

Worship The King

- Merry Christmas to you and happy birthday to Jesus. And let me just say, my heart is so full of joy to see you. And I just wanna take a moment and thank all of you for joining us, but also could we just take a moment and thank the band and the choir? What an incredible job leading us. And here's what I want you to know is so wonderful, these are all members of our church family. These are people that we know and love. And many of the people on the stage became Christians at this church, some were saved and baptized this year. God has been doing incredible things and we're overjoyed to see you. My name is pastor Mark, I have the honor of teaching and preaching God's word here at Trinity Church, and we're very glad to have you. My Christmas present to you is a short sermon, If you come back later, you'll get a full one, but this one's a bit brief. But I love this time of year because I love Jesus Christ. And I thank you for joining us as we worship him. And when we speak of Christmas, we're really speaking of the worship of Christ. Christmas the word comes from actually two ancient older words, Christ mass. Of course, Christ, referring to Jesus Christ and mass is an old word that the church would use for worship services devoted to Jesus. So Christmas is literally in its own title, the worship of Christ. And we do this by gathering together and singing Christmas carols, which are songs devoted to Jesus, special songs during the holiday season. And the reason that we are worshiping is because Jesus Christ is worthy. And our word for worship comes from an older English word called worth ship. And that is that honor, praise, glory, expectation, adoration, and appreciation would go to the person who was worthy. And we're here to worship Jesus Christ because he alone is worthy. There are an infinite number of reasons why he is worthy of worship, but I will give you two, number one, Jesus Christ is God, he is the only God, he is the creator God. And ultimately Jesus Christ is without beginning or end, we're all made by him, we're all made for him, we will all stand before him when all is said and done. Jesus Christ is the only founder of any major world religion to ever declare himself to be God. And today we are here celebrating the biggest worship event on planet earth as the Christians around the globe, a few billion of us get together to worship Jesus Christ. He is, he is the only God. And the other reason that we're worshiping him is because he's humble. It's hard to adore someone who is arrogant, but it's easy to adore someone who is humble. So not only is Jesus Christ our God what we remind ourselves during this holiday season is that he's humble. He came from heaven to earth, he from a thrown to a manger, and he came from wealth to poverty, he came from being worshiped by angels to being surrounded by animals. Jesus Christ is altogether humble. And what I wanna talk about is what was Jesus Christ doing before that first Christmas when he entered into human history? Jesus existed before his birth on the earth, he lived in eternity as God. The old Testament prophet Isaiah writes about 700 years before Jesus Christ enters into human history through the womb of Mary, and we read this, Isaiah six gives us a glimpse into heaven and it shows us Jesus before his entrance into human history. And he says, "I saw the Lord sitting upon a throne." John has given a peak into heaven, he gets to see Jesus in glory before he comes in humility. "High and lifted up, and the train of his robe filled the temple. Above him, stood the seraphim." These are angelic divine beings who worship him. "Each had six wings with two, he covered his face, with two he covered his feet, and with two, he flew. And one coal to another and said, holy, holy, holy is the Lord of hosts. The whole earth is full of his

