

Who Is Jesus

Part Two / Wednesday, December 12, 2018

The Miracle of the Incarnation

1 Brief review: The question, “Who Is Jesus?” is the single most important query of your
2 life. We opened this series last week with the very words of our Lord to His disciples at
3 Caesarea Philippi (on the slopes of Mount Hermon in northern Israel):

4
5 Mark 8:27-29

6 **And Jesus went out, and his disciples, into the towns of Caesarea Philippi: and by**
7 **the way he asked his disciples, saying unto them, Whom do men say that I am? [28]**
8 **And they answered, John the Baptist: but some say, Elias; and others, One of the**
9 **prophets. [29] And he saith unto them, But whom say ye that I am? And Peter**
10 **answereth and saith unto him, Thou art the Christ.**

11
12 Our Lord is still asking that question of everyone: Who is Jesus to you personally? It is
13 my prayer that the Holy Spirit will illuminate the true answer to that to all who take in this
14 series.

15
16 In last week’s study we examined Paul’s declaration in Galatians 4:4: **But when the**
17 **fulness of the time was come, God sent forth his Son, made of a woman, made under**
18 **the law...** As we near our celebrations of Christmas, this truth (“the fulness of time”) is
19 near to our hearts: at the exact time, the exact place, God appointed the physical birth of
20 His only begotten Son; John 3:16 **For God so loved the world, that he gave his only**
21 **begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have**
22 **everlasting life.** In last week’s study and notes, we looked at a number of historical
23 reasons why Jesus’ birth is so celebrated.

But....why December 25th?

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25
26
27 No one knows the real birthday of Jesus. No date is given in Scripture. So why do we
28 celebrate this glorious occasion on December 25th? The early Christians certainly had
29 discussions (and varying conclusions!) as to when it should be celebrated. It is worthy
30 of note that Jesus’ birth probably did not happen in the year 1, but slightly earlier,
31 sometime between 2 BC and 7 BC. Many scholars will validate 4 BC. (Remember
32 there was no “0”; the years go from 1 BC (before Christ) to 1 AD (Anno Domini - after
33 Christ).

34
35 The first recorded date of Christmas being celebrated on December 25th was in 336 AD

1 during the reign of the Roman Emperor Constantine. A few years later, the Pope (Julius
2 I) officially declared that the birth of Jesus would be celebrated on the 25th of December.
3 This, in a nutshell, is the basic reason we still celebrate the date, although Jesus could
4 have been born on some other date.

5
6 **WAS THAT EARLY DATE 2,000 YEARS AGO OUR LORD'S FIRST DAY ON**
7 **EARTH? NO!**

8
9 Long before time began, in the eternal past, Jesus “was with God” (John 1:1). Yes -
10 before the world was: John 17:5 **And now, O Father, glorify thou me with thine own**
11 **self with the glory which I had with thee before the world was.**

12
13 We know very little about of Jesus’ work during this period, only that our Father God
14 through Him framed the ages: Hebrews 1:2 **Hath in these last days spoken unto us**
15 **by his Son, whom he hath appointed heir of all things, by whom also he made the**
16 **worlds;** and that He began to assemble the future list of the redeemed before the
17 foundation of the world: Ephes. 1:4 **According as he hath chosen us in him before**
18 **the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in**
19 **love...**

20
21

That verse, by the way, does not speak of predestination ; rather it speaks of foreknowledge . There is a huge difference in the two words!

22
23 We know from Scripture that *Jesus had a part in creation*. John refers to the creation
24 story in John 1, referring to Him as THE WORD. He wrote, John 1:3 **All things were**
25 **made by him; and without him (Jesus) was not any thing made that was made.**
26 Thus a person’s thought of Jesus as only “the Baby Jesus” (a phrase heard in media more
27 and more) severely limits one’s understanding of whom He truly is.

28
29 Paul the Apostle adds his “amen” to this in 1 Cor. 8:6 : **But to us there is but one God,**
30 **the Father, of whom are all things, and we in him; and one Lord Jesus Christ, by**
31 **whom are all things, and we by him.** And: Col. 1:16-17 **For by him were all**
32 **things created, that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible,**
33 **whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers: all things were**
34 **created by him, and for him: [17] And he is before all things, and by him all things**
35 **consist.**

36
37 These verses represent Jesus as the Creator.

