

“HIS NAME JESUS”

Matthew 1:18-25

Intro: In the days when the Lord Jesus Christ was upon earth, no one had any question about His humanity, but people generally had trouble accepting His Deity. Basically this is why the scribes and Pharisees sought to kill Him, and eventually did. The Apostle John has recorded for us the crux of the issue of their opposition to our Lord in John 5:16-18. The earlier part of that chapter records for us the healing of a man who had not been able to walk for thirty-eight years. The Lord had healed him, but specifically what angered the Jewish religious leaders was that He had done this on the Sabbath day. So this is what we read in John 5:16-18:

16 And therefore did the Jews persecute Jesus, and sought to slay him, because he had done these things on the sabbath day.

17 But Jesus answered them, My Father worketh hitherto, and I work.

18 Therefore the Jews sought the more to kill him, because he not only had broken the sabbath, but said also that God was his Father, making himself equal with God.

Actually the Lord had not broken the Sabbath, but He had broken Jewish tradition regarding the Sabbath. In this case the Lord had told the man whom He had healed, “Take up thy bed, and walk.” To the Jews, for the man to do this was work. But when the Lord said to the Jews, “My Father worketh hitherto, and I work,” meant that He was claiming equal-ity with God. Which meant that the Lord was claiming Deity, which He was. And if this had been a false claim, the Lord would have been guilty of blasphemy, which would have meant that He should have died. But if it was true, and it was, the Jews should have fallen on their faces, confessed their sins, and worshiped the Lord. The Jews had not question about our Lord’s humanity, but they were in total denial of His Deity.

This charge against the Deity of our Lord followed Him all the way to the Cross because you will remember that one charge that the people cried out against the Lord as He was dying on the Cross, was this: “If thou be the Son of God, come down from the Cross” (Matt. 27:40).

So the issue against the Lord was not His humanity, but His Deity. Even the apostles had trouble comprehending that our Lord was the Son of God in human flesh. I think that we all will have to admit that to believe that the Son of God had come to earth as a Man, is truth which the Spirit of

God has to reveal to us. When the Apostle Peter in response our Lord's question, "But whom say ye that I am," said, "Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God, our Lord responded to Peter in these words found in Matthew 16:17: "Blessed art thou, Simon Barjona: for flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee, but my Father which is in heaven." This could be said to each one of us. The Father Himself has convinced us that Jesus is "the Christ, the Son of the living God."

The average person in the world does not believe that about Jesus of Nazareth, but we who are true Christians, believe this with all of our heart.

But what about the true humanity of Jesus? We believe that too. We believe it because it is clearly taught in the Bible. And we would have to say that the Holy Spirit has had a major hand in convincing us that Jesus, the Son of God, became a true human being. He had a human body. He was not ghost of some kind. He was a true human being just like we are, but with one very important exception: He did not have a sin nature like we do. He was not a sinner. "He did no sin" (1 Pet. 2:22). "He knew no sin (2 Cor. 5:21). He was "without sin" (Heb. 4:15). "In Him is no sin" (1 John 3:5). The testimony of Paul and Peter and John and whoever wrote the book of Hebrews, are all united in their belief in the sinlessness of Jesus of Nazareth. So the evidence is overwhelming. Any person who does not believe in the absolute Deity of Jesus, or in the total sinlessness of the humanity of Jesus, can't really be a Christian.

But now having said that, let me say that among those of us who are Christians, there is a great lack of appreciation for what the humanity of Jesus of Nazareth should mean to us in our daily lives. I hope in the three messages I will bring starting today and continuing for the next two Sundays that we all will come to a greater understanding of what it means that the Son of God became a Man. All of us as Christians are, according to 2 Peter 3:18, are to "grow in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ." As long as we live we are to be growing "in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ." There is always more to learn, and there are always ways in which we need to put into practice what we are learning about our Lord.

The Message

The first thing that I want to do today is to examine three of the most

familiar prophecies of Jesus Christ which we all are familiar with, and to note specifically what they say about the humanity of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.

