

The Miraculous Birth Birth of the King

by William MacDonald

William MacDonald explores the miraculous birth of Jesus, emphasizing its prophetic significance and humble circumstances.

Duration: 42:25

Scripture: Psalm 145:3, Zechariah 13:7, Matthew 1:1-2, Hebrews 4:12

Topics: "Birth Of Christ"

Description

In this sermon, the preacher discusses the unusual birth of Jesus Christ. He highlights that the birth of Jesus was prophesied in Isaiah 700 years before it happened. The preacher emphasizes that Christmas is a unique and remarkable concept, as it commemorates the appearance of the Lord of the universe in the form of a helpless baby. He also emphasizes the deity of Christ, stating that in the body of Jesus, all the fullness of the Godhead dwells. The preacher encourages listeners to reflect on the significance of Jesus' birth and to find peace amidst the commercialism and frenzy of the holiday season.

Transcript

Just a couple of things before we turn to the word. I got a special thrill driving here today and seeing all the supermarkets, uh, Safeway closed, Long's Drugstore closed, the malls were deserted. They don't do that for Lincoln, they don't do that for Washington, they don't do that for Labor Day, and I don't, I don't mean that they're doing it out of love for the Lord Jesus, but just gave me a little tug on my heart that the birth of my Savior stops all of those stores today.

It did something for me. Another thing, if you read Our Daily Bread, I don't know how many of you read it for today, but in case you didn't, it's very good. Uh, uh, Harry Reasoner was one of the most respected TV journalists, and in 1971 he wrote this, uh, commentary on Christmas.

I was really surprised when I read this. He said, Christmas is such a unique idea that most non-Christians accept it, and I think sometimes envy it. If Christmas is the anniversary of the appearance of the Lord of the universe in the form of a helpless baby, it's quite a day.

It's a startling idea, and the theologians who sometimes love logic more than they love God find it uncomfortable. That's a wonderful line, theologians who sometimes love logic more than they love God, and he's speaking about liberal theologians. He said they sometimes find the birth of Christ uncomfortable.

It's either all false, here's what he says, it's either all falsehood, or it's the truest thing in the world. It's the story of the great innocence of God, the baby, God in the power of man, and it is such a dramatic shot toward the heart that if it is not true for Christmas, nothing is true. For Christians, nothing is true.

Sorry. So even if you have not got your shopping all done, and you're swamped with all the commercialism and frenzy, be at peace. The story ends.

Isn't that well done? You don't expect that from a TV journalist. Okay, we're going to think this morning about the unusual birth, unusual birth of the Lord Jesus Christ. It's unusual in prophecy, it's unusual in its genealogy, in the birth, in his name, and in his early life.

What would you think if I told you that a baby was going to be born seven years from today, and I told you the sex of the baby, and I told you what the baby was going to be called, and I told you what the baby was going to be like to its character, or her character? You'd say, come on, McDonald. Listen, Isaiah did all of that and more 700 years before this baby was born. Turn to Isaiah chapter 7 and verse 14.

I never cease to get a thrill out of this. Verse 14, therefore the Lord himself will give you a sign. Behold, a virgin shall conceive, and bear a son, and shall call his name Immanuel.

Isaiah, 700 years before the birth of the Lord Jesus Christ, says, look, friends, there's going to be a miraculous birth. It's going to be a boy, not a girl, and his name is going to be Immanuel. That's marvelous.

I mean, we're so used to some of these verses in Scripture, we forget just how marvelous it is. And as if that wasn't enough, you turn over to chapter 9, and you read verses 6 and 7, and you have it again. For unto us, a child is born.

Unto us, a son is given. That's pretty explicit, isn't it? Pretty specific. The government shall be upon his shoulder, and his name will be called Wonderful.

Now, I think, I know that some of you probably have a Bible here today. His name shall be called Wonderful Counselor. Well, it's true, he is a Wonderful Counselor, but it isn't right.

It isn't a right translation. The word wonderful there is a noun, not an adjective. His name shall be called Wonderful, and you know the name stands for what a person is.

He is wonderful at his name. Counselor, mighty God, everlasting Father, Prince of Peace. I tell you, I think that's tremendous.

And as if that wasn't enough, the prophet, another prophet who lived at the same time that Isaiah lived, his name was Micah, and he said, well folks, I'd like to tell you where he's going to be born. I mean, he didn't say Asia or Europe or something. I mean, there are only so many continents, you know, and he could have made a broad guess.