1 Scriptures leave no room for doubt on this issue: Jesus existed long before the worlds
2 were formed We speak of the PRE-INCARNATE Christ. What do we mean by that?
3 When Jesus was born, it was the blessed INCARNATION of Jesus; He became a human
4 being, just as John so clearly wrote: John 1:14 **And the Word was made flesh, and**
5 **dwelt among us, (and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the**
6 **Father,) full of grace and truth.**

7
8 The Incarnation? The pre-existent Christ became a man. Why would God do such a
9 thing? Why would He allow it to happen?

10 11 THE REASONS FOR THE INCARNATION

12
13 1. God, the Father, had long since committed to mankind the solution to their sinful
14 nature and the cause for their redemption. Romans 15:8-9 **Now I say that Jesus**
15 **Christ was a minister of the circumcision (the Jews) for the truth of God, to confirm**
16 **the promises made unto the fathers: [9] And that the Gentiles might glorify God for**
17 **his mercy; as it is written, For this cause I will confess to thee among the Gentiles,**
18 **and sing unto thy name.**

19
20 Try to imagine the chagrin, the shame, of Adam and Eve after their sin and fall from
21 grace. But even at that dark hour, God offered them hope: Genesis 3:15 (God said,
22 speaking to the serpent, Satan) **And I will put enmity between thee and the woman,**
23 **and between thy seed and her seed; it shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his**
24 **heel.** At that very early juncture in humanity's history, God promised a deliver who
25 would come and end Satan's attacks on mankind. And that deliverer would be Jesus, the
26 Christ. God promised that Jesus would:

- 27 ✓ come as the Savior from sin
- 28 ✓ come as King in His Kingdom
- 29 ✓ deliver us from evil

30
31 Jesus Himself said He had come to bring salvation to the Jews, His own people, for Jesus
32 was a Jew by human birth: Matthew 15:24 **But he answered and said, I am not sent**
33 **but unto the lost sheep of the house of Israel.** But sadly, John 1:11, **He came unto**
34 **his own, and his own received him not.**

35
36 But received by Jew or Gentile or not, Jesus was the faithful Son of the Living God who
37 came to deliver us from sin and the clutches of Satan.

38
39 2. Jesus came to show us who God was! John 1:18

40 **No man hath seen God at any time; the only begotten Son, which is in the bosom**
41 **of the Father, he hath declared him.**

1 That verse of “no man has seen God” stands in stark contrast to the sermon last Sunday
2 taken from Rev. 22:4: **And they shall see his face** Can you even imagine one day
3 looking to the face of God? By faith now, as we walk on earth, the Father is revealed to
4 us by Jesus and His teachings. But one day, face to face!

5 *Face to face with Christ my Savior - face to face, what will it be*

6 *When with rapture I behold Him, Jesus Christ who died for me?*

7 But on that glorious day we shall also behold Him, the God and Father of His children!

8
9 Jesus spoke openly about this issue - you have seen Me, thus you have seen the Father!
10 He said this to one of His disciples, Philip: John 14:9 **Jesus saith unto him, Have I**
11 **been so long time with you, and yet hast thou not known me, Philip? he that hath**
12 **seen me hath seen the Father; and how sayest thou then, Shew us the Father?**

13
14 *It may well be that to the ancient world this was the most staggering thing Jesus ever
said. To the Greeks God was characteristically “the Invisible.” The Jews would
count it as an article of faith that no man had seen God at any time. To people who
thought like that Jesus said: “If you had known me, you would have known the Father
too.” Then Philip asked what he must have believed to be the impossible. Maybe he
was thinking back to that tremendous day when God revealed his glory to Moses
(Exodus 33:12-32). But even in that great day, God had said to Moses: “You shall
see my back: but my face shall not be seen.” In the time of Jesus men were
oppressed and fascinated by what is called the transcendence of God and by thought
of the difference and distance between God and man. They would never have dared
to think that they could see God. Then Jesus said with utter simplicity, “He who has
seen me has seen the Father.” **TO SEE JESUS IS TO SEE WHAT GOD IS LIKE!***

