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When God Became Man: the Birth of Jesus Christ; Matt 1:18-25

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Introduction – The coming of the Son of God into the world is a wondrous, marvelous story, filled with miracles.

First, there is the Virgin Birth. A young lady engaged to a man but who has never been with a man is found to be with a child. That does not happen. That's precisely the definition of a miracle, a divine intervention. People have denied the virgin birth since the virgin birth because it's beyond us, beyond our experience and knowledge. If you leave God out of the equation, of course, it becomes unbelievable. But if God is involved, nothing is impossible with God. If He can create everything from nothing, then He can, in the 2nd Person of the Trinity, enter into Mary's womb. The reason why the doctrine of the virgin birth of Jesus is so important for us to affirm is that it explains how Jesus can be truly God and truly man in one person. He was conceived of the Holy Spirit (fully God) and born of Mary (fully man).

Second, the Incarnation. God the Son, wrapped Himself in human flesh and became a man. This is one of the most profound mind-boggling miracles of the Bible. God entered into His creation in the form of His creation. That's like saying Alexander Graham Bell became a telephone or Henry Ford became a Model T or Dave Thomas became a double with cheese. But even more unfathomable than those examples is the Creator becoming part of His creation. And yet, we dare not jettison this doctrine just because we can't fully explain it or comprehend it. For just as the doctrine of the virgin birth is necessary in understanding the Person of Christ, that he was fully God and fully man, so the doctrine of the Incarnation is necessary in understanding the Work of Christ. He came as a man to pay man's debt. He came as God so that the payment would be complete and final. The only satisfactory solution to the problem of enmity between God and man is the God-man, who would come as man to man and bring man to God. Let's see how these miracles unfold as we study this passage together.

- I. A Wonderful, Disturbing Miracle (vv18-19)
 - a. God worked in a wonderful, miraculous way. God came into His creation as creation in the most mysterious, amazing, beautiful way – as a baby in His mother’s womb.
 - i. Cooing, snuggling, crying, needing to be changed
 - b. And yet as amazing as that was, it was very disturbing. Joseph and Mary were betrothed, that is, they were legally engaged to be married so that the only thing remaining for Joseph and Mary’s marriage to be completed would be for her to enter his home and consummate the union.
 - c. And she was found to be with child. Joseph could only imagine one possible scenario, Mary had been unfaithful. Mary’s family, friends, and entire village could only imagine one possible scenario, Mary had been unfaithful. Mary is shamed and Joseph is devastated.
 - d. Let me just say this: It is often the case when God does the most marvelous things, it’s very disturbing and upsetting and often misunderstood!
 - e. Even though Joseph is hurt and devastated, he continues to show love toward Mary, who for all he knows, has horribly betrayed him and violated their vow and trust and he determines to make this as unsettling as possible.
 - f. Joseph is doing the best he can do in such disturbing situation. Mary is being obedient in the midst of such a disturbing situation. But God is at work in the most marvelous, wondrous way imaginable!

- II. An Assuring, Angelic Announcement (vv20-21) BEHOLD!
 - a. The angel first does away with Joseph’s initial conclusion but in a way that must have been for Joseph both a relief and a marvel.
 - b. The second part of the angel’s message to Joseph is a threefold explanation as to why Mary was pregnant in such a marvelous, miraculous way.
 - i. Mary - She will bear a son – gender reveal –
 - ii. Joseph - You shall call his name Jesus
 - iii. Jesus – for he will save His people from their sins
 - c. And it’s right there that it all comes together and begins to make sense to Joseph concerning both the Person and Work of Christ.
 - i. Concerning His Person

1. If Mary is going to give birth to a son, then he is fully man.
2. And yet if that which has been conceived in her is from the Holy Spirit, then he will also be fully God.
3. And if God is becoming man in Mary's womb, as my adopted son, a son of David, then He must be the promised, anointed One. He must be the Christ.
4. BTW – Christ is not Jesus' last name. It's a title. Christ is the Greek word for anointed one, or Messiah.
(vv1,16,17,18)

ii. Concerning His Work

1. I am to call him Jesus. Jesus is the Greek form of the Hebrew Joshua, both names mean "Yahweh saves."
2. And that's why the angel provides an explanation to Joseph as to why he would name his adopted son "Yahweh saves."
3. Because He is Yahweh and He will save!
4. For he will save – doesn't say He will try to save, hope to save, attempt to save, save some but not all, most but not all – He will save
5. His people – if they are His people then he must be God
6. And from what will he save them – from bad luck? From poverty? From rejection? No, God comes to save His people from their greatest problem, their rejection of Him, their rebellion against Him – for he will save his people from their sin.

III. A Powerful, Prophetic Fulfillment (vv22-23)

- a. Matthew picks up the narrative here and he's quoting Isaiah 7:14. Cf. v9. Now there are different views as to how this sign given to Ahaz was fulfilled in Isaiah's day, but there's no confusion as to its complete fulfillment in Jesus's day.
- b. All of this took place to fulfill... All of the wonder and all of the disturbing events and the pregnancy and Joseph and the coming virgin birth, it all happened at this time because some 700 years prior God said it would happen.

- c. A virgin will bear a son and people will call him Immanuel because those who believe will be able to see that He is God come to us, God with us.
 - d. John 1:14 – 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.
 - e. The angelic announcement spoke to His person and work. The prophetic fulfillment speaks to the method of his work. His work is to save his people from their sins – his method is God with us.
 - f. God the Son left the glories of heaven and emptied Himself, veiled his eternal glory in the robe of fallen human flesh. He lived among us. Knew the weaknesses and limitations of the body. Felt hunger. Grew tired. Increased in wisdom. Experienced temptation. Felt the sting of hatred and betrayal and denial and false accusation and suffering and even death. How was God with us in Jesus? In every possible way.
 - g. He fully entered into our world that we might fully enter into his heaven. He experienced everything we are that we might experience everything that He is. The Son of God became the Son of Man so that we as sons of men might become sons of God.
- IV. An Extraordinary, Ordinary Birth (vv24-25)
- a. There is so much about this that is so ordinary. Joseph wakes up. He takes Mary as his wife. She gives birth to a son. They name their son Jesus. Familiar. Ordinary.
 - b. And yet there is so much about this that is so extraordinary. Joseph does what he does because an angel has spoken to him. Mary delivers a child because the Holy Spirit has moved upon her. Their son is God's Son. His name is Jesus not because that's a common name but because He's the only one named "Jesus" who is going to live up to His name.
 - c. In this very ordinary story, God is doing the extraordinary.

Conclusion – I mentioned two miracles of this passage in the introduction today; the virgin birth and the incarnation. But there's actually a third miracle here isn't there? A miracle even more unfathomable and wondrous and amazing and beyond us than the virgin birth and the incarnation. The greatest miracle in this

narrative is salvation. That God would come to His enemies and save them by taking their sin upon Himself and paying for that sin through His death. Just like the virgin birth, the cross is disturbing and upsetting and fraught with rumor and speculation and even denial, and yet it is simultaneously the most wondrous, marvelous miracle of all – Jesus, God in the flesh, saving His people from their sins.