

## **“TO US A CHILD IS BORN’**

### **The Incarnation 2020**

*We are approaching a season freighted with tradition and sentimentality (and baked goodies!). We associate being with friends and family, giving, the cultural focus on the Christmas season that comes with this time of year. What should drive it? At its core what is this about? The emphasis is upon the incarnation of Christ - the eternally begotten Son of God coming into our world as one of us. Yet how did He come? He came completely God and completely human. And for a specific purpose - to offer Himself once and for all time as a sacrifice of atonement for the sin of the world (For more on this read Hebrews chapters 9-10).*

#### **1. The Word of God** (The expression of who God is and what He does)

- a. He came in the flesh (1 Jn 4:1-4, 1 Jn 1:1-3)
- b. In the beginning, God the Word: (Jn 1:1-4)
  - Was already there. He existed in the beginning - When time began, He was here. See also Jn 17:5
  - Was with God, “in relation with God, together with” etc. Look up Phil 2:5-11
    - \* Christ existed in the form of God. (See Heb 1:1-3)
    - \* Made Himself a human. He set aside the glory of heaven and came as a servant, a human. He never ceased to be God (Col 1:19) but while He was here in our flesh, He lived empowered by the Holy Spirit (Jn 3:34).
  - He was God (Lit: ..and “God, was the word.”)
  - Created all things (See also Col 1:15-17, Heb 1:1-3). And moreover, He is the One who sustains all things (See also Col 1:17).
- c. If you want to know God, you have to look to Christ (Jn 1:18, 14:5-14; 1 Tim 6:16, 1 Jn 4:12). Christ is the tangible expression of Who God is and What He does. Look to Him.

#### **2. God incarnate** (Why did He share our humanity?).

- a. To fulfill the righteous requirements of God’s law in us (Rom 8:1-3)
- b. To be our merciful, faithful and complete High Priest before God. (Heb 2:1-18)
  - He would make atonement for the sins of the people.
  - He would free us from our slavery to the fear of death.
  - He would be made human in every way.
  - He would be a merciful and faithful high priest on our behalf. (See also Heb 4:14-16)
- c. To do so He was made like us. (Heb 2:1-18)
  - We have flesh and blood - so did He.
  - We suffer human frailty - so did He.
  - We suffer temptation - so did He (Yet without sin).
  - We may approach the “throne of grace” with confidence and receive mercy, grace and help in time of need. (Heb 2:17-18, 4:14-16)

#### **3. His incarnation was a necessity** (Ps 143:2, Rom 3:20, Gal 3:10-14)

- a. We cannot redeem ourselves (Ps 143:2, Ecc 7:20, Rom 3:23)
- b. All have sinned and are separated from God (Is 59:2, Matt 5:17-20, Rom 3:23, 10:1-4)
- c. Redemption is offered freely through the coming and work of Christ.

Next week: “One for All”

**“TO US A CHILD IS BORN’**  
**The Incarnation 2020**  
**Part 2**  
**“One for All”**  
**Romans 5:1-21**

**1. We have peace with God through Jesus.**

- a. It is the result of justification (Being declared “not guilty” by God).
- b. Through faith in Jesus we have access (“approach, admission”) - Rom 8:15
  - Into the (“this”) grace in which we stand (Ps 130:3)
  - Causing us to boast in our hope (“confidence”) of the glory of God (Phil 3:20).
- c. We can even rejoice in our sufferings - God is not at war with us. He will use all things for our good (Jas 1:1-5). Even hard things. And He has given us His Spirit.
- d. How can we be sure?
  - God paid our price when we were His enemies (Eph 2:1-10, Col 1:21-23).
  - Jesus died for us while we were still sinners. (1 Jn 4:10)
  - He declared us righteous, satisfied God’s wrath through Jesus, and saved us through His life. Our boast is not in our own works but in Christ.

**2. “One for all” times two (Or a tale of two representatives: Adam and Jesus):**

- a. Through Adam sin entered the world.
- b. Death came to all men (For in Adam, all sinned) and reigned (10 out of 10 people die).
  - Death reigned before and after the law was given. Why? To point us to Christ.
  - Adam was a pattern of the One who was to come, Jesus.

