

God's Love In The Flesh

Text : **Luke 2: 1-20**

INTRODUCTION :

A. Why do you :

1. Buy insurance ?
 - a. Do you want to have a wreck ? No.
 - b. Wrecks happen so wise people prepare.
 2. Have a fire extinguisher ?
 - a. No one wants to have a fire outside the fire place.
 - b. But, when one happens we're grateful to have a fire extinguisher at hand.
 3. Maintain a first aide kit ?
 - a. We all hope we never have to use it.
 - b. However, regardless of our efforts to prevent them, accidents happen.
- * **ILL.- When coaching football, we did everything possible to prevent injuries, but in spite of our elaborate efforts, accidents happened. (First Aide Kit)**

B. Obviously, we expect the God who has greater wisdom than all mankind is more prepared than man.

1. God created mankind pure, holy and good.
 - a. **Gen. 1:27 ... God created man in His own image.**
 - b. **Gen. 2:7 ... God ... breathed into his nostrils the breath of life.**
(**God gave of Himself to make man live. We have part of God within us.**)
2. God did not want for man to sin, but He knew we would so He prepared for it.
 - a. We prepare for that which we do not know, but are apprehensive will happen.
(**Sickness, death, accidents, fires, etc.**)
 - b. If we insure our meager assets against perceived threats,
would we not expect God to prepare for damage He KNOWS is forthcoming.
3. God does not deal in ambiguities; He knows all things.
 - a. cf- **139th Psalm**
 - b. **I John 3: 19-20** **We will know by this that we are of the truth, and will assure our heart before Him 20 in whatever our heart condemns us; for God is greater than our heart and knows all things.**

Thus, though God did not want man to sin, He made provisions to rescue him from the sin He knew he would commit.

I. God is the eternal being who lives outside of time.

A. Man measures time because he is living in a finite physical realm.

1. **Gen. 1 - cf- II Pet. 3:10** The earth had a beginning and it will have an end.
2. Measurements based on the rotations of the earth were invented to measure time.

B. Man measures time because his days on the earth are limited.

1. **Psa. 90: 10-** As for the days of our life, they contain seventy years,
Or if due to strength, eighty years,
2. **Heb. 9: 27-** ... it is appointed for men to die once and after this comes judgment,

C. God does not dwell in the physical realm so He does not experience time.

1. When Moses asked God who he should say had sent him to Pharaoh :
Exod. 3: 14- And God said unto Moses, I AM THAT I AM: and he said,
Thus shalt thou say unto the children of Israel, I AM hath
sent me unto you. (KJV) (*eternally existent*)
2. God describes Himself to the Apostle John as :
Rev. 1: 8- "I am the Alpha and the Omega," says the Lord God,
"who is and who was and who is to come, the Almighty."
3. God is eternal.
I Tim. 1:17- Now to the King eternal, immortal, invisible, the only God,
be honor and glory forever and ever. Amen.

D. The physical earth (*including man*) was created by God (*a spirit*) FOR Himself.

1. **Col. 1: 16-** For by Him all things were created, both in the heavens and on earth,
visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or rulers or
authorities—all things have been created **through Him and for Him**.
2. **Rom. 11:36-** For from Him and **through Him and to Him** are all things.
To Him be the glory forever.

E. This is where our understanding of God's begins, with the creation, but God pre-existed earth.

1. **Gen. 1 - cf- John 1** ... The one who created existed before that which He created.
2. Jesus claimed to be with the Father before the earth existed.
John 17: 5- Now, Father, glorify Me together with Yourself, with the glory
which I had with You before the world was.
3. God existed and there was activity between spiritual beings prior to creation.

II. Evil came into the world as a result of that which had transpired in Heaven.

A. We are not given any details of Satan's rebellion against God.

1. Men pass down many legends about the Satan's fall or expulsion, **but** none are revelation from God.
2. Therefore, we must accept the principle of **Deut. 29:29**, it's none of our business.

B. Revelation does tell us that that which was created **BY** God and **FOR** God was corrupted by Satan.

1. **Gen. 3**
2. Satan acted out of spite toward God. (**We don't know what caused the spite.**)
3. Satan gained nothing, **but** God was hurt.
 - a. He lost the fellowship of those He had created for Himself.
 - b. He lost the glory man was intended to bring to Him in the spiritual realm.