The Gospel of John Volume 2 / William Barclay / page 159 / Westminster Press

15
16 3. Jesus became a man to become a faithful high priest. Thiessen writes, “Let it be
17 said with all reverence, that Christ came in order to enter into every human experience,
18 that He might be fit as a High Priest. The book of Hebrews teaches us that the high
19 priests were taken from among men that they might faithfully represent men: Hebrews
20 5:1-2 **For every high priest taken from among men is ordained for men in things**
21 **pertaining to God, that he may offer both gifts and sacrifices for sins: [2] Who can**
22 **have compassion on the ignorant, and on them that are out of the way; for that he**
23 **himself also is compassed with infirmity.** Or to put this verse simply: Hebrews 5:1-2
24 (Living Bible) **The Jewish high priest is merely a man like anyone else, but he is**
25 **chosen to speak for all other men in their dealings with God. He presents their gifts**
26 **to God and offers to him the blood of animals that are sacrificed to cover the sins of**
27 **the people and his own sins too. [2] And because he is a man, he can deal gently with**

1 **other men, though they are foolish and ignorant...**
2
3

The very fact that He felt the pangs of hunger, the want of sympathy from others, that He had sleepless nights, that He was weary from the toils of life, that He felt every type of temptation that comes to mankind, that He was misunderstood, forsaken, persecuted, and delivered up to death, was a preparation for His priestly ministry. –
Henry Thiessen

4
5 4. God sent Jesus (the incarnation) to destroy sin.
6

7 How could He do that? He became the substitute sacrificial offering, “the Lamb, slain
8 from the foundation of the world!” (John the Baptist) John 1:29 **The next day John**
9 **seeth Jesus coming unto him, and saith, Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh**
10 **away the sin of the world.**

11
12 Jesus Himself said this was His main purpose: Mark 10:45 **For even the Son of man**
13 **came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give his life a ransom for**
14 **many.** In order to die for the sins of the world, it necessitated His becoming a human
15 being. Hebrews 2:9 **But we see Jesus, who was made a little lower than the angels**
16 **for the suffering of death, crowned with glory and honour; that he by the grace of**
17 **God should taste death for every man.**

18
19 Why was it necessary for Jesus to be virgin-born, a perfect man, the Heidelberg
20 Catechism answers this question: “The justice of God requires that the same human
21 nature which had sinned should make satisfaction for sin; but no man, himself a sinner,
22 could satisfy (God) for the others.”

23
24 5. Jesus came to destroy the works of Satan. 1 John 3:8 **He that committeth sin is of**
25 **the devil; for the devil sinneth from the beginning. For this purpose the Son of God**
26 **was manifested, that he might destroy the works of the devil.** Well, praise the Lord
27 for that! We sing, *“I once was lost but now am found; was blind but now I see!”*

28
29 Now here is a blockbuster from Scripture: Hebrews 2:14-15 **Forasmuch then as the**
30 **children are partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself likewise took part of the**
31 **same; that through death he might destroy him that had the power of death, that is,**
32 **the devil; [15] And deliver them who through fear of death were all their lifetime**
33 **subject to bondage.**

34
35 The Incarnation was the kiss of death for Satan! Because of Jesus, the Adversary has

1 lost his hold on us! As I have mentioned numerous times from the pulpit: The next time
2 Satan reminds you of your PAST....you remind him of his FUTURE!

