



2 | MATTHEW 1:18-25

THE BIRTH OF THE KING

Jesus' came to earth in such a humble way so that all would be welcome in his family.

Outline

1. **THE MIRACLE OF JESUS' BIRTH (1:18)**
The Miracle of Jesus' Deity
The Miracle of Prophetic Scripture
The Miracle of Christ's Sinless Humanity
2. **THE MYSTERY OF JESUS' BIRTH (1:19-20)**
A Human Scandal
A Divine Scandal
3. **THE MERCY OF JESUS' BIRTH (1:21-25).**
The Name of Jesus
The Name of Immanuel
Immanuel the Missionary
Immanuel Interpreted
Immanuel, God with Us

Call to Worship

For to us a child is born, to us a son is given; and the government shall be upon his shoulder, and his name shall be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace. ⁷Of the increase of his government and of peace there will be no end, on the throne of David and over his kingdom, to establish it and to uphold it with justice and with righteousness from this time forth and forevermore.
–Isaiah 9:6-7

Songs

What Child is This

Silent Night

Sing We the Song of Emmanuel

O Holy Night

Joy to the World

Scripture Reading

ISAIAH 7:10-14

Again the LORD spoke to Ahaz: ¹¹ "Ask a sign of the Lord your God; let it be deep as Sheol or high as heaven." ¹² But Ahaz said, "I will not ask, and I will not put the Lord to the test." ¹³ And he said, "Hear then, O house of David! Is it too little for you to weary men, that you weary my God also? ¹⁴ Therefore the Lord himself will give you a sign. Behold, the virgin shall conceive and bear a son, and shall call his name Immanuel.

LUKE 2:1-20

In those days a decree went out from Caesar Augustus that all the world should be registered. ² This was the first registration when Quirinius was governor of Syria. ³ And all went to be registered, each to his own town. ⁴ And Joseph also went up from Galilee, from the town of Nazareth, to Judea, to the city of David, which is called Bethlehem, because he was of the house and lineage of David, ⁵ to be registered with Mary, his betrothed, who was with child. ⁶ And while they were there, the time came for her to give birth. ⁷ And she gave birth to her firstborn son and wrapped him in swaddling cloths and laid him in a manger, because there was no place for them in the inn. ⁸ And in the same region there were shepherds out in the field, keeping watch over their flock by night. ⁹ And an angel of the Lord appeared to them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were filled with great fear. ¹⁰ And the angel said to them, "Fear not, for behold, I bring you good news of great joy that will be for all the people. ¹¹ For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, who is Christ the Lord. ¹² And this will be a sign for you: you will find a baby wrapped in swaddling cloths and lying in a manger." ¹³ And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host praising God and saying, ¹⁴ "Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace among those with whom he is pleased!" ¹⁵ When the angels went away from them into heaven, the shepherds said to one another, "Let us go over to Bethlehem and see this thing that has happened, which the Lord has made known to us." ¹⁶ And they went with haste and found Mary and Joseph, and the baby lying in a manger. ¹⁷ And when they saw it, they made known the saying that had been told them concerning this child. ¹⁸ And all who heard it wondered at what the shepherds told them. ¹⁹ But Mary treasured up all these things, pondering them in her heart. ²⁰ And the shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all they had heard and seen, as it had been told them.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

WELCOME: We are glad you are here! Be sure to grab a Welcome Packet from the Welcome Center if you are visiting with us.

GIVING: Each of you should give what you have decided in your heart to give, not reluctantly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver. – 2 Corinthians 9:7

Use secretary@livinghopechurch.net. We also have a collection box on the Welcome Center

Introduction

We continue a new series in the book of Matthew called “The King at Christmas.” Our title this morning is: “The Birth of the King”.

Firsts are important.

My first day at Kindergarten – I held my sister’s hand all two blocks to our school. Some of you remember your first white Christmas. The first time I saw my wife – I saw purity, compassion, and a deep love for God. The first thing we see in God’s revelation of Jesus Christ is the virgin birth. By putting the virgin birth of Christ on the first page of our New Testament, the Holy Spirit is giving this event great prominence. We see that God becomes flesh and that he is Immanuel, God with us. Let’s read about it.

