

**Introduction:**

- I want to lay out a sound foundation as of why it is so important to the Christian faith that we understand that God became flesh. The Apostle Paul said in 1 Timothy 3:16 *"Without question, this is the great mystery of our faith\*: Christ\* was revealed in a human body."* NLT
    - In December 1903, after many attempts, the Wright brothers were successful in getting their "flying machine" off the ground. Thrilled, they telegraphed this message to their sister Katherine: "We have actually flown 120 feet. Will be home for Christmas." Katherine hurried to the editor of the local newspaper and showed him the message. He glanced at it and said, "How nice. The boys will be home for Christmas." He totally missed the big news--man had flown! Daily Bread Dec 23, 1991.
    - It is so easy in our materialistic society to 'miss the big news'—God became flesh.
    - We miss this mystery because it has just become a story. The church has become too familiar with it.
    - We miss it this mystery because it has been wrapped up in materialism. We have put more understanding in how to navigate black Friday and Cyber Monday than to impart this central truth our children and others. (Remember Dt 6:4-ff) Teach these things diligently to your children.
    - We miss it because we have not really given ourselves to understanding it. We have lost the sense of mystery surrounding the virgin birth and of God becoming flesh.
  - The words 'God became flesh', simply mean that God became a man. But the ramifications of God becoming man are huge to the believer and to all who need redemption. Jesus is that God-man.
  - We will look at three things this morning. The Message of Christmas, The Son of God of Christmas, and Why It Matters. *"But as he considered these things, behold, an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream, saying, "Joseph, son of David, do not fear to take Mary as your wife, for that which is conceived in her is from the Holy Spirit. She will bear a son, and you shall call his name Jesus, for he will save his people from their sins." All this took place to fulfill what the Lord had spoken by the prophet: "Behold, the virgin shall conceive and bear a son, and they shall call his name Immanuel" (which means, God with us)."* (Matthew 1:20-23, ESV)
- I. The Message of Christmas** John 1:14 the Word became flesh...God with us...Immanuel.
- A. The driving focus of the message of Christmas is that God became a man. As a Christian our salvation depends on that. To not believe that is to be of the anti-christ spirit. To not believe this is take on cult status in the eyes of Christianity. This is why the message of God became man is important to us, as believers in Christ.
- 1) The apostle John wrote: 1 John 4:3 *every spirit that does not confess that Jesus Christ has come in the flesh is not of God. And this is the spirit of the Antichrist, which you have heard was coming, and is now already in the world.* NKJV
  - 2) Most religions believe that Jesus was a good man and a great teacher. But they do

not believe that He is the Son of God. Secular humanists do not believe He is the Son of God. Islam does not believe that Jesus is the Son of God. Jehovah's Witnesses don't believe that Jesus is the Son of God. Mormonism does not believe that Jesus is the Son of God although their language will say so.

B. The two gospel accounts of the birth of Christ (Matthew and Luke) are testimonies of the marvelous way in which God became flesh or God became a man. They describe how it happened.

- 1) The marvel (that which causes wonder or astonishment) is the fact that the Son of God became a man and He did so by way of the virgin birth.
- 2) The Word, that was God and was with God (Jesus), became a man! This does not mean that He ceased to be God—that would be metamorphosis and not incarnation. Metamorphosis is a total transformation. Jesus did not experience that.
- 3) The Word (Jesus) became a flesh. This does not imply that at sometime later this man became God. This would be called divinization (the making of a God.) You can't take something created and then make it God. That would be idolatry. Are you seeing the wonder of this.

C. The mystery of Christmas is John 1:14 "The Word became flesh." The Word, who was with God and was God took upon himself flesh and became a man. He did this without ceasing to be God. Thus He is Emmanuel--"Behold, the virgin shall conceive and bear a son, and they shall call his name Immanuel" (which means, God with us). NKJV Mt 1:23

- 1) This revelation transcends human imagination! It is of epic proportions! It's a mystery! That the creator of all things, visible and invisible would take on flesh so that we could see God/know God/and have relationship with God.
- 2) The apostle Paul was totally fascinated with God becoming a man: 1 Timothy 3:16 *"Without question, this is the great mystery of our faith\*: Christ\* was revealed in a human body"* NLT
- 3) Again the whole purpose of God becoming a man is the redemption of human race!

