

“Three perspectives of the birth of Jesus”

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I. Intro

As this is the time of year that people all over the world celebrate the birth of Christ and I wanted to take a different approach at our examination of His birth. So, this morning we will be in three different sections each giving us a different view.

- **John 1:1-4 Heavenly View**
- **Matt. 1:18-25 Prophetic View**
- **Philip. 2:5-11 Practical View**

II. John 1:1-4 Heavenly View

We start with what many call the prolog or summation of the gospel of John where John gives his readers a threefold declaration about Jesus:

- In the beginning was the Word
- And the Word was with God
- And the Word was God

John says, “*When the beginning began, the Word was already there*”. Though John did not immediately identify the “Word” choosing instead to do so gradually like peeling the layers of an onion. The first truth John wants us to understand is that **the “Word” predates time or creation as He was there before anything was.** John is NOT speaking on the origin of God but rather God’s continuous existence which John will contrast in verse 14 with the word “**became flesh**” which **speaks of that which had always been eternal entering time, space, and matter.**

The word for God here is “Elohim” which speaks of three or more and suggests that John is thinking in terms of the tri-unity of God. The word Logos in the Greek means “*to collect, to*

place words side by side, to speak and to express an opinion” A word is composed of letters and Jesus according to Rev. 1:11 the “*Alpha and Omega*” the first and last letters of the Greek alphabet so Jesus is God’s last word to mankind, and John says that Jesus is the “Eternal Word” “Creative Word” “Essential Word”. Paul calls Jesus “*the hidden wisdom which God ordained before the ages for our glory*” (1 Cor. 2:7).

Next John takes on the concept that “*the Word was with God*” which carries two powerful truths:

- a. That the “Word” existed eternally with God
- b. And that the “Word” was in perfect fellowship with God in equality and intimacy they were face to face with each other

John is saying that, there is a Being known as the Word and this Being is God, because He is eternal yet this Being called the Word does not encompass all that God is as God the Father is a distinct Person from the Word as we are told that “*the Word was with God*” I cannot be “*with*” myself I can only be with someone else.

The last of this threefold declaration “*And the Word was God*”. John declares that Jesus was in the beginning with God again makes the point that the Father is distinct from the Son, and the Son distinct from the Father so we see that they are equally God, yet they are separate Persons. John’ declares these three truths about Jesus:

1. “*In the beginning was the Word*”: **Eternal**
2. “*The Word was with God*”: **Equal**
3. “*The Word was God*”: **Essential**

Then in the 2nd verse John gives us the origin of the “Word” as “*He was in the beginning with God*”. John links together the **pre-existence of the Word** with that of God. The point John is making is that the Word has always been God and this phrase is directly prior to the creative acts showing Jesus’ involvement in creation is NOT as being created Himself but rather that He is

instead the creator! This is further brought forth in verse 3 in the words, “Was made” *which is in the perfect tense in the Greek which means that creation is a finished product not a work in progress*. There are four essentials to life and John declares that Jesus is all of these:

- **Light:** John 8:12 *Jesus is the light of life*
- **Breath:** John 3:8 *Jesus is the breath of life*
- **Water:** John 4:10 *Jesus is the water of life*
- **Food:** John 6:35 *Jesus is the bread of Life*

The Word created all created things as Paul says in Colossians 1:16 “by Him all things were created that are in heaven and that are on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or principalities or powers. All things were created through Him and for Him.”

In verse John tells us that the Word is not only the source of all life but the principal of all life.

The Word not only creates life, but He is the One that sustains all life.

III. Matt. 1:18-25 Prophetic View

This is the part of the birth of Christ that we are most familiar with but the point of Matthew in sharing this story of the birth of Christ is found in verses 22-23. There are over 300 prophecies in the O.T. about the First Coming of Jesus, but many of these are repetitious of each other, and when you cut all those out you are left with 108 specific prophecies all fulfilled by Jesus of Nazareth. Luke’s gospel gives us information not recorded in Matthew, mainly of how the angel Gabriel came to inform Mary of what was about to take place in her life. Matthew tells us:

1. The time of Mary’s pregnancy: “*..After His mother Mary was betrothed to Joseph, before they came together*”. What we don’t understand is the cultural importance of the Jewish marriage. There were three stages to it:

- A. **The engagement period**: This was not at all like our engagement time. In this time marriages were arranged by the parents at a young age.
- B. **The espousal or betrothal time which lasted a year**: They were considered during this time legally married, although the relationship would not be consummated until a year later at the marriage festival.
- C. **The marriage itself**. On the wedding night the father of the bride would take signs of his daughter’s virginity and keep them in case there was ever a question

as to her being a virgin. It was at the second stage that we are told that “..before they came together, she was found with child of the Holy Spirit.” That is before sexual intercourse, suddenly Mary finds herself pregnant and we know through Luke (1:31-35) that she was told that it was by way of the Holy Spirit.

