

Title: The Cradle, the Cross, and the Crown

Passage: Matthew 1:18-25

Introduction: Questions to consider

- Who was that baby born in Bethlehem?
- Why was the baby born? Why did Jesus come?
- How does the Christmas story end? Not just in the Bible but also for you.

Passage: 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. And her husband Joseph, being a just man and unwilling to put her to shame, resolved to divorce her quietly. 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. She will bear a son, and you shall call his name Jesus, for he will save his people from their sins.” 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). When Joseph woke from sleep, he did as the angel of the Lord commanded him: he took his wife, but knew her not until she had given birth to a son. And he called his name Jesus.

Overview

I. The Cradle: Who was the baby born that first Christmas?

II. The Cross: Why was that baby born?

III. The Crown:

I. The Cradle

- Who was that baby born that first Christmas night in Bethlehem?

Emmanuel: God with us

- The eternal, sovereign, creator God of the universe entered the world as a human baby.
- The Second Person of the Trinity (Jesus, son of God) came to earth

Micah 5:2

But you, O Bethlehem Ephrathah, who are too little to be among the clans of Judah, from you shall come forth for me one who is to be ruler in Israel, whose coming forth is from of old, from ancient days.

John 1:1-3, 14

In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was in the beginning with God. All things were made through him, and without him was not any thing made that was made....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.

Colossians 1:15-17

He is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of all creation. For by him all things were created, in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or rulers or authorities—all things were created through him and for him. And he is before all things, and in him all things hold together.

Hebrews 1:3

He is the radiance of the glory of God and the exact imprint of his nature, and he upholds the universe by the word of his power. After making purification for sins, he sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on high,

Isaiah 9:6

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.

Book: "Mere Christianity" by C.S. Lewis

- Jesus' deity must be recognized
- He was eternal son of God or otherwise must consider him as a liar or lunatic. He cannot be merely considered as a good, moral teacher

Contrast: Some may disregard Jesus

Romans 1:21-23

For although they knew God, they did not honor him as God or give thanks to him, but they became futile in their thinking, and their foolish hearts were darkened. Claiming to be wise, they became fools, and exchanged the glory of the immortal God for images resembling mortal man and birds and animals and creeping things.

Book: "The Case for Christmas" - Lee Strobel

- consider reading if wonder who is Jesus.

Truth: The baby that came was God of the universe made flesh.

II. The Cross

- Why was the baby born? What was the purpose of His coming?
- Jesus (meaning) = the LORD saves

Jesus came to earth to die for us.

Galatians 3:13

Christ redeemed us from the curse of the law by becoming a curse for us—for it is written, "Cursed is everyone who is hanged on a tree"

1 Timothy 1:15

The saying is trustworthy and deserving of full acceptance, that *Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners*, of whom I am the foremost.

Propitiation = removal of God's wrath and judgment

Isaiah 53:4-6

Surely he has borne our griefs and carried our sorrows; yet we esteemed him stricken, smitten by God, and afflicted.

But he was pierced for our transgressions;

he was crushed for our iniquities; upon him was the chastisement that brought us peace, and with his wounds we are healed.

All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned—every one—to his own way; and *the LORD has laid on him the iniquity of us all.*

1 Peter 2:24

He himself bore our sins in his body on the tree, that we might die to sin and live to righteousness. By his wounds you have been healed.

2 Corinthians 5:15

and he died for all, that those who live might no longer live for themselves but for him who for their sake died and was raised.

Book: "Fifty Reasons Christ Came to Die" - John Piper

- God is both just and loving. His love is willing to meet the demands of His justice, which demands a holy curse over our sin.

Jesus came to die not he cross willingly

Hebrews 10:9-10

then he added, "Behold, I have come to do your will." He does away with the first in order to establish the second. And by that will we have been sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all.

Truth: Jesus came to die

III. The Crown

- How does the Christmas story end?

Philippians 2:5-11

Have this mind among yourselves, which is yours in Christ Jesus, who, though he was in the form of God, did not count equality with God a thing to be grasped, but emptied himself, by taking the form of a servant, being born in the likeness of men. And being found in human form, he humbled himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross. Therefore God has highly exalted him and bestowed on him the name that is above every name, so that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.

- Cradle = "born in the likeness of men"
- Cross = "even death on a cross"
- Crown = "God has highly exalted Him...every knee should bow"

Revelation 19:16

On his robe and on his thigh he has a name written, *King of kings and Lord of lords*.

Truth: The glory of Jesus is one that He wants to share with you!

John 17:24

Father, I desire that they also, whom you have given me, may be with me where I am, to see my glory that you have given me because you loved me before the foundation of the world.

- context: Jesus prayed this just hours before He would die on the cross
- The full redemption and glorification of His children when Jesus returns again and is exalted as King of kings and Lord of lords.

1 Corinthians 2:9

But, as it is written, "What no eye has seen, nor ear heard, nor the heart of man imagined, what God has prepared for those who love him"

Question: How will the Christmas story end for you?

- Sin, which we all have, can be forgiven through Jesus Christ

- Believe in Jesus as your Savior,

Romans 10:9

because, if you confess with your mouth that Jesus is Lord and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved.

- Submit and follow Jesus as your Lord

Luke 9:23

And he said to all, “If anyone would come after me, let him deny himself and take up his cross daily and follow me.

Emmanuel (“God with us”)

- God’s peace and presence can be real for you if you will return and turn to God.