No, no, no, no, no. Let's turn to Micah chapter 5, Jonah, Micah, and this is really so thrilling when you start to think of it. But you, verse 2, but you Bethlehem, Ephrata.

Bethlehem, Ephrata. You see, there was more than one Bethlehem in the land of Palestine when Jesus was born, but Micah 700 years beforehand said, I want to tell you which Bethlehem he'd be born in Bethlehem, Ephrata, which is about six miles south of Jerusalem. Don't you think that's wonderful? I do.

I can see why the liberals don't like prophecy. I can see that. It's so convincing.

It's so wonderful that they want to explain it away, and they want to give a later date to these prophets and all this nonsense. That's what Reasoner meant when he said, these theologians who love logic more than they love God. But when you really love the Lord, and you believe in the inspiration of the scriptures, it's just marvelous.

So just think of that. The prophets, they told a child was going to be born, a child was going to be born a miraculous birth, a child was going to be a son, a boy, and he was going to be born in Bethlehem, Ephrata. Not Bethlehem, Naphtali.

It's like the United States. I don't think there's a state in the United States. Maybe Alaska might be an exception, or Hawaii, but most states have a city named Lincoln in it.

Did you know that? And it's as if Mike was saying, now not the Lincoln in 47 states, the Lincoln in Illinois. He was that specific. Marvelous.

You say, well, what about the date of his birth? Well, the prophecy of the date of his birth, there's no prophecy concerning the date of his birth, but there's a wonderful prophecy in Daniel chapter 9 when he would die, when he would die. And we don't have time to go into that. I'll read it with you, but it would really take the whole hour to explain this passage of scripture.

Daniel 9, verse 26. It says, And after the sixty-two weeks, and the weeks there, really the word is seven, after the sixty-two seventh, Messiah shall be cut off, but not for himself. Messiah shall be cut off.

So, actually, Robert Anderson took this prophecy of Daniel chapter 9 and he put it all together. Robert Anderson, head of the Scotland Yard, and he proved that this prophecy brings you down to the Palm Sunday before the crucifixion of Christ. If any of you want to follow that in detail, there's a footnote in his book, The Coming Prince, and it gives you all the mathematical computations.

Brings it down to Palm Sunday before Christ's death. Well, you say, what is that got to do with the first? Well, at least brings you to the year in which he was born. That's not bad.

700 years beforehand, is it? Tells you at least the year. I mean, the lifetime of a man. And as it turns out, he died when he was about 33.

So, I think that's very, very good. It's marvelous, in fact. It's because the prophecy is concerning the Lord Jesus Christ, concerning his birth, and that is in all the genealogies.

There are two wonderful genealogies in this book, and there's a genealogy in Matthew, and there's a genealogy in Luke. Matthew chapter 1 and Luke chapter 3. You can hold out your finger in those two places. In Matthew chapter 1, there's a genealogy that brings it down to Joseph, the stepfather of Jesus.

This is not, just remember, this is not the bloodline of Jesus in Matthew 1, because Jesus was not the son of Joseph. He was virgin born. But it's very important to remember this, that the line in Matthew is the line that proves that he's the legitimate heir to the throne of David.

In Luke, you have the genealogy bringing it to Mary. This is the bloodline. The Lord Jesus is descended from David through Nathan, and then down to Mary.

And these two genealogies are marvels in themselves. Marvels in themselves. Unusual birth.

Nobody ever had two genealogies like this, I'll tell you that. In Matthew, there are four women mentioned. Tamar, Ruth, Rahab, and Bathsheba.

Two harps, one adulteress, and two Gentiles. Amazing. You know, man would have never, if this book were written by men, he never would have put that together like that.

But these women were, and incidentally, most genealogies, Hebrew genealogies, don't mention women, they mention men. But these women's names are mentioned here. Why? Well, because he's the Savior of sinners.

That's why. Because he's the Savior of sinners, as well as the King of Israel. None of those four are mentioned in Luke's gospel that gives you the bloodline of the Messiah.

I'd like you to notice an interesting thing in Matthew 1.11, if you have your finger there. It said, Josiah begat Jeconiah and his brothers about the time they were carried away to Babylon. That name, Jeconiah, everything in the genealogies is interesting.

