

The Birth of the King

The Story: part 22

March 12, 2017

DAY 1: Jesus' divinity: the Word made flesh

John 1:1 In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.

² He was with God in the beginning.

³ Through him all things were made; without him nothing was made that has been made.

⁴ In him was life, and that life was the light of men.

⁵ The light shines in the darkness, but the darkness has not understood it.

1. The “word” in Greek language of the New Testament means, reason, logic, explanation, or wisdom.

2. John identifies Jesus as the Word. And John identifies several aspects of Jesus' divinity. See if you can find at least five divine attributes. List them below.

3. John records that the long-awaited Messiah, Jesus Christ IS THE Word. He is the One who alone can answer the great questions of life!

a. He tells us who God is.

b. He shows us who God is.

c. He will show the people how much God loves them.

d. He will show what God's sacrificial love is willing to do for people.

4. There is no Christianity without the divinity of Christ.

5. Which of these characteristics of Jesus is most striking to you? Why?

DAY 2: Jesus' incarnation (Came in the flesh)

1. Yesterday, we looked at the divinity of Christ. John also shows us that Jesus is fully human!

John 1:14 The Word became flesh and made his dwelling among us. We have seen his glory, the glory of the One and Only, who came from the Father, full of grace and truth.

¹⁵ John testifies concerning him. He cries out, saying, "This was he of whom I said, 'He who comes after me has surpassed me because he was before me.'"

¹⁶ From the fullness of his grace we have all received one blessing after another.

¹⁷ For the law was given through Moses; grace and truth came through Jesus Christ.

¹⁸ No one has ever seen God, but God the One and Only, who is at the Father's side, has made him known.

2. What reasons can you think of that it would be important for Jesus to be fully human?

3. Theologians discuss the topic of “revelation,” meaning, how God revealed Himself to man. “General revelation” is God revealing Himself in nature (Psalm 19 for example). “Special revelation” is God revealing Himself “specifically” through the bible and through Jesus. We come to know God more “specifically” in these ways.

4. Only another human being could pay the penalty for our sin.

5. That Jesus became flesh has another encouragement to us, especially in the area of dealing with temptation to sin. Under the next two verses, how does the humanity of Jesus encourage us?

Hebrews 2:18 For because he himself has suffered and been tempted, he is able to help those who are tempted.

Hebrews 4:15 For we have not a high priest who is unable to sympathize with our weaknesses, but one who in every respect has been tempted as we are, yet without sin.

6. Jesus Christ, fully human, fully God.

DAY 3: Jesus, fully human

1. If I was tasked with sending Jesus Christ to earth to reveal the character and love of God, I certainly would not have done it the way God did. I'd have had Jesus come in the clouds, with every miracle I could think of, a book signing, coronation as king, life in the palace Well, you get the idea.

2. What's stunning is that the actual coming of Jesus is almost exactly opposite of that approach!

3. Jesus was born to a very ordinary woman.

*Luke 1:34 And Mary said to the angel, "How shall this be, since I have no husband?"
³⁵ And the angel said to her, "The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you; therefore the child to be born will be called holy, the Son of God.*

4. Jesus was born of a young virgin girl, needing no help from us to be born.

5. His earthly father, Joseph, was an ordinary carpenter.

6. Jesus' birth was truly humble.

Luke 2:15 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 babe lying in a manger.

¹⁷ And when they saw it they made known the saying which had been told them concerning this child;

¹⁸ and all who heard it wondered at what the shepherds told them.

¹⁹ But Mary kept 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.

7. Think of the following, in contrast to my approach of "glitz and glamour."

a. In a tiny hamlet, called Bethlehem,

b. In a manger (a stable or just a small cave), reserved for farm animals,

c. Born an innocent, helpless baby,

d. Born to a young, ordinary young woman,

e. No palace, no fanfare, no ticker tape parade, "big and important" people around.

8. Even the innkeeper missed the significance of the night of Jesus' birth!

9. What strikes you about the humility and humanity of His coming?

DAY 4: Jesus turned away

John 1:10 He was in the world, and though the world was made through him, the world did not recognize him.

¹¹ He came to that which was his own, but his own did not receive him.

1. In spite of over a thousand years of Old Testament prophecy, and hundreds of Messianic prophecies, Jesus Christ went unrecognized. If you've been studying the Old Testament with us, this should come as no surprise.
2. John tells us two groups of people did not recognize Jesus. Who were they?
3. It's one thing for the non-Jewish world to not recognize Jesus. It's quite another thing for God's people to miss their Messiah, born in their land, through the line of David, in the town of Bethlehem. All of these and a hundred more prophecies should not have been missed!
4. But this assumes that human nature is non-biased, and "open" to God's revelation. As we've seen, that is certainly not the case. People see what they want to see, hear what they want to hear, and believe what they want to believe.
5. The innkeeper was not the only one to turn Jesus away. We can only imagine what went through his head as he rejected Jesus, claiming it was too crowded to have a pregnant woman give birth in his inn.
6. The world is always "too crowded" to receive Jesus—crowded with deadlines and headlines, phone lines and long lines, full itineraries, full schedules, jam-packed lives.
7. Jesus comes not to complicate our already complicated lives, but to simplify our lives, even to give us life.
8. What is your take away from today's "non-recognition" verses?

DAY 5: Jesus: the giver of new life!

John 1:12 Yet to all who received him, to those who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God--

¹³ children born not of natural descent, nor of human decision or a husband's will, but born of God.

1. If you've heard the term "born again," this is one of the verses of reference.

2. Being "born again," is a spiritual birth. Just so there's no mistaking this, John also records several of ways NOT to think about this spiritual birth. Beneath each of these, jot down how each is NOT the same or equated with being born spiritually:
 - a. Born not of human descent-

 - b. Born not of a human decision-

 - c. Born not of a husband's will-

3. If you read different translations of verse 12, some translate "right" to become a child of God, and others translate it as "power" to become a child of God. What strikes you about each translation?
 - a. the "right" to become a child of God-

 - b. the "power" to become a child of God-

4. This week we looked at what's referred to as the prologue of the book of John. It is filled with theology, helping to reveal the "person" or the "just who is He?"

5. As you finish, what strikes you about Him?