Matthew 1:18-25 | Now the birth of Jesus Christ took place in this way. When his mother Mary had been betrothed to Joseph, before they came together she was found to be with child from the Holy Spirit. ¹⁹And her husband Joseph, being a just man and unwilling to put her to shame, resolved to divorce her quietly. ²⁰But 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. ²¹She will bear a son, and you shall call his name Jesus, for he will save his people from their sins.” ²²All this took place to fulfill what the Lord had spoken by the prophet: ²³“Behold, the virgin shall conceive and bear a son, and they shall call his name Immanuel” (which means, God with us). ²⁴When Joseph woke from sleep, he did as the angel of the Lord commanded him: he took his wife, ²⁵but knew her not until she had given birth to a son. And he called his name Jesus.

Key thought: Jesus was born as the God-man to save his people from their sins. Anyone who comes to him by faith will be saved.

1. THE MIRACLE OF JESUS’ BIRTH (1:18)

Matthew 1:18 | Now the birth of Jesus Christ took place in this way. When his mother Mary had been betrothed to Joseph, before they came together she was found to be with child from the Holy Spirit.

THE MIRACLE OF JESUS’ DEITY

Matthew 1:18 tells us that Jesus birth is divine! His nature is that of deity, since Jesus was conceived by the Holy Spirit in Mary’s womb.

Matthew 1:1-17 explain Jesus’ **legal human right** and historical legitimacy to sit on Israel’s throne: He’s the son of *David*. Matthew 1:18-24 explain Jesus’ **divine right** to the throne: He’s the son of *God*, conceived by the Holy Spirit. Matthew is telling us not only that Jesus has legal and legitimate historical right to the throne of David, but that he

is the **theocratic King** of the Old Testament (Psa 2). He is Yahweh, the LORD God come to take his throne.

Here we have the silence of 400 years, and those 400 years were preceded by 500 years of rebellion in a divided kingdom. And Yahweh pleads with Israel sending prophets, saying: Turn back from your idolatry! Turn back and receive me as your King! Tear down your high places, and worship at my throne! And just when it seems that all is cut off, Yahweh does not send another prophet, but the Prophet of prophets, King of kings, and Lord of lords, his own promised Son.

Jesus is the divine King of Israel who becomes flesh. John says it this way:

In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. ² He was in the beginning with God. ³ All things were made through him, and without him was not any thing made that was made. ... ¹⁴ 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 1:1-3, 14

Jesus is the theocratic king of the Old Testament. Our God and King was sending ambassadors over and over and over in the Old Testament. Now the King has descended from his Almighty throne and come into his creation to save us.

Imagine being there for the creation of the world! What majesty! And so the Holy Spirit hovers over Mary's womb, and God becomes incarnate! The virgin birth is a miracle.

THE MIRACLE OF PROPHECY

The virgin birth confirms the reliability of Holy Scripture. There is nothing more powerful than the life-giving Word of God. For us, the Bible is our only hope. The Bible is the primary instrument that God will use to:

- Regenerate our heart
- Renew our mind
- Transform our entire life

The conception of Jesus without the help of a man confirms the reliability of Scripture. No one here this morning can comprehend the virgin birth. It would be like me telling you, if you ask how I got to church today, and I told you, "I levitated 1000 feet in the air, and I flew here". You see, it had never been heard before or since that a woman would conceive a child without a man. By putting this on the first page of the New Testament, Matthew is saying the miraculous conception of Christ is in perfect harmony with the entire record of God's Word. Isaiah prophesied long ago and said that the Messiah would enter the world this way.

Therefore the Lord himself will give you a sign. Behold, the virgin shall conceive and bear a son, and shall call his name Immanuel. – Isaiah 7:14

Isaiah said "the virgin" shall conceive, because there is only one virgin that's ever conceived a son, and his name is Immanuel, conceived by the Holy Spirit.

THE MIRACLE OF CHRIST'S SINLESS HUMANITY

Now the ancient prophecy of Genesis 3:15 will be fulfilled. God says to that evil serpent:

And I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your seed and her Seed; He will crush your head, and you will strike his heel.
–Genesis 3:15

[Christ was] in every respect has been tempted as we are, yet without sin. –Hebrews 4:15

The Seed of the woman will be born without the assistance of a man. Adam's sin nature will not pass down, because this will be the Son of God, untouched by the sin of Adam. Before Joseph and Mary had ever consummated their marriage, Mary "was found to be with child from the Holy Spirit" (1:18)

Jesus is born sinless, untainted by the sin of Adam. He's the Seed of the woman, He's not a son of Adam, he's the Greater Adam, the "last Adam" (1 Cor 14:45). He has come to usher in a new humanity, a new beginning is about to take place. **What a miracle that the one who is untouched by sin is born to die for sin and sinners!**

2. THE MYSTERY OF JESUS' BIRTH (1:19-20)

As we look at Jesus' birth from the bird's eye view two thousand years later, it all seems clear to us, but it certainly wasn't clear to Joseph. Joseph needed the assistance of an angel to understand what was happening.