## II. Christmas starts with The Pre-existent Son of God. John 1:1 *In the beginning was the Word and the Word was with God and the Word was God.* NKJV

A. Do you want good news? The good news is this that God has come as Jesus Christ for the salvation of mankind. Acts 4:12 *"...there is no other name under heaven given among men by which we must be saved"* NKJV

B. That Jesus is the Son of God is a basic fact of the Gospels.

- 1) It is declared supernaturally by divine encounters:
  - a. An angel declares to Mary that Jesus the Son of God: Luke 1:35 *"And the angel answered and said to her, "The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Highest will overshadow you; therefore, also, that Holy One who is to be born will be called the Son of God."* NKJV Overshadow: Same thing that Holy Spirit did

- in Genesis 1 over the waters of the deep.
- b. God declares it Himself at Jesus' baptism: Luke 3:22 "...*voice came from heaven which said, "You are My beloved Son; in You I am well pleased."*
  - c. Satan refers to Jesus as the Son of God twice in Luke 4:3, 9 "*If you are the Son of God..."*
  - d. Demons declare Jesus to be the Son of God: Luke 4:41 "*And demons also came out of many, crying out and saying, "You are the Christ, the Son of God!"*" NKJV
  - e. These four scriptures are from the supernatural realms.
- 2) That Jesus is the Son of God is declared personally by others:
- a. John the Baptist: John 1:34 "*I have seen and I have borne witness that this is the Son of God.*" NKJV When he baptized Jesus he heard God say, "*This is my beloved Son.*"
  - b. Andrew says to Simon Peter in Jn 1:41 "*We have found the Messiah. (the Christ)*"
  - c. John 1:49 Nathanael says of Jesus, "*Rabbi, you are the Son of God.*" NKJV
  - d. In a boat on Sea of Galilee after a major storm, the disciple say of Jesus, Matthew 14:33 "*Truly you are the Son of God.*"
  - e. Peter in Matthew 16:16, "*You are the Christ, Son of the Living God.*"
  - f. Paul in Galatians 1:16 that God "*was pleased to reveal His Son in me.*"
  - g. Paul three days after his Damascus experience "*immediately he proclaimed Jesus saying, 'He is the Son of God.'*
- 3) The testimony of faith.
- a. Where there is vital faith there is the inward assurance that Jesus is the Son of God. 1 John 5:10 "*All who believe in the Son of God know in their hearts that this testimony is true.*"
  - b. Thomas and Jesus in John 20:27 "*Don't be faithless any longer. Believe!*" NLT Thomas proclaims, "My Lord and my God." And Jesus says these wonderful words, "*Blessed are those who have not seen and yet believe!*" v 29. It is the testimony of faith.
  - c. Faith is possible only through God's revealing of himself. The major thing we have to realize is that God is revealed through His Word and by His Spirit. John 20:31 "*These things are written that you may believe that Jesus is the Son of God.*" NKJV This is true of all of the Word of God. It is written that we might see the redemptive plan of God and that the Word is testimony to faith in Jesus Christ as God's Son.
- 4) The testimony of works
- a. Answer of Jesus to men sent by John the baptist. John 5:36 "*I have a greater witness than John—my teachings and my miracles. The Father gave me these works to accomplish, and they prove that he sent me.*" The works, in Jesus words prove that the Father sent him.

- b. Romans 1:4 "...*and he was shown to be the Son of God when he was raised from the dead by the power of the Holy Spirit. He is Jesus Christ our Lord.*" NKJV
- c. Jesus sign to Israel, John 2:19 "*Destroy this temple and in three days I will raise it up.*" Only one equal to God could make such a statement.