We only have time to think about them. But just think of that name, Jeconiah, and remember that in your Bible there are different versions of that name. He's also called Coniah.

He's also called Jehoiachin, and he's also called Jeconiah. They're all similar. It's all the same name.

Jehoiachin, Coniah, Jeconiah, and Jeconiah. Now would you turn, please, to Jeremiah 22.30. Jeremiah 22.30. And here you'll find that there was a curse pronounced upon this man. Jeremiah 22.30. And it says that no son of his would ever prosper reigning upon the throne of David.

Jeremiah 22.30. Thus says the Lord, write this man down as childless. Oh well, just to prove it's Jeconiah. Verse 28.

Is this man, Coniah, a despised, broken idol? Is he a vessel in which is no pleasure? Why are they cast out, he and his descendants, and cast into a land which they do not know? O earth, earth, earth, hear the word of the Lord. Thus says the Lord, write this man down as childless, a man who shall not prosper in his days, for none of his descendants shall prosper sitting on the throne of David and ruling any more in Judah. You say, what's significant about that? Well, what's significant about that, if Jesus were descended from Joseph, he'd come under the curse of Jeconiah.

You see, that line in Matthew 1 comes down to Joseph, the stepfather of Jesus. But Jesus wasn't a lineal descendant of Jeconiah. He wasn't a blood relative of Jeconiah.

If he was, he could never have reigned upon the throne of David. But Jesus was the adopted son of Joseph. See, the virgin birth is so significant.

It had to be this way, and therefore he does not come. Well, you say, maybe somebody else will arise. In fact, in the last days, I think when the Antichrist arises, he's going to claim to be a descendant of David, and with rights to the throne of David.

Uh-uh, not possible. You see, it came down in Matthew 1, it came down through the line, curse of Jeconiah, and down to Joseph, and then his son by adoption, Jesus. Now, Jesus really did inherit the

rights to the throne of David in that genealogy.

And, you know, nobody else can ever claim the throne of David, because Jesus is still living. I think that's wonderful. You know, the Lord Jesus is still living as the right hand of God.

Nobody can claim the throne of David. He's going to come back and take it someday. At his second advent, he's going to come back, and he's going to sit on the throne of David in Jerusalem and reign over the nation of Israel.

Well, it's almost a shame to spend a little time in the genealogies. F.W. Grant, in one of his books, has a wonderful chapter entitled, *The Gospel and the Genealogies*. I confess, when I was a young fellow, and before I would say, boy, if I were writing the New Testament, I never would have started with a dry-as-dust genealogy.

Well, I tell you, I've changed my mind. This genealogy is not dry-as-dust. It's marvelous.

We just had time to go through it. Then the birth, of course. Unusual prophecy, unusual in prophecy, unusual in genealogy, unusual in birth.

Luke chapter 2, verses 4 through 7. Luke chapter 2, verses 4 through 7. Joseph also went up from Galilee out of the city of Nazareth unto Judea, to the city of David, which is called Bethlehem, because he was of the house and lineage of David, to be registered with Mary, his betrothed's wife, who was with child. So it was, while they were there, the days were completed for her to be delivered, and she brought forth her firstborn son, wrapped him in swaddling clothes, laid him in a manger, because there was no room for them. As you can talk about, an unusual birth.

How many in our audience were born in the cattle sheds? In fact, who do you know outside of the Lord Jesus who was born in a cattle shed? The creator of the universe! Born in a cattle shed. Incredible. That's the way it was.

There was no room for him in these. Coming events cast their shadows before them, don't think. Just very significant.

There was no room for him in these. He came unto his own, and his own received him not. That is, Israel came unto Israel, and his own received him not.

But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name. It's marvelous, isn't it? You just can't take it in. Once again, if I was writing this book, I would have had him born in a castle, wouldn't you? I'd have had him born in a castle with the most beautiful bedroom you've ever known in your life.

Talk about a bassinet, probably gold-encrusted. His birth was like his death. It borrowed no glory from this world at all.

No glory. No majesty. I think that's marvelous.

I gasp when I think of it. Some of the happiest days of my life were when I was a boy, and we spent the summer on a farm in Vermont. And I know what a cattle shed is like, you know? I know what a barn is like.

I know what a stable is like. A clean, many of them. It's not sanitized like the maternity ward of a hospital, dear friends.