3
4 6. Jesus came to earth as a human to be an example of a holy life. 1 John 2:6 **He**
5 **that saith he abideth in him ought himself also so to walk, even as he walked.**

6
7 Moses was a great leader, to be sure. But on several occasions he showed his quick
8 temper which was not exemplory. David is loved as the first king of Israel, but one
9 would need a thick tablet to set down his transgressions. And so it goes with every
10 single person in Scripture - EXCEPT THE CHRIST OF GOD. 1 Peter 2:21 **For even**
11 **hereunto were ye called: because Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example,**
12 **that ye should follow his steps:**

13
14 Jesus showed us how to behave in our daily lives toward God, lost humanity and true
15 believers alike. When we want to puff ourselves up, we should consider God's picture
16 of every single one of us if we're without Christ: Romans 3:23 **For all have sinned,**
17 **and come short of the glory of God;**

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So....what is this "glory of God?" John 1:14 **And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, (and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father,) full of grace and truth.** There it is: Jesus is the glory of God - not you or me. Someone might say, "Well, I'm as good as he or she is!" Perhaps so; but unfortunately "he or she" is not the glory of God, so when we stand before the God, we will not be compared to "him or her." No, we will be compared to HIM! And do we ever come up short! If anyone believes he or she is the equivalent to Christ, stand up and now and show us! No will, of course, because none of us can be considered the glory of God.

7. Jesus came, God Incarnate, to prepare us for His return and for eternity! How do we know He is coming back? Read the volume of Scripture. Hebrews 9:28 **So Christ was once offered to bear the sins of many; and unto them that look for him shall he appear the second time without sin unto salvation.** John 14:1-3 **Let not your heart be troubled: ye believe in God, believe also in me. [2] In my Father's house are many mansions: if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. [3] And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also.**

"During World War II, when it seemed so dark for all humanity, the Axis powers surging over the world, General Douglas MacArthur left the Philippine Islands in utter defeat,

1 having failed in his quest and purpose for those stricken people there, he made the
2 statement, 'I shall return!' Those words have become famous, but he only reiterated a
3 statement that was made by a Galilean two thousand years before. The general
4 plagiarized that statement, for it was first made by Jesus Christ, the Son of God. 'I go to
5 prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and
6 receive you unto myself that where I am, there ye may be also.' (John 14, 2 and 3) Just
7 as MacArthur returned to the Philippine Islands and raised the red, white and blue, the
8 symbol of liberty and freedom, and gave those people back their liberty, even so will
9 Jesus come again! He will return as the risen Lord, victorious over death and sin, the
10 mighty conqueror and the Ruler of ages! This King of kings will reign in His kingdom
11 of peace for a thousand years on this earth." From a sermon by Evangelist Jack Shuler

12 THE INCARNATION FURTHER DEFINED

13 Christ's humility. There are so many differences in Jesus, the only begotten Son of
14 God, and Satan that one could write a book on the subject. Our Lord's humility is a case
15 in point. In Satan's case, for example, Isaiah 14:12-14: Note Satan's arrogant pride:
16 **How art thou fallen from heaven, O Lucifer, son of the morning! how art thou cut**
17 **down to the ground, which didst weaken the nations! [13] For thou hast said in thine**
18 **heart, I will ascend into heaven, I will exalt my throne above the stars of God: I will**
19 **sit also upon the mount of the congregation, in the sides of the north: [14] I will**
20 **ascend above the heights of the clouds; I will be like the most High. I will, I will, I**
21 **will!** To Satan (Lucifer) it was all about him!

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24
25 Now note this difference: Philip. 2:6-7 **Who, being in the form of God, thought it**
26 **not robbery to be equal with God: [7] But made himself of no reputation, and took**
27 **upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men:**

28
29 Theologians call this amazing quality in our Lord His *Kenosis* – in other words, Jesus
30 voluntarily "emptied Himself" of prideful qualities that mark most of mankind. But He
31 did not ever divest Himself of His attributes: Omniscience, omnipotence and
32 omnipresence.

33
34 Consider his omniscience, His divine knowledge:

- 35
36 • John 2:24-25 **But Jesus did not commit himself unto them, because he knew**
37 **all men, [25] And needed not that any should testify of man: for he knew what**
38 **was in man.**

39
40 His power:

- 41 • He rebuked the wind; He fed multitudes with virtually nothing that multiplied in

1 His hands; He healed he sick, cast our demons, raised the dead! Matthew 9:28
2 **And when he was come into the house, the blind men came to him: and Jesus**
3 **saith unto them, Believe ye that I am able to do this? They said unto him, Yea,**
4 **Lord.**

5
6 On the cross, Jesus could have whispered for help and millions of angels would have
7 quickly removed Him and dispatched the entire Roman Empire in seconds. HE HAD
8 THE POWER BUT NEVER USED IT FOR HIS OWN GOOD. Note the temptation in
9 the wilderness. This was the Kenosis, the self-emptying.