C. Man's rebellion against God put him at enmity with God. (*aligns with Satan*)

1. Man's rebellion separated him from the relationship / fellowship he had with God.
 - a. **Gen. 3**
 - b. **Isa. 59: 1-2** Behold, the LORD's hand is not so short That it cannot save;
Nor is His ear so dull That it cannot hear.
2 But your iniquities have made a separation between you and
your God, And your sins have hidden *His* face from you so that
He does not hear.
2. Speaking of Christ's redemptive work, God describes man's condition as :

Rom. 5: 9-10 Much more then, having now been justified by His blood,
we shall be saved from the wrath of God through Him.
10 For if while we were enemies we were reconciled to God
through the death of His Son, much more, having been
reconciled, we shall be saved by His life.
3. Even while physically alive, man is dead to God because of his rebellion ... his sin.
 - a. When one sins he rejects the authority of God to rule his life. (**He is a rebel.**)
 - b. One who is separated from God is said to be "dead in trespasses."
Eph. 2: 1-2 And you were dead in your trespasses and sins, 2 in which
you formerly walked according to the course of this world,
according to the prince of the power of the air, of the spirit
that is now working in the sons of disobedience.
 - c. There is NO middle ground with God; One is for Him of against Him.
Luke 11:23- He who is not with Me is against Me; and he who does not
gather with Me, scatters.

III. In spite of his rebelliousness, God never stopped loving mankind.

A. No matter how much our children disappoint us, we never stop loving them.

B. We rebelled, but God reached out to us to bring us back.

1. This is the Christmas story.

a. When God came to earth, **HE** was reaching out to us.

b. We ran away, but God came looking for us.

2. He came to where we are ... **earth ... flesh**

3. He came because he cares for us ... **for YOU.**

a. **John 3:16**

b. **Luke 19: 41-44** When He approached *Jerusalem*, He saw the city and wept over it, ⁴² saying, "If you had known in this day, even you, the things which make for peace! But now they have been hidden from your eyes. ⁴³ "For the days will come upon you when our enemies will throw up a barricade against you, and surround you and hem you in on every side, ⁴⁴ and they will level you to the ground and your children within you, and they will not leave in you one stone upon another, because you did not recognize the time of your visitation."

c. Jesus knew that they were going to crucify Him in that city, yet He wept for them.

C. Jesus suffered the indignity of flesh in order to bring man back to Him.

1. **John 17: 4-5** I glorified You on the earth, having accomplished the work which You have given Me to do. ⁵ Now, Father, glorify Me together with Yourself, with the glory which I had with You before the world was.

2. Joseph was told to name Him Jesus. (**Savior**)

Mt. 1:21- She will bear a Son; and you shall call His name Jesus, for He will save His people from their sins.

3. Jesus said He was born in flesh to be sacrificed to ransom back those captured by sin.

Mark 10:45- For even the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give His life a ransom for many.

D. The first advent of Christ is a clear manifestation of the loving grief of a Father who lost his beloved children to the enemy and wants them back.

Read ... Rom. 5: 6-11

IV. Once God has reconciled a person to Himself, He works to keep him.

A. God has made provision to keep people faithful.

1. **Read & Exegete ... Rom. 8: 31-39**
2. **Read & Exegete ... I John 1: 6 - 2:2**

B. God has reached out to us, but we must respond to Him.

1. God loves us so He will not force us to Love Him. (*Forced love is an oxymoron.*)
2. As Adam and Eve were free to choose, so is all mankind.

C. God rewards those who love and obediently serve Him from the heart, but He rejects all who rebel against His rule in their heart.

1. He does not seek mere external compliance. (**Matt. 15: 8-9**)
2. God seeks those who obey Him because they love Him. (**John 14: 15**)
3. More than anything else, God wants for you to love Him. (**Matt. 22: 37**)
4. One who truly loves the Lord will tell others of his love. (**Rom 1: 9-10**)
5. Love will cause one to turn away from others and be true to Him. (cf- **Act 3:19**)
Acts 26: 17-18 ... rescuing you from the *Jewish* people and from the Gentiles, to whom I am sending you, **18** to open their eyes so that they may turn from darkness to light and from the dominion of Satan to God, that they may receive forgiveness of sins and an inheritance among those who have been sanctified by faith in Me.
6. One demonstrates the reality of his love and devotion by solemnizing his commitment to Christ / God by being baptized in water.
 - a. Like a wedding, baptism is the ceremony which transforms the relationship.
 - b. **Read & Exegete ... Rom. 6: 16-18, 15, 1-7**

CONCLUSION :

A. The story of Jesus is the greatest love story ever told.

1. He has loved you from before the world was created.
2. He came seeking to restore you to Himself.

B. There are few things more sad than unrequited love.

C. How are you responding to the love He is showing toward you ?

INVITATION : Will you not be reconciled to God ?