This is born in a manger to sorrow and to shame. Oh, it was wonderful. Blessed be his name, speaking for me, for me.

Matthew chapter 1, verse 16. Wonderful in his birth. Matthew chapter 1, verse 16.

And Jacob begat Joseph, the husband of Mary, of whom was born Jesus, who is called Christ. Now, as far as the English is concerned, that could mean that Jesus was born of Joseph. As far as English is concerned, couldn't it? The original language of the New Testament, the word whom is feminine.

I love it. It's feminine, not masculine. See, in English, you can't tell.

Whom could be masculine or feminine? You can tell in the original language of the New Testament. I get a thrill out of that. The care in which the Holy Spirit of God records the details concerning this unusual birth.

And then, of course, here in chapter 1, Isaiah is quoted, verse 22. Now, all this was done that it might be fulfilled which is spoken by the Lord through the prophets, saying, Behold, a virgin shall be with child and bear a son. They shall call his name Immanuel, which is translated, God with us.

And you know what world does. You know what the world does when you talk about Jesus being born of a virgin. In fact, some of the theologians, they don't like it.

William Barclay said the church has never required us to believe in the virgin birth. You know, theologians, they don't like that. Humanly speaking, impossible.

You know, God is greater than men. God can make a fool out of people who doubt his words. I'll tell you what I'm thinking of.

When God created this universe and all the creeping and flying things that were in it, he made a little thing called a bee. B-E-E. And in the in the world of bees, there is such a thing as virgin birth.

There is such a thing as a female bee giving birth to bees without the aid of a male. If you don't believe it, just go home and get your Webster's dictionary and look up the word parthenogenesis. Partheno from the Greek word for virgin.

Genesis means beginning, a virgin beginning. I think God chuckles in heaven. I really do.

I really do. I think he chuckles in heaven when he looks down on the earth and sees men ridiculing the virgin birth of the Lord Jesus, when if they'd only go to a beehive, they'd find virgin birth taking place. I hate to be on the side against God, wouldn't you? I hate to be on the side against God, ridiculing the word of God or doubting the word of God.

No, no, I don't want that. Unusual birth, virgin birth. They're not impossible with God, of course.

So, of course, the Lord Jesus had to be born of a virgin. If he were born of a man and a woman, he would have inherited the sin of Adam, and he could never be my savior. Thought of birth, huh? The creator of the universe, the Lord of life and glory, coming into this world.

I think it's one, I think it's Graham Kendrick, who writes some lovely modern hymns in England. He wrote, Lo, within a stable lies he who built the starry skies. I like it, don't you? Lo, within a stable lies he who built the starry skies.

And Charles Wesley wrote in one of his hymns, Our God contracted to a stand incomprehensibly made man. This is beautiful. Our God contracted to a stand.

You look at that little baby, you'll land, hopefully we'll have a baby before the day is over. You look at that little baby and think, did my savior come into the world like this? Every time I see a newborn baby, I think of that, you know, my Lord came into the world like that. Your God contracted to a stand.

What's a stand? I suppose it's, you know, this, the width from one finger to the other, and incomprehensibly made man, and that's right, just more than the human mind can handle. You know, the greatest, the most unusual thing, the most, the great marvel of this Christmas observance, is this, that in that baby, God was contracted to a stand. In that baby, you can look at that baby and say, in him dwells all the fullness of the Godhead bodily.

I mean like that. In him dwells all, and that was Colossians and Cephas, all the fullness of the Godhead bodily. It's one of the great verses of Scripture, as far as I'm concerned, concerning the deity of Christ.

I mean, try to get around some of the others. Try to get around this one, that in the body of the Lord Jesus dwells all the fullness of the Godhead. You say, my mind won't take it in.

My mind won't take it in. That's why Charles Wesley said, incomprehensibly made man. There's no human mind that can ever understand that, how God and men could exist in a body of flesh together.

And it's true, and he proved it was true by his words and by his work, as all the attributes of God. Absolutely undeniable. 2 The wonders of his name.

I said that he was named before he ever came into the world, and so he was. Matthew 1, verse 21, it says, He will bring forth a son, and you shall call his name Jesus, for he will save his people from their sins. That's what Jesus means.

It means Jehovah, J-E, Wesley, Savior. Jehovah is the Savior. That's what it was.

