

Our God is With Us (Matthew 1:18-25)

Introduction: *Suddenly, God breaks in to human history*

If there's one thing that we ought to know by now, it's that real hope isn't to be found in ourselves! The core problem we face, which the Bible identifies again for us here, is the problem of sin. Sure, there were, and are, other problems—problems of war, injustice, and poverty—but, clearly, these are the symptoms of the core problem. “You shall call his name Jesus [which means, Jehovah saves], for he will save his people from their sins” (1:21). Why does it mean for our faith?

1. Our Hope is Not Within Ourselves

Other religions and various moral philosophies focus on what we think or do or say. And we do in order to get. But it's obviously utterly different in the Christian faith. At its center stands an utterly supernatural event, a miracle: a child is born who is the Mighty God. This is our hope. What we're not able to do, He will do. God himself is actively at work in the life and history of mankind as a man.

2. Our Hope is in a Single Person

Because we have in one person, full divinity and full humanity, our faith and hope are in a single human person. Jesus stands at the very center of history like no other man stands at the center of history according to any other religion or philosophy. A man holds in his hand the governance of this world, and the power to grant eternal life to all who trust in him.

3. Love is the Heart of our Faith

At the incarnation, we have to ask, “Why would you care so much about us and saving us from our sins?” And the uniform answer given in the Bible is...Love. “God demonstrates His own *love* toward us, in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us” (Rom 5:8). “In this the love of God was manifested toward us, that God has sent His only begotten Son into the world, that we might live through Him” (1 John 4:9-10, see John 3:16, 1 John 4:19). And now, our entire Christian life is summarized by Jesus himself as simply love for God and love for man because the Christian life is a life of following the incarnation of God's mighty and indescribable love.

4. The Holy Spirit is the Source of our New Life

We read in Luke that when Mary asked the angel, “How will this be since I am a virgin?” The angel replied that the *Holy Spirit will come upon you*, and the *power of the Most High will overshadow you*.” Well, the same thing could be said of every Christian. “[We] were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God” (John 1:10-13). Every child of God, John says, is born of God; not naturally, but supernaturally, born of the Spirit.

Conclusion

Some people in the 20th century didn't like the doctrine of the Virgin Birth. But here is the real scandal, not that it's a miracle. Not that we cannot understand it. But that we were in such desperate need of it! Jesus didn't come to this earth to give us a Band-Aid solution to our problems. Jesus didn't come merely to provide humanity with a helpful body of teachings, as if sufficient education could save us. Jesus came to begin a new and perfect humanity. He came to join together permanently God and man in himself. And he came to overcome the fundamental barrier that has always separated us from God; He came to save His people from their sins (Mt. 1:21).