

1 The Savior Reveal

The most important "reveal" in history . . .

2 Scripture

In those days Caesar Augustus issued a decree that a census should be taken of the entire Roman world. (Luke 2:1 NIV)

(This was the first census that took place while Quirinius was governor of Syria.) (Luke 2:2 NIV)

And everyone went to his own town to register. (Luke 2:3 NIV)

3 Scripture

So Joseph also went up from the town of Nazareth in Galilee to Judea, to Bethlehem the town of David, because he belonged to the house and line of David. (Luke 2:4 NIV)

He went there to register with Mary, who was pledged to be married to him and was expecting a child. (Luke 2:5 NIV)

4 Scripture

While they were there, the time came for the baby to be born, and she gave birth to her firstborn, a son. (Luke 2:6 NIV)

She wrapped him in cloths and placed him in a manger, because there was no room for them in the inn. (Luke 2:7 NIV)

5 scripture

And there were shepherds living out in the fields nearby, keeping watch over their flocks at night. (Luke 2:7 NIV)

An angel of the Lord appeared to them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were terrified. (Luke 2:8 NIV)

But the angel said to them, "Do not be afraid. (Luke 2:9 NIV)

I bring you good news of great joy that will be for all the people. (Luke 2:10 NIV)

6 scripture

Suddenly a great company of the heavenly host appeared with the angel, praising God and saying, ...

"Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace to men on whom his favor rests." (Luke 2:13–14 NIV)

7 Introduction

As many of you know, Lynn Tipton passed away last spring.

She died of advanced Parkinson's Disease and Breast Cancer.

We held a memorial service for her at the University of Kentucky Arboretum.

At the end of the ceremony, we released balloons in her honor.

8 Introduction

However, due to a lack of wind the balloons rose straight up and remained over head for a long time.

In fact, I was worried that Lynn's balloons might become a hazard to helicopters and other aircraft traffic.

Finally, the winds picked up and carried the balloons safely off to the northeast.

9 Introduction

A few weeks later, I was driving up to the Georgetown-Scott County airport.

And there I saw, stuck in the security fence a balloon, just like the ones we used for Lynn's memorial.

I thought to myself, how ironic it would be that one of Lynn's balloons landed at the same airport I use.

10 Introduction

So, I got out of my car and when I looked at the balloon, what I saw shocked me and then made me laugh.

The inscription on the balloon said, "It's a girl!"

In other words, what I saw was a balloon from a "Reveal Party," which also could have been a real hazard to public safety.

In fact, "Reveal Parties" have become so large and outlandish these days that they have indeed created lots of public safety issues.

11 Introduction

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Having a baby is cause for celebration and, in the days before the ultrasound test, it used to carry with it some element of surprise.

Would the baby be a boy or a girl?

These days, however, most people don't wait until the child enters the world to announce whether it's a him or her.

In fact, "Gender reveal" parties are today all the rage!

12 Introduction

Most people agree this began with a simple post on social media in 2008, when a woman named Jenna Karvunidis and her husband cut into a cake revealing pink icing for a girl.

She posted about it on her blog, and the idea soon went viral.

But since social media makes everything a competition to go a step further, some gender reveal parties have actually gone way off the rails or the cheese has fallen off the cracker.

13 Introduction

Take the case this fall of a gender reveal party in which the family paid for a plane to crop dust a field with 350 gallons of pink water to honor their unborn female child.

The plane stalled out and crashed after dumping its shower of pink.

While the plane was totaled, the pilot did survive the crash.

14 Introduction

In another incident in 2017, a father-to-be started a 47,000-acre wildfire that caused \$8.2 million in damage when he shot his hunting rifle at an explosive target full of blue powder.

In October 2019, an Iowa woman was killed by flying shrapnel when another pyrotechnic gender reveal was inadvertently turned into a pipe bomb.

15 Introduction

We can blame this on Instagram or on the fact that we now tend to over-script and over-celebrate most things in life to impress friends, family, and strangers.

Whatever the impulse, gender reveal disasters can overshadow the joy of the actual birth of the life.

16 Savior Reveal

The same tendency applies to Christmas, too.

Christmas is about celebrating the birth of a baby, but it too has become so over-scripted many miss the real meaning of the event.

Many people who celebrate Christmas in our culture have only a vague notion of the meaning of Jesus' birth.

Though they know it has to do with a birth, they seem to show that they are more interested in shopping, buying presents, and waiting for Santa.

17 Savior Reveal

Christmas started out as a fairly simple celebration around the fourth century, . . .