You know, I love the name of Jesus. Somebody said that in our worship meeting not too long ago, and it struck a responsive chord with me. I don't always agree with my brethren, and I'm not speaking about the brethren here, but on a wider scale.

It's a very common thing among our assemblies, and I love the assemblies, but it's a common thing to say, never call him Jesus. Give him his full title, Lord Jesus Christ. Well, I confess it's a good idea to give him his full title, Lord Jesus Christ, but please don't tell me that I mustn't call him just Jesus, because Jesus is the sweetest name I know.

It really is. It's the sweetest name I know. No sweeter name has ever fallen on my ears than the name Jesus.

I think the reason they say that is because they've heard people use the name, you know, almost like a mantra in certain religious circles, you know, without much feeling connected with it. But I don't think you can support that teaching that we mustn't call him Jesus. Look at how many of our hymns call him Jesus.

We sing that, didn't we this morning, Jesus, a very thought of thee, with sweetness fills my breast. Better far thy face to see, than in thine presence rest. So, I treasure the name.

In fact, Philippians 2 says that God has given him the name, not a name, but the name which is above every name. What is it? Jesus. That the name of Jesus every knee shall bow, and every tongue confess him, Lord, to the glory of God the Father.

That's a great thing, isn't it? Some bow the knee to the Lord Jesus Christ now. I tell you, it's really something to think that in a coming day, every knee is going to bow the name of Jesus, and every tongue confess him, Lord, to the glory of God the Father. The only thing is, they'll do it then in judgment.

We do it today in grace, don't we? So, I find that tremendously solemn. You turn on the radio, or you turn on the TV, and you hear people ridiculing the Lord, and ridiculing fundamentalists, and ridiculing the right wing, and all this, and they show they're out of contempt for Christ and the things of Christ. And I sit there, and I think, watch out for those knees of yours.

They're going to bow someday at that name. The name is going to be declared, and they're going to have to bow, and those very lips are going to have to confess that Jesus is Lord, the glory of God the Father. What a wonderful name, Jehovah Savior.

And then, of course, we also read that he would be called Emmanuel. You say, well, we don't call him Emmanuel. Well, we do.

We do call him Emmanuel. Once again, the name stands for what he is, and he is God with us. And every time we acknowledge him to be God with us, we're acknowledging him as Emmanuel, and in our hymns we call him Emmanuel's land.

What are we speaking about? We're speaking about the Lord Jesus. And then you have those lovely titles in Luke, chapter 2, verses 9 through 11. Luke, chapter 2, verses 9 through 11.

There you have him called Savior Christ the Lord. Notice Luke, chapter 2, verse 9. Behold, an angel of the Lord stood before them. The glory of the Lord shone around them, as they were greatly afraid.

The angel said to them, Do not be afraid. Behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy, which will be to all people. For there is born to you this day in the city of David a Savior, who is Christ the Lord.

Savior. Christ, that's the Messiah, the anointed of God. The Lord is the Lord of life and glory.

It means the sovereign of the universe. What a wonderful thing. This will be the sign to you.

You will find a babe wrapped in swaddling cloths, lying in a manger. And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host, praising God and saying, Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace and goodwill to men. Wonderful, wonderful Jesus.

Then, of course, in his early life, I think it's so significant that you have here the story about the wise men. The wise men. Who in the world were they? Were they Jews or Gentiles, the wise men? Anybody? Jews or Gentiles? Well, they were Gentiles.

You know, and I find this really staggering. If you'll turn back to Matthew chapter 2, I'd like to read verses 1 through 12 there, and this is so significant. I said, Coming events cast their shadows before them.

Watch in these chapters how the Gentiles accept him. They bring gifts to him. Listen to what it means to the Jews when he's born.

Now, after Jesus, this is Matthew 2, verse 1. Now, after Jesus was born in Bethlehem. Notice it doesn't say when Jesus was born. It says afterwards.

And you know, this could have been quite a while afterwards. In fact, it doesn't even have to be in Bethlehem what we're reading about now. It could be in Nazareth.

After Jesus was born in Bethlehem, Judea, the days of Herod the king, behold, wise men come from the east to Jerusalem. Well, the idea is they probably came from, I don't know, Afghanistan, Iran, I don't know. They generally thought they were Zoroastrians who used to read the stars.

