

"Person of the Year: 33 A.D.

Wesley Chapel December 30, 2012	Nature Coast December 29, 2019	Trilacoochee January 31, 2021
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## **Slide: TIME MAGAZINE COVER**

This time of year, we look back at the top movies, the bestselling books, and the newsmakers and the celebrities who made headlines.

Some of the top news stories last year included President Trump's impeachment; the fire at the Notre Dame Cathedral in Paris; Hurricane Dorian in northern Bahamas; the College Admissions Scandal; and the grounding of the Boeing 737 Max Airplanes.

## **Slide: PAST PERSONS OF THE YEAR**

Time magazine is most famous for its annual selection of the Person of the Year.

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## **Slide: FIRST MAN OF THE YEAR**

Lindbergh was the first Man of the Year in 1927.

Time magazine has annually profiled a person, a group, an idea, or an object that, quote, for better or for

worse... has done the most to influence the events of the year, unquote.

### **Slide: ADOLF HITLER MAN-of-the-YEAR**

Not all of the selections have been popular.

Because of their impacts on the news of the year, Adolf Hitler was named Man of the Year in 1938; Joseph Stalin, in 1942; Nikita Khrushchev, in 1957, and the Ayatollah Khomeini, in 1979.

### **Slide: PERSON OF THE YEAR: 33 AD**

Since the designation is often regarded by readers as an honor, and spoken as an award or prize, how would Time magazine consider Jesus Christ as Person of the Year for the year 33 AD?

We will need a few ground rules to accomplish this:

Number one: All of us are living in the Roman Empire.

Some of us are Roman citizens living in the City of Rome.

Some of us are slaves working on farms, in mines, and building Roman highways.

Some of us are Roman soldiers fighting rebellions to keep the peace.

### **Slide: TIME BUREAU OFFICES**

Number two: We all have subscriptions for Time

magazine which is published in Rome and has news bureaus scattered across the Empire.

### **Slide: YEAR OF CHRIST'S DEATH**

And number three:

Since AD would not be commonly used until at least 8 centuries after the death of Jesus Christ, we will use AD, which stands for the Latin abbreviation: "Year of our Lord," to number the years after the birth of Jesus Christ, and BC—for news recorded Before Christ.

If we can keep all of this in mind and probably much more on your part, I think we will have an interesting sermon.

### **Slide: BC PERSONS OF THE YEAR**

For example, we can look back at some of the news makers Time magazine may have named as Person of the Year prior to the birth of Christ:

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### **Slide: MAP OF THE ROMAN EMPIRE**

The Roman Empire will have a population increase from 70 million to more than 100 million by the year 117 AD.

In this growing empire Roman Judaea is not viewed as a critically important province.

To get a sense how big the Empire is—it is outlined in blue on this contemporary Map of the United States.

**Animation:** The Roman province of Britain is here in the Northwest.

**Animation:** The Roman province of Egypt is here in the Southeast.

About as far apart as Florida and Washington State.

**Animation:** the Mediterranean Sea would be here.

### **Slide: MAP OF A ROMAN AQUEDUCT**

Historians will note that Romans will conquer some 40 nations.

Remarkable that emperors operating over many centuries were able to hold together such a vast domain.

Without railroads, airplanes, the internet — or any weapons of mass destruction.

### **Slide: TIBERIUS CEASAR**

In the year 33 A.D. the editors in Rome believe that Caesar himself should be Time's Person of the Year.

Tiberius is one of Rome's greatest generals.

But in that year, a financial crisis hits Rome. Land values plummet, there is a lack of cash, a crisis of confidence, and many families are ruined.

## **Slide: HOW WALL STREET SOLD OUT AMERICA**

Does this sound familiar to you?

There are similarities between the crisis of 33 AD and 2008 AD.

Tiberius used the Roman Treasury to inject capital into a financial system on the verge of bankruptcy.

It was no different in 2008 with the introduction of TARP-Troubled Asset Relief Program--with the purpose of providing liquidity for collateralization of loans.

## **Slide: Arch of Titus**

The Arch of Titus was the entrance to the main street of ancient Rome, which leads past the Colosseum.

During the reign of Nero, it was lined with colonnades.

This was also the entrance to Rome's Wall Street.

## **Slide: Jug of Money**

Here, two of the largest banking houses were the first to close their doors.

Loans that were considered high quality?

No longer well-capitalized.

Unfortunately, the loan securities were placed with noblemen going broke in Gaul, a region that now includes present day France, Belgium, and Germany.

### **Slide: Alexandria, Egypt**

There is agreement from Time's news bureau in Alexandria.

Like today, money and banking were connected throughout the Roman Empire.

The crisis has devastated the leading banking house in Egypt.

It made matters worse when three ships loaded with ivory vanished in a violent storm on the Red Sea.

The loss resulted in a drop in the value of ostrich feathers and ivory associated with the Ethiopian caravan trade.

### **Slide: HEATING and SHAPING GLASS**

There is also agreement from Time's news bureau in Antioch.

**Animation:** Phoenician workers there and in Ephesus went on strike because of the loss of pay-- from the

failure of the largest banking house in Lebanon.

**Animation:** It was also discovered that this banking house had large loans outstanding with Lebanon and Egypt.

**Animation:** This was bad news for this banking house.

**Animation:** A few days later this banking house became insolvent.

It did not stop there as rumors centered around the strongest banking house in Carthage--also on the verge of closing.

### **Slide: PLOWING A FIELD WITH A HORSE**

Agriculture and land were by far the hardest hit of the financial crisis in the year 33 A. D.

Tiberius ordered one third of every senator's fortune be invested in lands within Italy--in an attempt to prop up falling real estate prices.

