

THE LORD IS COME FOR EVERYONE LUKE 2:10-11
CHORAL SERVICE MON DEC 21, '15

¹⁰ “And the angel said to them, “fear not, for behold, I bring you good news of great joy that will be for all the people. ¹¹ For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, who is Christ the Lord.”

When you are shopping for Christmas presents,
are you ever attracted by advertisements claiming
that a particular item is the perfect gift for everyone
on your list?
Does that mean everyone? From great-grandma
in the nursing home to the newspaper boy?
Or something that says one size fits all: is it really all?
from a newborn baby to someone who is 100s of lbs?
So when the angel says the good news of great joy
is for all people, does that really mean all people?
Yes, Christ really came to save all people.

CHRIST SAVES ALL FROM ADAM TO ZECHARIAH
CHRIST CAME FOR ALL FROM AHAB TO ZACCHAEUS
CHRIST IS FOR ALL FROM ANIMISTS TO ZOROASTRAINS

CHRIST SAVES ALL FROM ADAM TO ZECHARIAH

Adam, the very first person, was personally created by God
in God's own image and he was originally perfect
but he didn't listen to God and did what God said not to do.
So no matter how perfect he was before,
he was a sinner and needed a savior.
When his children were born, they were in image of Adam,
which means they were all sinful from day one
and they all needed a savior too.
Zechariah, the father of John the Baptist, was an old priest.
He had faithfully served God for many years
by offering sacrifices and prayers in the temple.
But he didn't listen to God's angel and believe his promise
about John's birth so he became unable to talk.
No matter how long he had done good things,
he was a sinner and needed a savior.
The same was true of everyone in between them
and everyone after them.

Everyone from Adam to Moses didn't yet have
the 10 commandments but they had a God-given
conscience that told them some things are right & wrong.

But that was not enough to make them good.

It just meant they had no excuse because they knew
things they were doing were wrong.

But they also had a promise given to Adam and Noah
and Abraham that God would still love and care for them
because he would one day send a descendant
who would be a blessing to them and all nations.

Moses and those after him had God's commandments
including instructions on sacrifice and worship.

But even though they were written down clearly
they didn't keep them perfectly either
and so those laws didn't save them and those sacrifices
were never enough to finish paying for their sins.

But God also promised Moses and King David and the rest
that he would send a perfect prophet, priest and king
who would do everything they could not do,
and that savior of every one of them was Jesus.

They were saved by believing in Jesus
who God had promised would come
just as we are saved by the same Jesus who has come
just like God promised.

But what about those who were not looking for a savior?

CHRIST CAME FOR ALL FROM AHAB TO ZACCHAEUS

Ahab was one of the most wicked kings of Israel.

He and his wife Jezebel led people to worship
a false God named Baal and do terrible things.

But God sent the prophet Elijah to warn him.

He was so mean Elijah felt like giving up,
But God did not give up until finally even Ahab
repented and God had mercy on him.

Why did God do this? It was because of Jesus.

Zacchaeus was tax collector in Jericho

He was a traitor to his own people and a greedy cheat
who didn't care about anyone but himself.

But Jesus came along and invited himself
into Zacchaeus' life, and Zacchaeus was changed.

When Jesus was dying on the cross,
a murderer, just before he died, came to faith in Jesus
and Jesus promised he would be in heaven.
Even before that Jesus said even of the Roman soldiers
who were nailing him to the cross: Father, forgive them.
There are lots of other bad people in Bible
who had no interest in God
but God was interested in them and reached out to them.
We don't know for sure which of them
finally repented and had faith and were saved
but we know God offered them his grace & forgiveness
and that was because Jesus died even for them
and his death was enough to pay for their sins.
That means this is still true for everyone
from Adolph Hitler to Al Zarqawi
and every one of us, no matter how bad we have been,
even though, sadly, many never benefit
from what Jesus has done for them
because they reject it and don't think they need it.
But because Jesus is the Lord, which means he is God,
his death on the cross is enough to pay for
all the punishment deserved by everyone in the world.
And God's grace and love is so great
he wants everyone in the world to receive his salvation
which is given for free through faith.
Even this repentance and faith is also given freely by God
through the work of the Holy Spirit with God's word.

So, now,
CHRIST IS FOR ALL FROM ANIMISTS TO ZOROASTRIANS

Have you ever gotten an advertisement in the mail
addressed to "occupant"?
If it was an advertisement for siding or shingles
and you live in an apartment or a mobile home
you might say, that is not for me, and throw it away
even though it was indeed sent to you.
That is what some people say about Jesus
Some may say, "Jesus is not for me, I am Jewish"
or "Jesus is not for me, I am Muslim" or Hindu.
or "Jesus is not for me, I am an atheist."
But, whether they realize it or not, everyone needs Jesus
and God wants everyone to have and know Jesus.

Every culture in the world has some sort of religion,
Many primitive cultures are animist,
they believe there are spirits in everything
and the spirits of the dead are still around
and they have to do things to keep them all happy
or bad things will happen to them.
Some advanced cultures are humanist,
they believe there are no spirits at all, not even God.
There are only people, and we decide for ourselves
what is right and wrong
and we can help ourselves out of any problem.
But all of these different religions have one thing in common,
they all depend on us, something we must do or decide,
which shows they are all invented by people.
So all these religions are like a car without a motor,
only holes in the floor for your feet, like Fred Flintstone.
They are worthless, whether they believe in one god
or many gods, because none of their gods are real.
There is only one religion given by God himself,
and that is the one that says everything depends on God
and what he does for us. This is faith in Jesus.
This is why, when Jesus was born, a star appeared
and was used to attract Magi from the east.
They were not even Jewish.
They may well have been Zoroastrians,
which is an ancient religion of the middle east.
They didn't know it yet, but Jesus was for them too,
and God wanted them to know it.
God wants everyone to know and believe in Jesus.
This is why he sent angels to the shepherds,
and the shepherds ran and told others
and God sends us to tell everyone in the whole world,
from Afghanistan to Zimbabwi,
"Joy to the world, the Lord has come."
He has come for all.
CHRIST SAVES ALL FROM ADAM TO ZECHARIAH
We all need to be saved and only Jesus can do it.
CHRIST CAME FOR ALL FROM AHAB TO ZACCHAEUS
He has earned salvation for all and offers it to all.
CHRIST IS FOR ALL FROM ANIMISTS TO ZOROASTRAINS
and he wants them all to be saved through faith in him.