glory." Before Jesus entered into human history, before that first Christmas, he existed eternally in glory as God. And Isaiah says, I saw him high and exalted, seated upon the throne in all of his glory being worshiped. In John 12:41 he says that Isaiah saw Jesus and spoke of him in glory. And what he told us as well, the prophet Isaiah is that this Jesus would get off of his throne and that he would enter into human history. So in the next chapter of that ancient prophet, Isaiah, we read this, "Therefore the Lord himself will give you a sign. The Virgin." That is Mary, "Will be with child." And that is Jesus. "Give birth to a son." who is the son of God. "And will call him Immanuel." which means God is with us. What he taught us here is that Jesus Christ was ruling and reigning and then he would be entering into human history through the womb of a young unmarried virgin woman. This is exactly what was fulfilled in history, it was promised in prophecy and we celebrate it as reality together today. So Jesus was worshiped in heaven and then he came to the earth and he came to the earth to be worshiped as king. I wanna take some of the familiar characters of the Christmas story, and I want to see how all of the worship of Jesus begin at his conception. First and foremost, he was worshiped on the earth by his relative, an older man named Zachariah. Zachariah was a priest, he lived roughly a 100 miles away from Jesus' parents, Mary and Joseph, and he was one of 18,000 priests. He was a small pastor of a small flock in a small town. He loved the Lord, he served the Lord, and a few times a year, he would be welcomed to come to Jerusalem, the big city to the temple, the presence of God, where God was to be worshiped on earth, that was the connecting point between heaven and earth. And he had gone for many years and his name was never chosen. Then one fateful day, he got the great honor of his life, he was invited into the presence of God to worship God, to light a candle or incense, and to pray before the Lord. And he would only get to do this once in your lifetime. And he'd been waiting his entire life and his day came. And as he entered into the presence of God, an angel showed up and spoke to him, not just any angel, but Gabriel. One of the few mentioned named angels in the Bible. And what he tells Zachariah is this, you are going to witness the greatest movement of God in the history of the world. First, you will give birth to a son in your old age, even though you and your wife were elderly and barren, and you will name him John. And he will be the prophet preparing the way for the coming of the Lord. And then Jesus Christ, the Lord promised to and through Isaiah is coming. So he receives this revelation in the midst of worshiping God. Well then the story continues and we hear of Jesus' mother, Mary. She is the fulfillment of the promise that was given to Isaiah that the virgin will be with child. She lived in a small town, she was a rural peasant girl, she was betrothed, or what we would call engaged to be married. She was from an unlikely place, she was an unlikely person to be chosen for this great distinction to bring God into human history, God becoming a man, Immanuel, God with us. And what happens is that an angel shows up, again, it is Gabriel, and he tells her, Mary, you are the chosen one. You will bear the son of God and you will raise him. And she is overwhelmed and overcome. And she immediately stops and she worships God. Rather than worrying, she's worshipping. And she has this song that she sings and it is known as Mary song. And she begins by declaring this, she says, "my soul magnifies the Lord, my spirit rejoices in God, my savior." What she realizes is that her son will be her savior. And that her baby is her God. And she stops, and she worships God when she hears that she is going to be the mother of God. Well, she's so excited because she also hears that her relative, Elizabeth is pregnant, Zachariah's wife. And she was beyond childbearing

years, she'd always wanted to have a child and could not. And now God had answered her prayer and gave her a baby boy. So Mary wants to celebrate her pregnancy and also rejoice with Elizabeth. So though she is pregnant, she makes a journey of about a 100 miles to Elizabeth's house. And what we have here is two boys, one in Elizabeth's womb, it is John, the baptizer. He is the promise, Jesus is the fulfillment. He is the one who prepares the way for the coming of the Lord, and Jesus is the Lord who has come. And what happens is that Mary has Jesus in her womb and as they come together, something incredible happens, and that is that Elizabeth worships the Lord. She stops, and even though she is older and it would have been customary for the younger woman to bless the older woman, the older woman stops and pronounces a blessing over not only Mary, but the baby in her womb. She calls this moment, the mother of my Lord, Elizabeth is the first person to worship Jesus Christ as Lord, and she calls him her Lord. At this point, he is just a baby in his mother's belly, but ultimately Elizabeth knows that is my Lord. That is my Lord. What is even more extraordinary is what happens next? The two women come together, we have the old covenant and the new covenant, we have the promise and the fulfillment, we have John the baptizer and Jesus Christ, the son of God. And it says that when they came together, John, though, he was just a baby in his mother's womb, he was filled with the holy spirit. You can be filled with the holy spirit from a mother's womb. You can have a name and be chosen by God for a destiny from the mother's womb. It's the strongest potential argument for life. And what it says is that he leaped in his mother's womb, praising God. John the Baptizer is filled with the spirit and he is worshiping Jesus' perhaps cousin from his mother's womb. Surrounding the birth of Jesus is worship. That Jesus Christ was worshiped in heaven, and he then was worshiped on the earth. Well, the story then continues that when Jesus was born, we hear of shepherds and angels being included in the worship of Jesus. First, we read of the shepherds in Luke chapter two, and this is kind of the famous section of scripture that the peanuts cartoon with Linus gets read every single year. And so we'll read it again. And what happens is again, an angel appears and he appears to the shepherds. Let me say this briefly about the shepherds, they were the lowliest and the most outcast. They were not allowed in town, they slept out in the fields or in the caves, they spent their time with animals, not people. They were rejected, marginalized and outcast. Some of you feel that way? But ultimately God knows them, God loves them, God pursues them and sends an angel to them. And part of what the shepherds are doing, they're watching the flocks in the field and part of their job is worship because those would be lambs taken to the temple to be offered as sacrifices, preparing us for the coming of Jesus Christ, the lamb of God who takes away the sins of the world. So they are participating in the worship of God and an angel arrives and says to them, fear not, for behold, I bring you good news of great joy, that will be for all the people. This good news of Jesus Christ and ours being the visited planet has gone from one place to every place. For unto you is born this day in the city of David, a savior. You and I need a savior. We are all sinners, and Jesus Christ is our only savior. He goes on to say, who is Christ the Lord? That means he is the highest authority, that he alone is worthy of worship. And this will be assigned for you. You will find a baby wrapped in swaddling cloths and lying in a manger. The angel shows up and tells the shepherds, the one you have been waiting for, he has arrived. The Virgin has given birth to the son, the promise of Isaiah has been fulfilled. And then we read that the angels come down from heaven and they worship Jesus on the earth. They who worshiped

