

Adjustable Jesus

New parents are so **creative** when it comes to celebrating the announcement and arrival of a new baby, aren't they?

Have you ever wondered who announced **Jesus's arrival**?

Let's take a look at the **birth announcement of Jesus**, the Son of God:

Luke 1:26-31 – NKJV - *Christ's Birth Announced to Mary*

²⁶ Now in the sixth month **the angel Gabriel was sent by God** to a city of Galilee named Nazareth, ²⁷ to a virgin betrothed to a man whose name was Joseph, of the house of David. The virgin's name *was* Mary. ²⁸ And having come in, the angel said to her, "Rejoice, highly favored *one*, the Lord *is* with you; blessed *are* you among women!"

²⁹ But when she saw *him*, she was troubled at his saying, and considered what manner of greeting this was. ³⁰ Then the angel said to her, "Do not be afraid, Mary, for you have found favor with God. ³¹ And behold, you will conceive in your womb and bring forth a Son, and shall call His name JESUS.

I do think that the majority of new parents are pretty creative in their methods of **sharing the news of their newborn**, but I think **having the angel, Gabriel, make the announcement** for you might be better than any other way, **right?**

Give me a choice of a cute, fancy Facebook post or Gabriel and I'll pick Gabriel every time.

Who is Gabriel?

He stands in the presence of God

Luke 1:19 - NKJV

¹⁹ And the angel answered and said to him, "I am Gabriel, **who stands in the presence of God**, and was sent to speak to you and bring you these glad tidings.

He was sent by God to three different people:

Daniel – prophetic message about Jesus, the Anointed One (Daniel 9).

20 Now while I *was* speaking, praying, and confessing my sin and the sin of my people Israel, and presenting my supplication before the Lord my God for the holy mountain of my God,

21 yes, while I *was* speaking in prayer, **the man Gabriel**, whom I had seen in the vision at the beginning, being caused to fly swiftly, reached me about the time of the evening offering.

22 And he informed *me*, and talked with me, and said, “O Daniel, **I have now come forth to give you skill to understand**.”

Zachariah – about the birth of John

Luke 1:19-20 - ¹⁹ And the angel answered and said to him, “***I am Gabriel, who stands in the presence of God***, and was sent to speak to you and bring you these glad tidings.

²⁰ But behold, you will be mute and not able to speak until the day these things take place, **because you did not believe** my words which will be fulfilled in their own time.”

Mary – to foretell the birth of Jesus (Luke 1:26-28).

²⁶ Now in the sixth month ***the angel Gabriel was sent by God*** to a city of Galilee named Nazareth, ²⁷ to a virgin betrothed to a man whose name was Joseph, of the house of David. The virgin’s name *was* Mary. ²⁸ And having come in, **the angel said to her**, “Rejoice, highly favored *one*, the Lord *is* with you; blessed *are* you among women!”

Few things in life excite us more than to hear that a baby is coming to our family!

And then the day finally comes; **a baby is born!**

And almost immediately, the moment the baby is born, the parents are given the challenging task of molding the life of that baby and ***shaping them to become incredible young people and adults someday.***

As they grow, **they embrace our values and morals** and they, to some extent, take on our characteristics, our lifestyle.

We teach them about our political views, our religious perspective, our worldview and our family traditions become their traditions. ***They become mini-me's.***

Sometimes people say, ***“You’re just like your daddy!”*** or ***“You’re just you’re your mother!”***

Whether you realize it or not, good, bad, or indifferent, ***you have enormous influence*** on those little babies that are born into your family!

Most of the time, those babies become the adults that you raised and influenced them to be.

Adjustable Jesus

Next week we will ***celebrate the birth of Jesus, a baby born for the hope of the world, 2,000 years ago!***

And while it’s a wonderful thing to have influence on your own children during their formative years - - -

I think we sometimes blur that same line in our relationship with Jesus.

I think a lot of Christians today

- still only see Jesus as a baby in a manger
- Not as a Savior who died on the cross
- Rose from the grave
- And intercedes for us at the right hand of God today.

Of course, everyone here knows that **Jesus died on the cross**, but a lot of ***Christians relate to Jesus*** as though he is still in a manger.

Like he’s a Jesus ***that we can influence*** to be what we want him to be,

- **Instead of a resurrected Jesus** - - -
- Who **influences** our lives - - -
- To **become what he wants** them to become.

I have no doubt that our culture ***has influenced our perception of Jesus*** and ***who He actually is.***

These days, when someone says, “*I have a personal relationship with Jesus,*” it’s hard to tell which Jesus they are speaking of...

Are they talking about baby Jesus in a manger that our society and culture has determined to still be in his formative years?

We can shape him to be any kind of Jesus we want him to be?

Here’s our problem: when many people speak of a “*Personal Jesus,*” what they really desire is an Adjustable Jesus.

They want to be disciples on their own terms; to calibrate their religion to a more relaxing, luxurious setting; to throw out the difficult, challenging aspects of belief, and put something customized and convenient in its place.

When these folks say “my personal relationship with Jesus,” all that really registers is the “my.”

When you say, “I love Jesus,” which Jesus are you talking about?

- *Are you speaking of a formative, baby Jesus that you can adjust to fit your lifestyle?*
- *Or the resurrected Jesus – who said, “If any man, woman, boy or girl will be my disciple, they must take up their cross and follow me.”*

The thing is: there’s a lot to be said for paying attention to the details.

- When it comes to celebrating the birth of Jesus
- We really should cross the T’s and dot the I’s.

Next week, when your family begins to gather to remember the day Jesus was born, **Celebrate like never before!**

- Celebrate the details of His birth
- Gabriel’s announcement,
- Mary’s immaculate conception by the Holy Spirit,
- The shepherds and the wise men and the star that guided them
- Mary and Joseph using a manger, a cattle trough for his first cradle.

Pay attention to the details and celebrate like never before!

But when the birthday party is over, when your cleaning up the wrapping paper, taking down the tree and Nativity, ***don't you dare leave Jesus in that manger!***

Don't think of him as a baby that you can develop into the Jesus you want him to be.

- **He's not an Adjustable Jesus!**

When God sent Jesus into the world, born of a virgin, He already had a plan for who he would be, what his life on earth would be like, when he would embrace his ministry, how he would live and ultimately die. *He sent him to save sinners***.**

God determined the parameters of Jesus' life.

Jesus doesn't live in our heart on our terms.

We can't mold him, form him, and steer him the way we want him to go, **like we have done with our own children.**

- ***We have to embrace the Jesus God sent him to be***.

If I could give you one gift before you go it would be this:

- **that you pursue Jesus** with all your heart, mind, and soul.
- That you never give up **on knowing Him**, because ***He will never give up on you***.
- **When you discover Jesus for who He really is**, you realize that **he is everything you will ever need** in this life and in the next.

Seek Jesus!

If you will do that, **you will find that Jesus is all you need** because he will be everything you need him to be when you need him to be it.

1 Chronicles 22:19 - NKJV

¹⁹ Now set your heart and your soul to seek the Lord your God. Therefore arise and build the sanctuary of the Lord God, to bring the ark of the covenant of the Lord and the holy articles of God into the house that is to be built for the name of the Lord."