10
11 **IN THE LIKENESS OF MEN**

12
13 **Philip. 2:7 But made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a**
14 **servant, and was made in the likeness of men:**

15
16 Characters in history often desperately wanted to become gods. For example, Alexander
17 the Great so designated himself divine. The mother of Emperor Tiberias, Livia, begged
18 to become a goddess. (Neither made it, by the way!) But our Lord Jesus voluntarily
19 gave up His position at the throne of His Father, God, to become a man for some 33
20 years.

21
22 Note again John's declaration: John 1:14 **And the Word (Jesus, the Logos) was made**
23 **flesh, and dwelt among us, (and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten**
24 **of the Father,) full of grace and truth.**

25
26 Simply put: The Word became MAN. 1 John 4:2 **Hereby know ye the Spirit of**
27 **God: Every spirit that confesseth that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is of God:**

28
29 Paul's declaration in Colossians is incredible: Col. 2:9 **For in him (Jesus) dwelleth all**
30 **the fulness of the Godhead bodily.** Jesus was God Incarnate yet for 33 years He lived
31 on this very earth as one of us! **THIS IS THE INCARNATION.**

32
33 **Malcomb Muggeridge**

34
35 The original host of NBC's *TONIGHT* show was Steve Allen, followed for five years by
36 Jack Paar. Paar often had a guest panelist named Malcolm Muggeridge (who died in
37 1990 at age 878). He was a long-time English journalist and satirist, who, in his early
38 years, flirted with communism. Later he became a fierce opponent of anything Marxist
39 and worked for the British government as a soldier and spy. He wrote two volumes of
40 an acclaimed autobiography with a title that spoke of his years without Christ, *Chronicles*
41 *of Wasted Time.* I sometimes hear from skeptics who consider evangelical Christians as

1 uneducated morons. The life of Muggeridge puts a severe dent in that identification.
2 He said he had been greatly influenced by six spiritual thinkers, Augustine of Hippo,
3 William Blake, Blaise Pascal, Leo Tolstoy, Dietrich Bonhoffer and Soren Kierkegaard –
4 all six brilliant thinkers and academicians. On a TV program featuring the team of
5 Monty Python who had just released a film, *The Life of Brian*, a scathing look at Jesus,
6 Muggeridge told the comedians that he considered their film “buffoonery,” “tenth-rate,”
7 “a miserable little film,” and “a squalid number,” not to mention “blasphemous.” In the
8 early days on Paar’s show, Muggeridge showed nothing but contempt for Christianity.
9 But in 1969 he found the Lord Jesus as His Christ and Savior. I had the joy of meeting
10 him and I asked him, “What a transition in your life! What led you to Jesus?” His
11 answer: “The Incarnation!” He called it the greatest story in human history. I agree!

12
13 In our study next week, I continue with The Incarnation, spotlighting the humanity of
14 Jesus in His 33 years on this earth. How could He be divine and yet human? And I
15 will also take us to a look at the character of Christ.

16
17 We have far, far to go in this study. Thank you for being here tonight. Please invite
18 some others to join you next week.

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5 **BIBLIOGRAPHY**

6 Most of these books are available in the lobby through the ministry of the Christ Centered
7 Bookstore.
8

- 9 1. The Holy Bible
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12 4. Jesus Manifesto - Leonard Sweet
13 5. The Jesus I Never Knew - Philip Yancey
14 6. The Historical Jesus - Gaalyah Cornfeld
15 7. The Life and Times of Jesus – Alfred Edersheim
16 8. Lectures in Systematic Theology – Henry Thiessen
17 9. Thru The Bible –Volume IV – J. Vernon McGee
18 10. The Gospel of John, Volumes 1 and 2 – William Barclay
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20 12. Many secular history books
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