

Full and free forgiveness, daily hope, a place in heaven, an abundant life now that even death cannot destroy—all this comes to us through a Child who wasn't bolted to his manger, a Child who left that manger to live the life of perfect obedience we could not live. The Child who grew up and allowed himself to be crucified for our sins, taking the punishment we deserved, to win our salvation. A sealed tombstone couldn't hold him in. He bolted from the tomb on the Sunday morning we call Easter and ascended to heaven to pray for us and to prepare a place where we will live together with him forever.

## Taking It Home

The people who bought the nativity set for their church were afraid someone would take Jesus. You see, Jesus wasn't meant to stay in the manger, on a cross, or in a grave. He lives! Actually, Jesus wants us to take him! To take him home. To take him with us as we celebrate Christmas. To take him to work, to school, to the grocery store. And after the calendar says this holy season is over, he doesn't want us to pack him away until next Christmas! He wants us to keep him in our hearts and lives every day in the New Year ahead. He wants us to share him with those around us who need his love.

Today you're receiving a gift to remind you that Christ your Savior is born. May the Holy Spirit use it to strengthen and encourage your faith. Rejoice! And share the news!

*For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord.*

(Luke 2:11)

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The Scripture quotation is from the King James or Authorized Version of the Bible.

#CSB9DA



Expanding the Impact of Your  
Gifts of Encouragement

# Christ the Savior Is Born!

## Introduction

While estimates vary, most experts say that, on average and worldwide, 175 children are born every minute. That's over 250,000 births every day! And hundreds of thousands of parents, grandparents, sisters, brothers, aunts, uncles, friends, and neighbors rejoicing at the birth.

Today we want to focus on the birth of one particular child. Today we want to join with people from all over the world as, together, we rejoice in the Good News that Christ the Savior is born.

When you think about it, it's quite a birth announcement: *Christ the Savior is born!* This news didn't arrive like most birth announcements do. There was no sealed, stamped envelope. There was no letter carrier or postal truck. Rather, this announcement arrived, enveloped in saving grace and sealed in a mercy that carried the stamp of heaven.

This birth announcement didn't include a perfect picture of a baby lying on a soft blanket. Instead, it causes us to picture

the perfect Jesus, lying on a bed of hay. The message of this birth didn't come via an e-mail subject line with details included on an attachment. Instead, this announcement speaks of one who left heaven to subject himself to a world of sin; the announcement comes with promises of hope and life attached. News of this birth wasn't posted on Facebook; rather, we read about it in the book of faith, God's true, inspired Word, the Bible:

*For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord.*

*(Luke 2:11)*

## Getting to the Heart

I once read a story about a group of people who ordered an expensive, life-size nativity to display outside their church at Christmastime. When it arrived, they unpacked the figures. They were surprised to discover that the baby Jesus figure was separate, not attached to the manger as they had expected. Immediately they became fearful that someone would steal the baby. So they bolted and chained Jesus to his manger!

These people meant well. They had invested a lot of time, money, and effort in their nativity display. Naturally, they wanted to make sure Jesus didn't go anywhere. But that's not how it really was with our Savior. Jesus invested his entire life in saving the world from sin and eternal death. His decision to make that investment came hundreds of generations earlier; that decision to love sinful human beings goes all the way back to Eden, to a couple named Adam and Eve. When sin walked through the front door of their perfect home and led them out the back door, the Lord was waiting for them.

Genesis 3:15 tells us that on that very day, the day their sin made it necessary for them to leave paradise, they heard, ever so faintly, the announcement that shepherds would

hear on Christmas night: *Christ the Savior is born!* By their disobedience, Adam and Eve opened the door to disease and discomfort, shame and shamelessness, disappointment and destruction, debt and death, and the list goes on.

But despite the fact they deserved no mercy, only punishment, the Creator-God told them about a son who would one day be born to crush the power of Satan. In the process he himself would be hurt. But nonetheless, the deliverer would come. There it was—ever so softly—Christ, the Savior would come. Hold on to the promise. Hang your faith on the hope, Adam and Eve:

*For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord.*

*(Luke 2:11)*

God's faithful people did just that, generation after generation. They hung their hopes on the promise God had made, his promise to send a Savior who would remove sin and cancel its consequences.

Finally, it happened. But in the most unusual of places—in the back streets of the little town of Bethlehem, in a place built to shelter animals. Mary and Joseph made room in the manger that stood nearby. They placed the newborn there, in his first bed, in a feeding trough designed for beasts of the field, not the best of heaven. And the God who had whispered his promise into Adam and Eve's ears now nudged the angels to shout it from the skies—Christ the Savior is born!

Christ, the promised Messiah, is born! The Savior we truly needed in order to truly live, to live both now and throughout eternity, had arrived. He was born of a woman, yet heaven's perfect child. That's news worth celebrating, both today and every day. It's news that changes everything, for now and for eternity.