the stable. And look back to the cross.

And you will know that God loves you. Because he came all the way from heaven. To rescue you. And it cost him everything. That is how much he loves you. Now here is my question.

As I finish on it. Jesus is the saviour of the world. But the question I want to ask you this Christmas day is this. Is he your saviour? Is he your saviour?

Let me tell you a very sad story. Okay? We are going to go back to the helicopter. Rescuing in the sea. Alright? And there was a man with a very big posh yacht. And he was sailing off the coast of Cornwall.

Let's meet you at Cornwall. You've been to Cornwall. You've been to Cornwall. Lots of people have been to Cornwall. And there was a terrible storm. We've got a storm in the last few days. And the yacht got damaged. It was a very expensive yacht. And the yacht began to sink.

[17 : 15] So he radioed at the heart. He sent an SOS. And the coast guard got the message. And the message sent. And the coast guard sent the air rescue team. And in the midst of this terrible storm.

The helicopter flew out to where they were sinking. And they lowered down a man on a cable. You've seen it. And they were going to grab the man on the yacht. And they said grab hold of the rescuer. And we'll lift you to safety.

The man on the yacht said. But what about my yacht? It cost me hundreds of thousands of pounds. I can't leave my yacht. I can't leave my yacht. Can you see my yacht? The man on the way said. Of course. He said. Of course not. We can't. We can't. It's too dangerous. If you don't get off the yacht. You will drown. And this man who was on the yacht.

Decided. I didn't want to go with the helicopter. He stayed with the yacht. He hoped his yacht would survive. And he hoped that he wouldn't lose it. But tragically the yacht sank. And he was lost along with it.

[18 : 13] How foolish is that? It's really silly isn't it? Really silly man. Can you imagine? The rescuer came. And he offered him. A wave of skin.

He offered him life. He offered to save him. But the man turned it down. You say that's unbelievable. But it did happen. It was true. Well let me tell you something.

Even more unbelievable. Even more unbelievable. And this is true. There are people all over the world. Who sit in churches like this today. And they know that Jesus came to rescue.

And they know. They sing the carols. They read the readings. That Jesus is the saviour of the world. That he came all the way down from heaven. And it cost him his life on the cross. But do you know what?

They say. I can't leave my sin behind. I can't leave all this other stuff behind. And they say. I'll stick with it. I'll be okay.

[19 : 11] Leave me alone. And they never ever ever. Put their trust in the rescuer. And the saviour. And you know what the bible says? Jesus died.

To save sinners. Wonderfully. But you must choose to be saved. Like a man on the yacht. We have to say. Yes Lord Jesus.

I want you to rescue me. I'm sorry for the wrong things that I've done. I thank you for living and dying for me. I want you to rescue me. And do you know.

You can say that when you're really little. As little as Ethan. As little as Martin's little baby. Or you can say that when you're as old as.

Well I won't say who's the oldest. It's a stupid thing isn't it. To say no.

[20 : 09] To the rescue. It's never too late. It's not too late today for you. The rescuer has come. And Jesus says. Trust in me. Have faith in me. Take hold of me. Yeah.

You're going to have to leave some things behind. But it's so important. Eternal life is on offer. Put your trust in me. And I will rescue you. Don't be like the guy in the yacht. You know.

Lots of you this morning. You know what Jesus has done for you. And yet you stubbornly refuse to trust him. Well let me say this. Like finish. Nobody else. Is going to come and rescue you.

You cannot save yourself. And nobody else can save you but Jesus. It's a desperate thing this Christmas day. If you've not trusted in him. And he is there.

He's waiting. Why not put your trust this Christmas day in the rescuer? That is why. The angels say to each one of us this morning. They bring us.

[21 : 07] Don't they? They bring us. Good news. Of great joy. It's great news when you're rescued. See after those shows.

You don't want helicopter heroes. Well you don't know. But after it they interview different people. And those people they are so thankful. They are so overjoyed.

They are so grateful. Because they've been rescued. They are relieved. Yes they're relieved. And so this Christmas day. Those of us who have been rescued. Rejoice.

It is a wonderful joy. It is a wonderful relief. To know that you are right with God. And you're ready to meet him. And no matter what this year brings in.

You're right with God. And you're ready to meet him. And maybe today. If you realise that you need rescuing. What you need to do. You need to say sorry to God. To say sorry.

[22 : 07] For all the sin and rebellion. To say thank you. For God sending his son. And the Lord Jesus living a perfect life. And dying a death in your place.

And say please God. Send your Holy Spirit. Into my life. And make me a Christian. And help me to live for you. Let's pray.