Matthew 1:19-20 | And her husband Joseph, being a just man and unwilling to put her to shame, resolved to divorce her quietly. ²⁰ 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.

A HUMAN SCANDAL

Mary's pregnancy was a mystery to Joseph. It was also a travesty and a scandal to all who they loved. The Mosaic law called for her to be stoned or to be divorced. In Joseph's limited understanding, this pregnancy looked from the outside to be a complete scandal. Mary was his beloved and betrothed wife! He was essentially engaged to be married. This was to be a time of joy and celebration. Instead, it seemed Joseph's wife had engaged in scandalous activity.

When you were betrothed, it was the equivalent of marriage, and it usually lasted for a year. If you were to break off a betrothal it was equivalent of divorce. Before they consummated the marriage, Mary was found to be with child.

Here is the woman of Joseph's dreams. Joseph is a righteous man and has had no physical relationship with her. He's looking forward to living his life with her, but she's pregnant, and it's not his baby. It's obvious to Joseph that she has been unfaithful.

Joseph needs to be brought into the loop! The Holy Spirit reveals to Joseph that Mary has experienced a supernatural consummation. The angel appears to Joseph and tells him something never before heard.

Matthew 1:20 | 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.

We don’t want to lose the impact of this story, so just imagine how the first hearers of Matthew’s Gospel heard this before the virgin birth was well known. A virgin giving birth? That which is in Mary’s womb is by the Holy Spirit? What?

The angel addresses Joseph as “Son of David” to remind us all that Joseph is the rightful king of Israel. So now things go from baffling to bizarre. **Not only is Mary pregnant, but now we learn she’s never had relations with a man.** She’s never felt a man’s embrace. She is completely morally pure in every way, but she is pregnant.

Matthew 1 is a story of adoption. Joseph adopts Jesus, and through Jesus, God adopts us! The greater scandal is the divine scandal! The angel tells Joseph, “Fear not”. That baby is God. He’s come to rescue you!

A DIVINE SCANDAL

We see the human scandal, but let’s look at the divine scandal. God becomes man. The Son of God leaves his glorious throne to be born in a manger. Mary’s pregnancy is a mystery to all! Who here can comprehend the incarnation? J.I. Packer said this:

It is here, in the thing that happened at the first Christmas, that the profoundest and most unfathomable depths of Christian revelation lie. “The Word became flesh” (Jn 1:14); God became man; the divine Son became a Jew; the Almighty appeared on earth as a helpless human baby, unable to do more than lie and stare and wriggle and make noises, needing to be fed and changed and taught to talk like any other child. And there was no illusion or deception in this: the babyhood of the Son of God was a reality. The more you think about it, the more staggering it gets. Nothing in fiction is so fantastic as is this truth of the Incarnation. – J.I. Packer, *Knowing God*, p. 53

The Messiah was born in a manger. The King was laid in a cradle. The Savior was found in a stable. The infinite became an infant. And all of that was promised and predicted and prophesied 700 years before Mary and Joseph found no room in the inn.

Let me tell you something. Jesus wasn’t just a good man. He wasn’t even a godly man. He was the God-man. That cradle 2000 years ago held the Creator. He was God in the flesh. He was the earthly child of the heavenly Father, and a heavenly child of an earthly mother. He was not half and half. He was 100% God, and 100% man. He was the God-man.

We see the two natures of Christ throughout the New Testament. We see Jesus **sleeping** in a boat in a storm (Mt 8:23-27). He’s tired. He’s a man. Yet when he awakes, he calms the sea! We see the one who made the oceans thirsty when he is nailed to a cross.

We see the Author of life go to his own death, and yet he is the God-man who conquers death, and rises on the third day.

What a mystery!