him up there, come to worship him down here. We read again in Luke two, suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of heavenly hosts, a full angelic choir. They were praising God and saying glory to God in the highest, and on the earth peace among those with whom he is pleased. When the angels went away from them into heaven, the shepherds said to one another, "Let us go to Bethlehem and see this thing that has happened, which the Lord has made known to us. And they went with haste and they found Mary and Joseph and the baby, that is Jesus lying in the manger. And the shepherds returned glorifying and praising God. They're worshipping. The point is this, that worship happened in eternity past before the creation of the heavens and the earth. And then Jesus Christ comes into human history and around him and surrounding him is praise and worship and adoration. And here not only the angels worship, but then the shepherds join them in the worship of Jesus Christ as God and savior. Now there are a few more shadowy figures in the Christmas story that you may be familiar with, but not fully aware of. These are the magi or the wise men. We don't know how many there were, we just know that they brought three gifts. And what you will see oftentimes is when we have a major scene in our house, it's Mary, Joseph, Jesus, maybe the shepherds, couple of angels and the wise men. The wise men didn't show up until sometime after Jesus' birth. It says in the scriptures that they came to his home, it was a roughly a 100 mile journey because they lived in Babylon. So if you've got an nativity, go home and take the wise men and put them in the other room. They'll be there around the 4th of July. They're gonna, they're on their way. And so what happens when they arrive at the house, they come to worship Jesus. They come to worship him. Now what's interesting about these wise men or magi, magi is literally short for magician. These are Babylonians, they are not Hebrews. They come from the nation of Babylon, not the nation of Israel. They would have heard about Jesus 600 years prior. And we read of this in the Book of Daniel, a book that I had the honor of preaching last year. And Daniel was a prophet of God, and he was taken in exile as a prisoner of war and he was incarcerated in Babylon. And he was anointed and blessed of God, he worshiped God despite incredible opposition and despite governmental regulation that was trying to close the houses of worship and command God not to be worshiped. The same spirit is still at work in our day, the nations change, but the demons don't. And what ultimately happened was that he became appointed to lead spiritually in Babylon. And he was a Bible teacher. So he taught those who were the pagan religious and spiritual leaders, the word of God. And he taught them the prophecies, including what we read in Isaiah. So for 600 years, these Babylonian people who had learned the Bible from Daniel were awaiting the coming of Jesus to fulfill the promises and prophecies given through the Hebrews. And all of a sudden they are confirmed by God that the time has come. And so they make the 100 mile journey to come to see Jesus. They go from Babylon to Egypt, and oh, excuse me to Israel and here's why they tell us. They say, quote, "We have come to worship him." Friends, we have come here to worship him. He alone is worthy of worship. And ultimately they bring for him three gifts. The point is this, that worship includes sacrifice, that we give. And ultimately Jesus Christ gave himself as a sacrifice of worship. The God so loved the world that he gave his only son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish, but receive eternal life. This is the season of gift giving and receiving. Let me say this, that you need to receive Jesus Christ as God's gift of salvation to you. And the reason that we give and receive gifts is because that is part of our worship of Jesus. Now we read of these men that they brought three gifts. The first is