The first prophecy is found in Genesis 3:15. It is the first prophecy in the Bible concerning Jesus Christ. Most of you know what I am talking about. But let me read the verse to you. Here it is:

15 And I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed; it shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel (Gen. 3:15).

These words were spoken by the Lord God to the serpent after he had tempted Eve into eating the forbidden fruit, and then had gotten her husband, Adam, to eat it. God announced that there would be enmity between the serpent, who was the Devil, and the woman. Notice the words, “her seed.” “Her seed” was a descendant of the woman, or her offspring. Now what the Devil understood about this, we don’t know. But the point that I want to make this morning is that when the Lord God spoke of *the seed of the woman*, He had to be talking about a human being. We are in a position to know the meaning of this verse since this prophecy is history. The woman probably was Eve, but the most closely related person to the promised seed, or descendant, was the virgin Mary. It is very significant that the Lord God did not say *the seed of the man*. The emphasis here is that the promised seed, Who was to be the Son of God, was related to the human family by a human mother, but not by a human father. So we see that this first prophecy of Christ had to do with His humanity.

Now let me take you to a second prophecy in the Bible, and this is in Isaiah 7:14. This is what that verse tells us:

14 Behold, a virgin shall conceive, and bear a son, and shall call his name Immanuel.

Here we are told that a virgin would conceive and bear a son. Obviously a woman is referred to by the word “virgin,” but she is an unmarried woman. When she would give birth to a son, it would be before she was married. Now at this point the Holy Spirit was revealing to the prophet Isaiah that “the seed of the woman” would be “a son,” not a daughter. And that this son would not have a human father. So the emphasis again is upon His humanity, born of a human mother, but not having a human father.

But Isaiah tells what His Name would be. From Isaiah 7:14 it was that

His mother would call Him, Immanuel. And, if you are using a Bible with marginal notes included, you will find that Immanuel means *God with us*, or *God is with us*. So do you see how this one sentence in the prophecy of Isaiah tell us that a virgin would give birth to a son, and His Name would indicate that He would be Deity, a Member of the Godhead. So the people of Israel, of Judah in particular, were to look for the coming of One Who would be the human son of a virgin, and at the same time would be God.

Now let us move on to just a page of two to the third prophecy that I want us to examine today. It is found in Isaiah 9:6 and 7. Follow in your Bible as I read these verses to you:

6 For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given: and the government shall be upon his shoulder: and his name shall be called Wonderful Counsellor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace.

7 Of the increase of his government and peace there shall be no end, upon the throne of David, and upon his kingdom, to order it, and to establish it with judgment and with justice from henceforth even for ever. The zeal of the Lord of hosts will perform this (Isa. 9:6-7).

The very first words of verse 6 tie in perfectly with the two previous prophecies that we have read: “For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given.” How could you have humanity and Deity expressed in any better way? “A child is born” – this is humanity. “Unto us a son is given” – Deity. And from the words which follow we can see the Isaiah was not speaking about two people, but he was speaking of just one Person. He went on to say, “and the government shall be upon His shoulder, and His Name (not names) shall be called Wonderful Counsellor (or a wonder of a Counsellor), The Mighty God, the Everlasting Father, the Prince of Peace.”

So Isaiah, speaking by the Holy Spirit (because he could not have known it any other way) tells us that this One Who was to come would be both God and Man in one Person. There never was any such Person before, nor has there been as such Person since,

Now I want to take you to the first chapter in your NT where we can bring all of this together. In the Genesis passage we go back basically to the beginning of time. I personally believe in a relatively young world about 4,000 years plus a few years to Adam and Eve. Then to Isaiah’s day

which was about 700 years B.C. And then to the time of Christ which divides B.C. and A.D.

The NT passage is our Scripture reading for today: Matthew 1:18-25.

Notice that verses 22 and 23 relate what is said here about the birth of Christ to the second of the three OT passages which we have looked at, the one in Isaiah 7:14. But notice how this passage brings together what we have read in all three of those OT passages.