3. THE MERCY OF JESUS' BIRTH (1:21-25).

A couple years ago, I found out my son William is a lot bigger and stronger than me. I told him one day: "I can still take you down." I was boasting. I'd always been stronger than him. But there comes a terrible day in the life of a father when the son becomes stronger than the father. But I had no idea how strong my son had become. I told my daughter Kristen to record me taking him down. I wanted to remember it. Well, it didn't turn out the way I thought. I went to tackle my son, and I thought I had him, but quickly he carefully grabbed me, and gently put my shoulders to the ground. In less than 60 seconds, my son, gently pinning me to the ground, said, "Ok, Dad, are we done now?" One word came to my mind: "Mercy!"

Now I've learned not to mess with my son, but I tell you, that word is so important: mercy! We have a merciful Savior, amen?! Our Savior's names and titles really reveal his mercy.

What's in a name? If that name is my name or your name, then not very much. But, if the name is Jesus, that name is *everything*! His name is the source of our salvation. His name is the hope of our hearts. His name is a name worth knowing, because it speaks of a Savior worth loving. His name is *everything*. **His name unlocks the door of heaven and closes the gates of Hell. His name saves the vilest sinner; redeems the darkest soul; and secures the precious saints.** His name is Jesus, the Name above all names!

Neither is there salvation in any other: for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved. –Acts 4:12 (KJV)

You know his name. Joseph and Mary were not able to give their son his name. That name was delivered to them by God through the angel.

THE NAME OF JESUS

"Call him Jesus," the angel said. Jesus means: "Jehovah saves." Yahweh, Almighty God in human flesh saves. What mercy!

Matthew 1:21 | She will bear a son, and you shall call his name Jesus, for he will save his people from their sins."

This is written to us! Jesus is the most appropriate name since he will save his people from their sins. Are you one of his people? Jesus makes salvation available to any who will come to him. But his death is only effectual for those who come by faith. You must trust his atoning sacrifice to make you clean and presentable before a holy God. Now that's the blazing center of the Christmas story. Jesus saves! Come to him. He is a mighty Savior.

He'll save you from your sins. Not only does he save you from the penalty of sin. That's true. Hell is removed for the Christian. Be he saves you from the power of sin. The idolatry of sin has no power over the Christian who keeps looking to Jesus for satisfaction.

The joy and peace and fullness of the Spirit makes the people of God the most satisfied and happy people in the universe. There is no joy like the joy of Christ. Why? Because he has saved us from our sins. No longer are we chained by the bitter shackles of anger. No longer are we paralyzed by the devil's fear.

According to JI Packer, the greatest miracle in the history of the universe is recorded in these eight short verses at the end of Matthew 1. He says:

The more you consider that Jesus the Christ became human flesh, the more you are blown away by God's love, your emotions are excited, and your life is challenged and transformed. –J.I. Packer

Jesus, Jesus, Jesus! What a name! The Name above all names! He's also called another name, through the prophet Isaiah.

THE NAME OF IMMANUEL

Matthew 1:22-23 | 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).

Immanuel the Missionary

Isaiah tells us that his name is Immanuel, which in Hebrew means, God with us! How amazing that God would leave the glory and comfort of his throne, and he became like one of us: clothed in weak humanity, because he loved us. He was willing to give everything for us. He was willing to be the ultimate missionary, and leave his home and his throne to rescue us.

We are all called to follow our Lord, to leave our comfort and lay our lives down for sinful humanity: reaching out to them with the love of Christ. This missionary heart is the legacy of the church from the beginning. One of my favorites is the story of the famous missionaries of the church, St. Patrick of Ireland. Actually, he wasn't born in Ireland. He was a missionary there. He was actually born in A.D. 373, along the banks of the River Clyde in what is now called Scotland. His father was a deacon, and his grandfather a priest. When Patrick was about 16, raiders descended on his little town and torched his home. When one of the pirates spotted him in the bushes, he was seized, hauled aboard ship, and taken to Ireland as a slave. There he gave his life to the Lord Jesus.