gold, which is for Jesus Christ as king. Gold has always been symbolized with king ship ruling and reigning. And oftentimes a king would sit on a gold throne showing their power, their preeminence, their prestige. And they come and they kneel down before this child, Jesus and they recognize him as crater and God and King of Kings and Lord of Lords and they worship him. And what's interesting is that oftentimes the king would sit on a golden throne and those who worshiped their king, they would fold down before the feet of their king. And one of the words in the New Testament, there was originally written in Greek that we use for worship, it literally means to fall on your face at the throne of the king and to kiss his feet. Jesus is our king. And ultimately when we kiss his feet in his presence, in his kingdom, you will be kissing nail scarred feet, because our king got off his throne and came down to suffer and die that we might live. So they give him gold as a gift fit for a king. In addition, they bring incense. Frankincense it is called. And this would have been used by the priests. So the first gift shows Jesus as our king. And then the second gift shows Jesus as our priest. The priest would mediate between God and people. They would bring the word of God to the people and the needs and purrs of people to God. The Bible says that we have one mediator between us and God, the man Christ Jesus, Immanuel, God with us. And ultimately he is our great high priest. Jesus is fully God and he's fully man. And he comes down so that we might have that relationship with God that was broken and severed through sin restored through his sacrifice. And so what the priest would do, they would go into the temple, the holiest place on earth, the connecting point between heaven and earth, the place where God's presence dwelt, and they would light an ignite incense or frankincense to create an atmosphere of worship. And the Bible says that when we sing and pray, it is similarly like incense that ascends into the presence of God, and that it creates a sweet aroma of worship and praise. And so that gifts, showing us that Jesus Christ is our priest. Now the third gift is myrrh. And if you're new to the Bible and thinking, well, I'd like to get my kids something for Christmas, I'll just get them what they got Jesus, please feel free to skip the third gift. It's a very strange gift to give a child because myrrh was used to prepare a dead body for burial. And so what happened was Jesus Christ is our king who came down as our priest to ultimately offer himself as our sacrifice. And what we see is that Jesus Christ died. The myrrh is to remind us the purpose of his coming was to be his dying, that our humble king got off his throne, came down and allowed himself to be nailed to a Roman cross, that he who was without sin died in our place for our sin, satisfying the wrath of God and earning for us the grace of God. That ultimately this gift shows us that Jesus came to pay a price so that you and I could be forgiven, that he gives a gift we cannot earn, that is forgiveness and eternal life. And this gift was foreshadowing the death and burial of Jesus. And we read as well in John chapter 19:39, that after Jesus died on the cross in our place for our sins, they wrapped him in upwards of 75 pounds of burial linens and spices, and it says this, they prepared his body for burial with myrrh. That ultimately these are prophetic foreshadowings, that Jesus is our king, that he is our priest and he is the sacrifice for sinners. Now, what is particularly interesting is that we're learning all of this today, and we're worshiping Jesus Christ on the earth, but I need you to know as well that Jesus is back in heaven. Not only did he die, he rose. Not only did he die, he conquered death and he defeated sin and he sets captives free. That Jesus Christ rose from the dead, and over the course of 40 days, he appeared to crowds upwards of 500 publicly at a time, that he evidenced his resurrection and his defeat of death. And then Jesus ascended back into heaven

where he rules and reigns as our king and our great high priest. And what Isaiah saw was Jesus in glory and where Jesus is right now, he is in glory. Jesus Christ, my friend is not dead, he's very much alive. He will hear your prayers, he will receive our praise. And ultimately. So the reason that we're worshipping him down here is because he is being worshiped up there. And right now we are part of the church of Jesus Christ, which is the largest movement of any sort or kind in the history of planet earth. This is the life that comes in the wake of the resurrection life of Jesus Christ. Today. Jesus' birthday is the biggest day of the year on planet earth. More songs are sung to him, more paintings painted of him, more books written regarding him, more lives devoted to him than anyone who has lived in the history of the world. And so we are worshipping him down here as he is being worshiped up there. But let me tell you something magnificent, there is a day that he will return. There is a day when the worship up there will join the worship down here. You and I are worshipping as we are awaiting the second coming of Jesus Christ. This is when the dead will rise, this is when justice will reign, this is when the curse will be lifted, this is when God's people will be blessed. And we know that Jesus Christ is coming when a particular worship song begins. I'm going to invite the choir and the band out at this time. But I want to tell you that as he is being worshiped up there, and in a moment, we're going to worship him down here that there is a day coming when the worship up there will come down with him. There's a word in the Old Testament called hallelujah, it means praise the Lord. And ultimately it is used in worship, oftentimes in the book of Psalms, which is the Old Testament book of worship. And these are songs that are inspired by the holy spirit to praise Jesus Christ as Lord and savior. Oftentimes the Psalms that use the word hallelujah, they do so at the beginning or end of the song, because praising God is the beginning and end of worship. This word, hallelujah never appears in the New Testament with one exception, in revelation 19, John has an experience that is very similar to Isaiah. Though, he is on the earth, he gets to peer into heaven. Though, he is worshipping God on this planet, he is peering into eternity. And it says that there will be two things that happen at the end of time, the first and foremost Jesus will return on a white horse to judge the living and the dead. And that the beginning of eternity will be commenced when the angelic hosts starts singing one particular word, hallelujah, which means, praise the Lord.