### III. Why Does it Matter?

- A. It matters because Jesus is the pre-existent Son of God. He did not become a son after his birth, or at his baptism or at the transfiguration. He was the Son that was given because God loved. Jn 3:16. Because Jesus is equal to God. Jesus is distinct from the Father. (Father did not die on cross, Jesus did. Jesus is seated at Right Hand of God. He is distinct from the Father.) Jesus is God the Father's personal embodiment. "*If you have seen me you have seen the Father.*" John 14:8-9
- B. It matters because Jesus is the revelation of the nature of God.
  - 1) He is the very representation of God. Heb 1:3 He reflects the glory of God and is the stamp of the very nature of God.
  - 2) Whatever can be said of God the Father is shown in the person of Jesus Christ.
  - 3) What is God like? Look at Jesus and you will know. Jn 14:8-9.
  - 4) The fact that God is invisible to men makes the revelation of Jesus all the more meaningful. I can see Him!
  - 5) Whatever Jesus said, Whatever Jesus did, revealed the nature of the Father.
    - a. John 1:14...*we have beheld His glory.*"
    - b. 2 Corinthians 4:6 *God who said, Let light shine out of the darkness...has shone in our hearts to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Christ.*"
- C. Because Jesus is the Son of God it makes redemption/salvation possible.
  - 1) The One who saves from sin must be nothing less than God or it is not possible. Mt 1:21 *You shall call His name Jesus, for he will save his people from their sin.* NKJV And in 1:23 he is called Emmanuel "*God with us.*"
  - 2) This is why God becoming flesh is so important. If the Son of God as God himself did not come from heaven and take upon himself our flesh, then we are still in our sin. Only One who is eternally God can save.
  - 3) It is mysterious and it is absolutely wondrous that the Son of God is both God and and Son and that He is the Son of God who became flesh and set the stage for our salvation. It is that 1 Timothy 3:16 verse, *Great indeed we confess is the mystery of our religion: He was manifested in the flesh.*
- D. Because faith in the Son of God alone saves a person. Why does it matter?
  - 1) Unless one recognizes that Jesus is the Son of God and not just a mere human being, there can be no salvation for him. This is why John begins with the "*the Word became flesh*" and climaxes with John 20:31 "*These are written that you may believe that Jesus*

*is the Christ, the Son of God, and that believing you may have life in His name."*

- 2) Unless you believe that Jesus is the Son of God, God able to save, there is no way to receive Him as Saviour. This is why there is no greater damage to the Christian faith than to deny that Jesus came in flesh--that is the spirit of the anti-christ. Ie. no wonder there is such a fight to take the Christ out of Christmas, "don't say Merry Christmas." Don't let the Christ of Christmas infect our school children. It is the spirit of the age--antichrist.
- 3) To believe that Jesus is the Christ is to receive Him.
  - a. John 1:12 *To all who received Him, to those who believed in His name, he gave the power to become the children of God.* To believe in Him as the Christ, Son of God, is to receive him into one's total life.
  - b. To believe is to confess: 1 John 4:15 *"Whoever confesses that Jesus is the Son of God, God abides in Him and he in Him."* Romans 10:9 *"If you confess with your mouth that Jesus is Lord and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved."*
- 4) By faith in Christ as the Son of God there is salvation.

### **Conclusion:**

- It is mysterious that God could come in the flesh as the Son of God. It is mysterious that a baby in a manger could one day take away the sin of world and redeem all those who would call on His name--Jesus. Jesus -- he will save his people from their sin. Emmanuel God with us.
- One of the greatest facts of Christianity is that when we stand before God. And we all will. The greatest news as believers is that we will not stand before God alone. A muslim--will stand before God alone. A Buddhist, will stand before God alone. A Christian will stand with Jesus, Son of God, at his side. And to those who received Him (Jesus) to those who believed on His name...He will say "My Brother! My Sister" Jesus will stand as or advocate declaring us to be sons of God.
- Invitation
  - Mary did you know. When you kiss your baby you kissed the son of God.
  - *"In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was in the beginning with God."* (John 1:1-2, ESV)
  - *"And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we have seen his glory, glory as of the only Son from the Father, full of grace and truth."* (John 1:14, ESV)