2. The second thing we notice is that the pregnancy was super-natural and as it relates to our topic this morning it was prophetic. There are many who want to take away the virgin birth of Jesus, saying that it is not important to the rest of the gospel. If you take away the virgin birth then Jesus is not who He claimed to be, and if He is not who He claimed to be then we all are still in our sins! The virgin birth points out the deity of Jesus. You can have a great teacher in Jesus if he was a liar. Look carefully at verse 25, and you see who’s first born son was Jesus was as it doesn’t say theirs but hers.

That is the point of Matthew in verses 22-23 as he tells us that all this was being done in

fulfillment of the Lord as He spoke through the prophet. From the beginning the plan has been laid out that man needed a savior and that savior had to be Immanuel, “God with us.” In verse 23 Matthew quotes Isa. 7:14 and though some the versions render the word for “virgin” in as “young maiden”, the context of the passage makes that impossible as it reads, “**Therefore the Lord Himself will give you a sign:..**” What kind of sign is it if a “**young maiden**” is with child as **this happens all the time.**

IV. Philip. 2:5-11 Practical View

The last viewpoint is the one that Paul writes about in Phil. 2: 5-11 where he wrote: “***Let this mind be in you which was also in Christ Jesus, who, being in the form of God, did not consider it robbery to be equal with God, but made Himself of no reputation, taking the form of a bondservant, and coming in the likeness of men. And being found in appearance as a man, He humbled Himself and became obedient to the point of death, even the death of the cross. Therefore, God also has highly exalted Him and given Him the name, which is above every name, that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of those in heaven, and of those on earth, and of those under the earth, and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.***”

In this amazing passage we see how the eternal Son of God stepped out of eternity and into time as Paul examines this by divided it into three sections:

- a. Vs. 6 **His renunciation**
- b. Vs. 7-8 **His humiliation**
- c. Vs. 9-11 **His exaltation**

Paul's view is to reveal to the Philippians that as far as humanity is concerned Jesus'

exaltation is made known through His humiliation. The context of these words were to use

Jesus as the example of how to have joy in spite of people as the church in Philippi was dealing

with division because of two ladies named Euodia (*Fragrance*) and Syntyche (*Fortunate*). Paul

gives to that attitude the attitude of Jesus who didn't achieve peace by passivity and compromise;

instead, His exaltation was made visible by His humiliation. ***Paul says that the key is having the***

same mindset as Jesus that you only win by willing to lose it all! There are **three steps in the**

words and actions of Jesus in this passage:

1. **Vs. 6 RENUNCIATION: Jesus gave up His right to His rights:** He didn't give up His rights as He couldn't not give up who He is, namely God the Son. Because he was also fully man **He willingly gave up His right to enjoy those rights.** Those rights are described for us here as being: **Existing in the form of God, equal with God the Father in nature and essence. Jesus in humanity didn't come to behave as God; He came to show humanity how God would act through a man, how humanity was intended to behave.** Jesus revealed the secret of a person's life: **Complete dependence upon God indwelling and empowering him.** With renunciation comes the willingness to bear injury, to put up with all the insults, to accept the cost of another's wrongs.
2. **Vs. 7-8 HUMILIATION: Jesus assumed all the hurt and rejection of the world, without complaint:** He didn't just give up His rights to His rights; He took up all of humanity's wrongs and did so without a word or action of complaint. Jesus was the only person who ever lived who didn't have to die, He said so, "*I lay down my life of myself, and I take it up again.*" **His whole earthly existence He lived under the shadow of misunderstanding by His parents, friends, neighbors', and countrymen.** At the end of His ministry even His followers abandoned Him; even one of His own followers betrayed Him turning Him over to the Romans to be stripped naked, nailed to a cross to die as the worst in society. **Jesus didn't stop at renunciation He went to humiliation going to the lowest place for every person, death on the cross where we belonged.**
3. **Vs. 9-11 EXALTATION: The third step inevitably follows the first two as Jesus was given the name which is above every name:** Every Jew would have known instantly what that name was. This name was so sacred it was never pronounced; instead it was just referred to as the "NAME" or by the consonants after the vowels were removed YHWH. **But just in case his readers weren't getting his implication Paul says that "every tongue will confess that Jesus Christ is Lord",** which is the translation Jehovah into English. **When someone is a Lord they have the right to everything they survey, they have sovereign authority and are the Master with everyone else at their beckon call.** ***Paul says Jesus who had that position and willingly gave up the right to those rights has won those rights in front of humanity because of His humiliation.*** This is why we read

in Revelation 5:12 *“Worthy is the Lamb who was slain to receive power and riches and wisdom, And strength and honor and glory and blessing!”*

My prayer is that these three viewpoints of the Birth of Jesus will further your devotion of Him as we celebrate His birth!