Failure to comply?

Prosecution, penalties, even death.

### **Slide: PONTIUS PILATUS**

Time's reporters in the Jerusalem bureau disagree.

Pontius Pilot had been the judge that year at a trial for a man who called himself the Son of God.

A Jewish mob wanted him crucified.

Since his appointment in 26 AD, Pilot had repeatedly caused near-insurrections among the Jews because of his insensitivity to Jewish customs.

This time Pilate washes his hands to show that he will not be held responsible for the execution of the man the Jews called Jesus Christ.

This man did not plot against the Roman Empire, but he is still put to death.

### **Animation: Herod Antipas**

Pilate initially handed Jesus over to Herod Antipas, in whose jurisdiction Christ was most active.

Like his father Herod the Great, he was made Ruler of Galilee by the reigning Caesar.

Herod did not see any miracles with this Jesus and sends him back to Pilate.

But the reporters in Jerusalem said Herod had his own problems.

He divorced his first wife and married the former wife of his brother.



He also beheaded an up-and-coming prophet that the Jews called John the Baptist.

### **Slide: TYRIAN SHEKEL**

The Jerusalem bureau knows that Rome liked stories about murder, revenge and especially betrayal. After all, the Roman Senate was no stranger to controversies, scandals—and murder.

In Judea, the word was spreading about Judas Iscariot. One of Twelve Men who formed an inner circle of the Disciples of Christ.

He was also in charge of the group's money and was stealing from them.

Judas went to the chief priests to betray Jesus Christ.

He got 30 pieces of silver—approximately the price of a healthy Jewish slave.

### **Slide: ROMAN DEITIES (Mars & Jupiter)**

Romans worshipped their own Gods.

As the empire extended throughout the Mediterranean, the general policy was to absorb the deities and cults of other people's worship rather than try to eradicate them.

The Roman Empire became highly tolerant and allowed the local populations such as the Jews to practice their own faiths.

### **Slide: JOSEPH OF ARIMETHEA**

But the death of an obscure religious teacher in a remote outpost did not impress the editors in Rome.

Yet the Jerusalem bureau said there was more to the story.

For example, a man named Joseph of Arimathea.

A native of Judea. An honorable counselor who was also a rich man.

Nothing unusual about this—except that he was also a silent follower of Jesus Christ.

Joseph, in secret, went to see Pilate and was granted Jesus's dead body off the cross at Golgotha.

Assisted by a second man named Nicodemus, they wrapped the body in fine linen and applied myrrh and aloes.

Then it was quickly placed in Joseph's own tomb because

the following day was the Jewish Sabbath.

### **Slide: DAY TURNED TO DARKNESS**

There are also the accounts of earthquakes, day turned into night, and the dead rising from their graves.

The initial reaction from Time's editors in Rome was probably: "We do not believe you!"

This is when the story takes on a life of its own: the reporters in Jerusalem have more than 500 eyewitness who claim Jesus Christ arose from the dead in three days.

The first eyewitness was a woman: Mary Magdalene. From a town on the western shore of the Sea of Galilee.

### **Slide: FEATURE (Parable of the Lost Lamb)**

By now the editors of Time magazine realize that Jesus Christ is more than just a Jewish rebel in Roman Judaea.

His death by crucifixion ended a 3-year ministry.

This Jesus often taught with parables.

And this Jesus performed more than 30 miracles including walking on water, calming a storm at sea, feeding 5,000 people, and raising a dead man named Lazarus.

### **Slide: JESUS OF NAZARETH**

There is agreement that Jesus of Nazareth should be Time magazine's Person of the Year for 33 A.D.

Of course, the story does not end there.

In subsequent issues, Time reports on the Day of Pentecost.

About Peter and the Apostles preaching the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

Three thousand people were baptized for the remission of sins.

Saul is converted on the road to Damascus, baptized by Ananias, and he brings the Gospel to the Gentiles as the Apostle Paul.

### **Slide: Gutenberg Bible**

We know tonight that Time magazine did not exist 2,000 years ago—the printing press would not be invented for another 1,400 years.

Also, the Bible as we know it did not exist at that time. We have the books of the OT and NT—unlike the 1<sup>st</sup> century Christians.

We can study God's Plan of Salvation simply by downloading a file on our smart phones.

### **Slide: Ecclesiastes 1:9**

Tonight, we are reminded how history can repeat itself.

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### **Slide: Jesus (Rock of Ages)**

However, one thing will never change.

Then, as now, our salvation is freely offered to us because we have the free will to refuse or accept.

Matthew 7:21 it says: "Not everyone who says to me, 'Lord, Lord,' shall enter the kingdom of heaven, but he who does the will of My Father in heaven."

We must also be steadfast in faith.

2 Peter 3:14 says: "Therefore, beloved, looking forward to these things, be diligent to be found by Him in peace, without spot and blameless."

We must not lose fact that Heaven is the eternal reward.

During his Sermon on the Mount, Christ told the crowd to lay up treasures in heaven. In Matthew 6:21: "For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also."

### **Slide: PICTURES of JESUS**

We do not know what Jesus looks like.

Was he tall or short?

Did he have a bread or long hair?

Was he fat or skinny?

It does not matter much—this was never part of God's Plan for Salvation.

**Slide: WE SAW THEE NOT**

Thousands of years later and more than halfway around the world, we are worshiping Jesus Christ tonight as our Lord and Savior.

Among the many hymns we have sung as Christians includes one written by Anne Richter in 1834 A. D.

Listen to the lyrics.

They describe what we did not see in the year 33 A. D.

But we believe.

**GIVE INVITATION**