"The Lord opened my mind to an awareness of my unbelief in order that I might remember my transgressions and turn with all my heart to the Lord my God." –Patrick of Ireland

Patrick eventually escaped and returned home. His overjoyed family begged him to never leave again. But one night, in a dream reminiscent of Paul's vision of the Macedonian Man in Acts 16, Patrick saw an Irishman pleading with him to come evangelize Ireland. It wasn't an easy decision, but Patrick, about 30, returned to his former captors with only one book, the Latin Bible, in his hand. As a slave, he evangelized the countryside, and multitudes came to listen. The superstitious Druids opposed him and sought his death. But his preaching was powerful, and Patrick became one of the most

fruitful evangelists of all time, planting about 200 churches and baptizing 100,000 converts.¹

Jesus is the ultimate missionary. He left his throne to rescue you. What about you? Have you embraced Immanuel? Do you know his love? If so, you will leave your comfort to rescue the perishing and care for the dying. If Immanuel is in you, then you too will have the same love to those who are alienated from Christ as you once were.

Immanuel Interpreted

It's interesting that Matthew has to interpret it. "They shall call his name Immanuel (which being interpreted means, God with us)." –Matthew 1:23. You see the Gospel is not just for Israel. It's for all nations. The name of Immanuel, God with us, should be interpreted to everyone. Messiah's birth and life, death and resurrection are not just for the Jews, but anyone from any tribe, language or nation can be grafted into Christ, and he will be your Immanuel!

Immanuel, God with Us

Finally, let me say that Jesus, as this text makes clear, is God! He's God Almighty. He is Adonai. He is the Angel that Jacob wrestled with, and Jacob says, "I've seen the face of God" (Gen 32:30). He's called "The Mighty God" in Isaiah 9:6. Micah prophesied there would be a ruler born in Bethlehem "whose goings forth have been from of old, from everlasting" (Micah 5:2).

Jesus himself said in **John 8:58**, "Before Abraham was, I am".

He said in **John 17:5**, "Father, glorify me in your presence with the glory I had with you before the world began."

Jesus says in Revelation 1:8, "I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the ending, saith the Lord, which is, and which was, and which is to come, the Almighty".

Paul, when he wrote to Titus, said that we should be "Looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great **God and our Savior Jesus Christ**" (**Titus 2:13**).

But Jesus is not only God. He's "God with us!" Paul again tells us plainly in...

1 Timothy 3:16 that "**God** was manifest in the flesh".

He's not left us alone. We are not orphans. Jesus is God with us! We are in union with him. Charles Spurgeon said it best:

He who was born at Bethlehem is God, and "God with us." God—there lies the majesty; "God with us," there lies the mercy. God—Therein is glory; "God with us," therein is grace. God alone might well strike us with terror; but "God with us" inspires us with hope and confidence. — Charles Haddon Spurgeon²

¹ Robert J. Morgan. *Then Sings My Soul* (Nashville, TN: Thomas Nelson, 2003), 21-22.

² Charles Haddon Spurgeon. "God with Us," *Metropolitan Tabernacle Pulpit, Volume 21*. Sermon preached December 26, 1875.

How near is God, that he would be with us? He took on the robe of our human flesh, yet without sin.

This High Priest of ours understands our weaknesses, for he faced all of the same testings we do, yet he did not sin. –Hebrews 4:15, NLT

Look how near our Immanuel has drawn near to us! He took on our flesh. He lived in our weakness. He hungered, he thirsted, and he felt sorrow. A man of sorrows. And he took on our death. Our God is near. He is with us! And he wants us to be with him forever. Let's worship our Immanuel today!

Conclusion

The Almighty God made himself of no reputation for you! He did not arrive here as an angel or an other-worldly being. He did not even come as a rich and powerful king. He came as a helpless infant and was laid in a feeding trough, a manger.

The love of God reaches down to each of us today. Can you see his love? He could have snatched any one of us in **his divine wrath and locked us up forever**. But he wouldn't have that. He takes no pleasure in the death of the wicked.

Say to them, As I live, declares the Lord GOD, I have no pleasure in the death of the wicked, but that the wicked turn from his way and live; turn back, turn back from your evil ways, for why will you die, O house of Israel? –Ezekiel 33:11

He says to you today: why will you die? Turn to Christ, our Immanuel, and live! He wants you to turn to him so that him might forgive you. He loves to turn his enemies to friends and adopt us as his own children.

What incredible love is this? This is the love of Christmas. This is the love of God with us! Turn to him and live this Christmas. This would be the merriest Christmas of all, to know not only God, but God with us! To know the love of Christ is to have a truly Merry Christmas! So I say to all who know and love him: Merry Christmas!