But the important, I think, here to remember is whoever they were, they were Gentiles. They weren't Jews. Saying, Where is he who has been born king of the Jews? For we have seen his star in the east have come to worship him.

Notice, when Herod the king heard these things, he was troubled, and all Jerusalem with him. Now, that's sad, friends. These are the people he came to.

They're troubled. Now, that's an interesting thing. I don't know how many babies are going to be born today in the United States, but President Clinton isn't going to be troubled over any one of them that's born.

It's not going to cause a ripple in the White House, is it? President Clinton is not going to feel any sense of dread that this baby that's born today somewhere in the United States is going to usurp his power. Herod and all Jerusalem with him. That's so sad, isn't it? But that's what's going to happen.

He's going to go into his public ministry, and the Gentiles will hear him, and they'll come to him, and many of them will put their faith in him, but his own people will reject him. These early chapters of Matthew and Luke are so very important. They almost tell you what's going to happen in most of the rest of the book.

And then they come to him with gifts, and that's so beautiful. Gold, frankincense, and myrrh. Of course, the gold speaks to me of glory.

The glory of deity. It's almost an acknowledgment that they realize this was no ordinary baby. The glory of deity.

Frankincense fragrance, you know, incense. Maybe some of you, your sister's got some perfume for Christmas. Well, this perfume, that's what we're talking about.

Frankincense perfume. Make it simple. And then there's myrrh.

Myrrh, that's not so good, is it? Myrrh, the word means bitter. The same word mara in the Old Testament, the waters of Mara, bitter. The same word that Naomi used when she came back to Bethlehem.

Don't call me Naomi, meaning pleasant. Call me Mara, for the Lord has dealt very bitterly with me. The frankincense spoke of the fragrance of his life and work.

The mara speaks of the bitterness of the death that he would desire. Now, there's an interesting thing. There's another place in the Bible where you get something similar to that, and that's Isaiah chapter 66, and verse 6. Isaiah 60, verse 6. I'd just like you to look at that briefly.

Isaiah 60, verse 6. And this is talking about a future day when the nations, when the Lord will be in Jerusalem, you know, and the nations of the earth are going to come up and worship in Jerusalem. And it says in verse 6, "...the multitude of camels shall cover your land, the dromedaries of Midian and Ephah. All those from Sheba shall come, they shall bring gold and incense, and they shall proclaim the praises of the Lord." Now, there's something missing, dear friends.

What? What's missing? Huh? Mera's missing. Why? Because this is looking forward to a second advent. There won't be any bitterness then.

There won't be any. He's going to come in power and great glory to reign over the earth. What a wonderful book this is, huh? No word of this book drops to the ground without meaning.

Absolutely not. "...never again shall God Jehovah smite the shepherd with the sword. Never again will cruel sinners set at naught their glorious Lord." I think it's beautiful to go back to Isaiah and see the Mera's missing, because he's looking forward to the second advent of the Lord Jesus when he comes back again.

And just one final verse. Our time is gone. There's much more we could say.

Matthew 2, 11. Unusual birth, an unusual early life. Matthew 2, 11.

I just love it. It says, "...when they had come into the house, they saw the young child with Mary his mother." I think that's lovely. This isn't the way you would have written it.

Not the way I would have written it. They saw Mary with a baby on her lap. No.

They saw the young child with Mary his mother. Who's the important one? Of course, not Mary here, but the young child. Marvelous, isn't it? How the Holy Spirit of God guards the person of the Lord Jesus Christ in all of these wonderful passages of Scripture.

I'll praise the Lord for all those who know him, who bow the knee to him in this life and acknowledge him to be Lord and Savior. What a wonderful message to take to a lost world. Jesus, I shall call his name Jesus, for he shall save his people from his sins.

He did not come to judge the world. He did not come to judge the world. He did not come to blame.

He did not only come to seek, it was to save he came. And when we call him Savior, we call him by his name. So we pray, and then Gary will come up and lead us in including him.

Father, we thank you for this wonderful birth today. Thank you for the Scriptures that set it forth so beautifully, and guard his sinlessness, his holy nature, and point forward to his glorious ministry here on earth. We pray for those who do not know him, who've never really taken their stand for Christ.

We pray that any such might do so before the day of grace is over. We just pray that in this holiday season that we might keep the Savior ever before our minds. We ask it in Jesus' name.

Amen. Closing number 144. Number 144.

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