<u>Adam</u>		<u>Our Lord Jesus.</u>
Many died by one man’s trespass.		How much more did grace and the gift of Jesus overflow to many.
Judgement followed one sin and brought Condemnation.		The gift followed many trespasses and brought justification.
By one trespass, death reigned.		How much more will those who receive grace and the gift of righteousness reign in life through the one man, Jesus Christ.
Just as the consequence of one trespass is condemnation for all men.	SO	The result of one act of righteousness was justification that brings life for all men.
Just as through the disobedience of one man the many were made sinners.	SO	Through the obedience of the one man, the many will be made righteous.
The law was added that trespass might increase (Ps 143:2, Rom 3:7, 20; Gal 2:16-19, 3:24-25).	BUT	Where sin increased, so grace increased all the more (1 Tim 1:15-17).
		<u>So That</u>
Just as sin reigned in death	SO	Grace might reign through righteousness to bring eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.

This is the truth illustrated that we saw already in Heb 2:14-18 and 4:14-16. He (Jesus) is our Representative, Substitute, Redeemer.

Now, a short study on sin: inherited or imputed?

Some people believe that our sin nature is passed down from father to child. In a way this is true but it is a generalization. Let's unpack this.

**Original Sin:** It is inherent in all humans from birth. We are slaves to sin. We are born with a fallen nature. This describes the ruin of character, and sinful actions are a reflection of that fallen, ruined nature within us.

**Imputed Sin:** All humanity is reckoned by God to share in Adam's guilt. It was credited to us all. We share in his guilt and condemnation.

**Likewise:** Upon the moment of salvation/faith, we are given an **imputed righteousness** — the righteousness of Christ. This is instantaneous with faith in Christ. We pass from death to life. This is called "**justification**."

- God **credits/reckons** us to possess the righteousness of Christ.
- And, our sins are **imputed** to Christ. He bore and paid for our guilt.

As we grow and progress in our relationship/life with God, righteousness is imparted to us. This is called "**sanctification**." As we grow we manifest the fruit of the Spirit and grow closer to God. One cannot spend time seeking the Lord and not grow.

Next Week: "The Coming King"

**“TO US A CHILD IS BORN”  
The Incarnation 2020  
Part 3  
“The Coming King”  
(He is holy)  
Isaiah 9:1-7**

**1. He came in fulfillment of God’s promise of redemption.**

- a. He came to crush Satan and his work (Gen 3:15, Heb 2:14-15, 1 Jn 3:7-8)
- b. He is the Ruler who would come (Gen 49:8-12, Nu 24:17-19/Mal 1-1-5)
- c. He is the God-Man (Ps 2, Is 9:1-6, Mic 5:1-5, Dan 2:34, 7:13)
  - From Bethlehem of Judah.
  - He’d be ruler over Israel.
  - He is eternal.
  - He is the Shepherd of His flock. (Is 40)
    - \* In the strength of the Lord.
    - \* In the majesty of the name of His God.
    - \* He will be their (our) peace (Rom 5:1-11, Eph 2:11-22).

**2. He came to and through, ordinary people. (Lk 1:26-38, 2:1-20). Not Lord of some but Lord of all.**

- a. An ordinary girl (Lk 1)
- b. A tradesman (Matt 1)
- c. Farm workers (Lk 2, Lk 10:17-21).

**3. Not a human work. He is the King of Kings!**

- a. Jn 3:5-8 - Human effort yields a man result.
- b. Check Ex 3:1-6, 20:24-26; Josh 5:13-15, 1 King 6:7, Rom 3:20, Tit 3:5-6.
  - \* In Dan 2 (The king’s dream) the kingdom of God is portrayed as a “rock cut out of a mountain, but not by human hands.”
  - \* Matt 22:1-14 - We stand in His righteousness or we will not stand at all.
- c. Jesus is the man from heaven - 1 Cor 25:46-58, Dt 10:17, 1 Tim 6:14-16, Rev 17:14, 19:16)

**“TO US A CHILD IS BORN”**  
**The Incarnation 2020**  
**Part 4**  
**“A Savior for All”**  
**Luke 2:1-20**

*A recurring theme in literature is the heroism and power of ordinary people thrust into extraordinary circumstances. This is seen in scripture as well. We tend to be awed by the people we perceive to be mighty, bold and talented. But those whom God uses are often the “least of these.” And those who embrace Him are much the same. Look at 1 Cor 1:18-25. The cross is foolishness to those who are perishing. Yet to us it is the power and wisdom of God. Our Lord came in human flesh as a common man and He came to common folks. While we tend to look for the sensational, look at the very ordinary nature of the birth of our Savior. And while their plight must have seemed hard to them, God was in complete control.*