But lately has gone viral and burned an explosive swath of consumerism through our culture.

Somewhere in the midst of it all, people have forgotten what it was about: the most important reveal in all of history.

18 Savior Reveal

We read the familiar story of Jesus' birth according to the gospel of Luke.

Maybe it has become so familiar that we miss the fact that the story was actually a more explosive revelation than anything one might create in their backyard.

And yet, when God reveals the coming arrival of his Son, it isn't at a party, nor is it a media event.

19 Savior Reveal

Actually, the reveal takes place in a hidden part of the world with no Internet connection or Facebook account.

In the quiet of a tiny house in the nowhere town of Nazareth,

To a young girl engaged to be married,

To shepherds, (social outcasts), sleeping in fields.

It seems that God is not all that interested in creating a major media event.

20 Savior Reveal

Luke makes this clear and, in a way, sets up a contrast between Jesus and Caesar.

Caesar Augustus didn't do anything without making it a media event — the media in those days being heralds and coinage.

Augustus had coins minted announcing that he was a "son of god."

"Lord" was a title reserved for Caesar and him only.

21 Savior Reveal

Luke makes it clear in telling these announcement stories that Jesus

is the true Son of God,

the world's true Lord, and

the real bringer of peace,

Also, the announcement doesn't take place in the halls of the Roman or Judean government or in the first-century equivalent of social media.

Again, the announcement appears in nowhere places to people who are nobodies.

22 Savior Reveal

And the announcement isn't just, "It's a boy!"

It's an announcement about his purpose.

The angel tells Mary that he will be the holy "Son of God" (Luke 1:36). The angel tells the shepherds that he will be their "Savior," who is "the Messiah, the Lord:" the world's true king and Lord (2:12).

In Rome, the army would sing their allegiance to Caesar, but in a field outside Bethlehem the angel armies of God declare his praise: "Glory to God in the highest heaven, and on earth peace among those whom he favors" (v. 14).

23 Savior Reveal

It's the announcement that God had broken into a broken world, not in a heavenly display of fireworks, but in the form of a tiny human child.

Who in humility will redefine greatness.

Show what righteousness, justice and godliness are all about.

And, put to shame the arrogant, proud, and those who are wise in their own eyes.

24 Savior Reveal

A spiritual seeker came to a rabbi and asked, "Teacher, why doesn't anyone see God nowadays?"

"People aren't willing to look that low," the rabbi replied.

To me, this is a great answer, because it just so happens, that the Lord God Almighty, the commander of the Host of Heaven is a humble servant.

Those who measure greatness by the world's standards will never see, know, or understand him.

25 Savior Reveal

When Mary was pregnant with Jesus and visited the mother of John the Baptist who was also pregnant, she gave what is known as the Magnificat.

"My soul glorifies the Lord and my spirit rejoices in God my Savior, for he has been mindful of the humble state of his servant. From now on all generations will call me blessed, for the Mighty One has done great things for me — holy is his name." (Luke 1:46–49 NIV)

“He has performed mighty deeds with his arm; he has scattered those who are proud in their inmost thoughts. He has brought down rulers from their thrones but has lifted up the humble.” (Luke 1:51–52 NIV)

26 Savior Reveal

When Jesus’ ministry was flourishing and people were coming to hear him in droves, he said this to them.

“Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you and learn from me, for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For my yoke is easy and my burden is light.” (Matthew 11:28–30 NIV)

— Savior Reveal

In fact, the Apostle Paul said that [Our] attitude should be the same as that of Christ Jesus:

Who, being in very nature God, did not consider equality with God something to be grasped, but made himself nothing, taking the very nature of a servant, being made in human likeness.

And being found in appearance as a man, he humbled himself and became obedient to death — even death on a cross!

— Savior Reveal

Therefore God exalted him to the highest place and gave him the name that is above every name, that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father. (Philippians 2:5–11 NIV-GK)

27 Conclusion

Everything about the birth of Jesus was a repudiation of the standards of this world.

Having power and glory means nothing, if we lack the humility to be in submission to God will.

For I have come down from heaven not to do my will but to do the will of him who sent me. (John 6:38 NIV)

Which is why he was given the name that is above all names and one day the governments of all the nations will rest on his shoulders.

28 Conclusion

So then, let us not fret or worry about what tomorrow will bring.

Why? Because Jesus has said, "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me . . . And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age. (Matthew 28:18, 20 NIV)

So then, let us cast our cares on him so that we can pray with great faith and assurance.

Who knows, we just might, having a clear conscience before God, change the hearts of the proud.

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