

Jesus: “He Saves”

Matthew 1:18-21

(Black Bibles p. 807; Children’s Bibles p. 1154)

We continue our series “Baby Names,” in which we discover the meaning of Christmas through the names and titles given to the baby born in Bethlehem.

“She will bear a son, and you shall call his name **[1] Jesus**, for he will **[2] save** his people **[3] from their sins.**” (Matt 1:21)

[1] “Jesus”

- Ordinary name! Yet extraordinary meaning...

[2] “save”

- Saving is an *extreme* measure – but those who are desperate will gladly receive it. (Is this you?)

[3] “from their sins”

- Saved from *what*? The Romans? The devil? Death? Those all are true, but this verse names the deepest enemy and problem of all: ourselves.

- God worked great acts of salvation in the Old Testament, such as the exodus from slavery in Egypt. But in Jesus we have God’s highest and final act of salvation! (see Heb 2:3-4)

To the Lord’s Supper: a meal commemorating the end of this baby’s life, and the salvation it achieved.

Questions for reflection and application:

1. Read the passage, Matthew 1:18-21. If we only had these verses, what would we say the meaning of Christmas is?
2. What does Christmas *mean* in the United States (perhaps both good and bad)? How is it different than what is taught in Matthew 1:21?
3. How do you respond to the thought of being helpless, and needing to be “saved”? And is there great joy in being saved?
4. What practically can you do this Christmas season to keep focus on the holiday’s true meaning?