Our attention is focused upon a woman who was going to have a child (as in verse 18), but a son (as in verse 21). She was engaged to be married, but not married. She was a virgin. When Joseph found out that she was expecting a baby, he could only come to the conclusion that she had been unfaithful to him, so, even though he loved her very much, he prepared to break his engagement with her. But he did not want to do it in a public way because of his love for her. It must have been a time of great despair for Joseph.

But while he was going over all of this in his mind the angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream and told him what was going on. He was told that the baby that Mary was carrying in her womb was not the result of sin on her part. Quite the opposite. The baby which was in her had been conceived by the Holy Spirit! This had set the virgin Mary apart as especially blessed by the Lord. She was undoubtedly one of the most wonderful of women, probably the most wonderful, of any woman who has ever lived. But she was not God herself. She was a sinner as she confessed when she said in her Magnificat, "My spirit hath rejoiced in God my Savior" (Luke 1:47). She gave birth to a human baby Who was God the Son.

Going back to the Garden of Eden, although Eve sinned first, yet judgment came upon the human race through the sin of Adam, and it seems from Scripture that the sin nature is passed on to all children through the fathers. Romans 5:12 says,

12 Wherefore, as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned:

But why would this subject be so important in OT Scripture, and why did the Son of God come to earth as a male human being. The angel of the Lord told Joseph in Matthew 1:20-21:

20 But while he thought on these things, behold, the angel of the Lord appeared unto him in a dream, saying, Joseph, thou son of David, fear not to take unto thee Mary thy wife: for that which is conceived in her is of the Holy Ghost.

21 And she shall bring forth a son, and thou shalt call his name JESUS: for he shall save his people from their sins.

Concl: The first reason that it was important that the Son of God come to earth as a Man, was because only a perfect sacrifice could satisfy God. “All have sinned and come short of the glory of God” (Rom. 3:23). “There is not a just man upon earth that doeth good, and sinneth not” (Ecc. 7:20). The sentence of eternal death hangs over the head of every person who has ever lived, or who will ever live, and no one can deliver himself from the judgment of God. A perfect sacrifice must be found. We all must die for our own sins. Our only hope is that a perfect sacrifice can be found for us. But there is none. The best of men are sinners under divine judgment. Paul stated in Galatians 4 what God’s remedy for man’s sin is:

4 But when the fulness of the time was come, God sent forth his Son, made of a woman, made under the law,

5 To redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons.

6 And because ye are sons, God hath sent forth the Spirit of his Son into your hearts, crying, Abba, Father.

7 Wherefore thou art no more a servant, but a son; and if a son, then an heir of God through Christ (Gal. 4:4-7).

In 2 Corinthians 5:21 Paul expressed it this way:

21 For he hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him.

It is the same Gospel which Isaiah preached in the OT:

6 All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned every one to his own way; and the Lord hath laid on him the iniquity of us all (Isa. 53:6).

The Lord Jesus never sinned, but He died for us, in our place, because God charged our sins against Him, in order that His righteousness might be put to our account.

But who are “His people” – “for He shall save His people from their sins”? They are the elect of God, those whom God has ordained for salvation. Notice how positive this statement. It was not that He could save His people, but that He shall save His people from their sins.”

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All of this means that if the Son of God had not become a Man so that He could pay the penalty for your sins and mine, there would be no Savior, no salvation. But He was born a Man without ceasing in any way to be the Son of God. He offered a perfect sacrifice. We can add nothing to what He did. Therefore we come to Him to put our trust in Him believing that He did everything to satisfy God concerning our sins, and we receive as a gift from God eternal life.

What a tragedy that some whom we have recognized as evangelical leaders are now saying that there may be some other way for people to come to God. There is no other way. And at this Christmas time when we remember the birth of our Savior, our hearts should overflow with praise to God there is salvation, but only through the incarnate Lord Jesus Christ. He is “the way, the truth, and the life; no man cometh unto the Father but by Him.

This is something that you can't afford to be mistaken on. If you have not received Christ as your Savior, I plead with you to come to Him today. Trust Him for the forgiveness of your sins. He said, “All that the Father giveth Me, shall come to Me, and him that cometh to Me I will in no wise cast out.” That is the Gospel. Turn to Christ today and be saved.