**1. A young couple in a bind.**

Lk 2:1-7

- a. Their obedience was costly (Mary - Lk 1:26-38, Joseph - Mtt 1:18-25)
- b. They were not at the mercy of events.
  - An inconvenient census (Bethlehem to Nazareth roughly 75 miles)
  - Mary at the end of her pregnancy.
  - Common folks with an uncommon lineage:
    - \* He was descended from David through Solomon (This branch of David’s line was disqualified by God to ever reign again. See Jer 22:24-30).
    - \* She was descended from David through his son Nathan.
  - The Messiah was to be born in Bethlehem (Mic 5:1-5).
    - \* He would rule.
    - \* His goings out are eternal (Lit: “From days of eternity”).
    - \* Israel would languish/suffer abandonment until she who is in labor gives birth.
    - \* He will stand and shepherd His flock in the strength and majesty of God’s name.
    - \* He will be their peace and rule over everything. (Is 9:6, Eph 2:14)
- c. Our Lord was born far from home and on God’s schedule.

***Everything went in accordance with a Divine plan***

**2. God revealed the glory of His Son to ordinary people.**

Lk 2:8-20

- a. They were out in the fields doing their job.
- b. God sent them a heavenly messenger (Which frightened them greatly. See Lk 1:12, Dan 10:7).
- c. The angel gave them a sign, a means of identifying the infant and verifying his message.
- d. They beheld a glorious sight - a great crowd/multitude of the heavenly host holding a praise service.
- e. They *had* to go and see this child.
  - The fact that they had been given a sign. God intended for them to go!
  - They looked until they found (“*discovered*”) the couple and their child.
  - They departed they spread the word to the amazement of those who heard them.
- f. They returned to their sheep, praising God.
  - They didn’t quit and enter ministry. God wants us to bloom where he has planted us. (See Lk 8:26-39, 1 Cor 7:17-24).
  - They served God where they were (Phil 1:27, 1 Thes 4:11-12, 1 Tim 3:7, Jas 3:13, 2 Pet 3:11-13)

***He came to identify with all of us.***

**“TO US A CHILD IS BORN”**  
**The Incarnation 2020**  
**Part 5**  
**“He is Lord”**  
**(Or, “The Issue Was Never in Doubt”)**  
**Verse: Prov 14:12. Text Matt 2:1-18**

**1. He was sought out and worshipped**

- a. God had revealed the birth of His Son to Parthian leaders/scholars/philosophers.
  - They’d seen His star rise and had been given a revelation from God.
  - They travelled a distance to see and honor this child.
  
- b. They arrived in Jerusalem and sought “the one who has been born king of the Jews.” This Stirred things up. Why?
  - These were important people in their native country. They likely traveled with security.
  - Their nation had invaded Judea in the past (44BC) and intervened in regional politics. (In a battle to determine the throne). Rome finally pushed them out.
  - Herod called the chief priests and teachers of the law together to find out where the Christ would be born. They answered according to Mic 5:2: “Bethlehem in Judea.”  
(A note here about Herod. He was resented by most of his people as an unqualified ruler imposed own them by Rome. His dad had been assassinated. He ruled harshly. He suspected everyone. Over the years he killed any others with claims to the throne, his brother in law (He had him drowned in his swimming pool), his mother in law, his wife Miriamne, three sons and 300 military leaders. The Roman emperor Augustus once quipped that “It would be better to be Herod’s pig than his son.” Not a nice guy.
  
- c. Herod didn’t want to anger Rome or Parthia (Who were for them moment, at peace).
  - Herod sent for the magi and was friendly but tried to use them to further his own agenda.
  - He sent them on their way with courtesy.
  
- d. The magi sought, found and paid homage/worship to the Lord.
  - They were guided by the “star.”
  - The came to a house. The family apparently decided to remain in Bethlehem.
  - They saw the child (Jesus was no longer an infant) and his mother and worshipped Him.
  - They presented gifts.
  - Warned by God, they avoided Herod and returned home.

***Can God be successfully opposed?***  
***Read Psalm 2, Mal 1:1-5, Act 4:23-30***

**2. God sent the family to Egypt (As He sent them in Gen 37-50).**

- a. While there they were safe.
  
- b. Like Israel, God brought His Son out of Egypt (Hos 11:1, Ex 4:22, Num 24:8)
  
- c. Joseph believed and acted (They left that night).
  
- d. Herod, furious at being thwarted acted with brutality to try and oppose God. It is ever so:  
See Dan 7:23-25

***God’s will is going to prosper.***  
***Is 10:5-23, 55:1-13***