

“Born to the Praise of God”
Luke 2:14

December 16, 2007

A. Introduction

1. the meaning of ‘incarnation’ is

2. Luke 2:11 – when did Jesus become Messiah?

B. The Birth of Jesus Glorified God

1. by the fact of the Incarnation
 - a. Luke 2:10-11, John 1:14 – because

 - b. John 12:23, 27-28 – because
2. by the peace from the incarnation
 - a. Isaiah 9:6 – He was the promised

 - b. Matthew 24:6 – this kind of peace was not

 - c. John 16:33, Acts 10:36 – this peace is centred in

 - d. 2 Corinthians 5:19, Romans 5:1 – this peace is with

3. by the favour in the incarnation
 - a. Ephesians 1:6 – this favour is shown in His

 - b. Galatians 4:4-5 – this favour was part of God’s

 - c. 2 Corinthians 9:15, 8:9 – its purpose was
4. by the praise of the heavenly hosts: Revelation 4:11, 5:9-13

C. The Re-Birth of Believers is to Glorify God

1. by the fact of salvation
 - a. Ephesians 1:9 – the gospel reveals God’s

 - b. Ephesians 1:12 – the end result is
2. by the fruit of salvation – some of the fruit in Philippians 1:9-11 are
3. by the final end of salvation – Ephesians 1:10-14, what is the progress of salvation as found in these verses?

A. Introduction

1. this morning, with
 - a. the reading of the Scriptures
 - b. the singing of the carols
 - c. the lighting of the advent candle for the shepherds
 - d. the presentation by the children
 - e. we could leave at this point, concluding that it has been profitable for us to gather together in this fashion
 - f. but, I should like to prevail upon you for a few more minutes with a message from God's word

2. The incarnation is the subject of the messages this December
 - a. first by Pastor Willard, as he visited us, and spoke of God sending His Son to be a light in the darkness
 - b. then by Pastor Carlos last week he spoke from John 1:18 on 'Declared of God', that God was explained to man by the incarnation of the Son of God
 - c. the words 'incarnate' and 'incarnation' are not to be found in the Bible, but they are from two Latin words meaning 'in the flesh', a phrase applied in Scripture to Jesus Christ
 - d. the incarnation means that God the Son, in the Person of the Lord Jesus Christ, came in the flesh and lived as a man
 - e. the term, incarnation, does not just refer to the birth of the Lord Jesus, but to the entire 33 years He walked among us

3. my text this morning is Luke 2:14, which we have already read, but let me read it again in several translations, each of which emphasizes a different aspect of its truth:
 - a. AV: *Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men.*
 - b. NAS: *Glory to God in the highest, And on earth peace among men with whom He is pleased.*
 - c. NLT: *Glory to God in the highest heaven, and peace on earth to all whom God favours.*

4. the Lord Jesus Christ, incarnate Son of God
 - a. has just had His birth announced to the shepherds by the angel: 'for today in the city of David there has been born for you a Saviour, who is Christ the Lord.' (Luke 2:11)
 - (A) note that word 'is' ... 'who IS Christ (Messiah) the Lord'
 - (B) we have mentioned this point before: Greek doesn't need the verb 'to be' to specify existence, but it is used here, so we need to take note of it
 - (C) if Luke had just written 'who Christ' which is quite acceptable Greek, it could be understood as 'who was Christ', 'who is Christ', or 'who will be Christ'
 - (D) but Jesus didn't later become Messiah and a Saviour, but He was from that instant Messiah and a Saviour

- b. so, Jesus was worthy of praise, honour and worship
 - (A) as a baby in that Bethlehem stable
 - (B) as a youth of 12 in visiting Jerusalem
 - (C) as a man ministering in Judah and Galilee
 - (D) as a sacrifice crucified for our sin
 - (E) and as the resurrected man from the dead
- c. but not only was the Son of God glorified in the birth of Jesus the Christ, but so also was the Triune God
 - (A) 'Glory to God in the highest' ...
 - (B) the incarnation brought worship and praise to the glory of the entire Godhead, Father, Son, Holy Spirit
 - (C) this morning I want us to focus our meditations on a few Scriptures on this subject.

B. The Birth of Jesus Glorified God

1. by the fact of the incarnation

- a. 'But the angel said to them, "Do not be afraid; for behold, I bring you good news of great joy which will be for all the people; for today in the city of David there has been born for you a Saviour, who is Christ the Lord.'" (Luke 2:10-11)
- b. that the God should step from eternity into time
 - (A) that '... the Word became flesh, and dwelt among us, and we saw His glory, glory as of the only begotten from the Father, full of grace and truth.' (John 1:14)
 - (B) (we shall, Lord willing, speak on that verse next week under the title, 'God Enters Humanity)
 - (C) that the Second Person of the Trinity, the Son, the Word became flesh, demonstrated God's glory to man
 - (D) this fact brings praise to God, to the glory of God
- c. God the Father glorified in the glory of God the Son
 - (A) as Jesus drew near the end of His earthly ministry we read in John 12
 - (1) verse 23, 'And Jesus answered them, saying, "The hour has come for the Son of Man to be glorified."'
 - (2) "'Now My soul has become troubled; and what shall I say, 'Father, save Me from this hour'? But for this purpose I came to this hour. Father, glorify Your name.'" Then a voice came out of heaven: "I have both glorified it, and will glorify it again.'" (27-28)
 - (B) shortly after, in Jesus' High Priestly prayer, John 17: 'Jesus spoke these things; and lifting up His eyes to heaven, He said, "Father, the hour has come; glorify Your Son, that the Son may glorify You" ... "I glorified You on the earth, having accomplished the work which You have given Me to do. Now, Father, glorify Me together with Yourself, with the glory which I had with You before the world was.'" (verses 1, 4-5)
- d. the life of Jesus brought praise to the glory of God by the fact that He was God Incarnate

2. birth of Jesus glorified God by the peace from the incarnation

- a. '... and on earth peace among men ...' - Luke 2:14b

- b. the promise of the incarnation, of Immanuel, of God with us, is given as a promise of peace
 - c. 'For a child will be born to us, a son will be given to us; And the government will rest on His shoulders; And His name will be called Wonderful Counsellor, Mighty God, Eternal Father, Prince of Peace.' (Isaiah 9:6)
 - d. a promise of peace, of the Prince of peace
 - e. there is a lot spoken of peace at Christmas time
 - (A) Washington Gladdon's wrote the poem 'I heard the bells on Christmas Day' where he mourns in the midst of the U. S. Civil war, 'There is no peace on earth' I said, 'for hate is strong and mocks the song of peace on earth, goodwill to men.'
 - (B) certainly the peace was not political, for Jesus said that for His followers, 'You will be hearing of wars and rumours of wars. See that you are not frightened, for *those things* must take place, but *that* is not yet the end.' (Matt 24:6)
 - (C) peace is often absent from the Christmas experience; A few years ago there was a news story about a young boy in Chicago who went up to a street Santa, yanked his beard and then let it go. The beard smacked Santa in the face. In retaliation, Santa hurled the bell he was ringing at the boy. The boy ducked - the bell missed him but hit another youngster in the head. The father of the second boy was furious. He hit Santa, knocking him to the ground where he continued to beat him. Finally a policeman turned the corner, saw what was happening and hit the father with his nightstick. Santa finished up the night in jail, and the two others went to the hospital! Some peace! ^{-(2)}}
 - (D) how can people unwilling to accept the Prince of Peace on His terms and conditions have peace?
 - f. God's peace provided in the incarnation is both personal and a Person
 - (A) 'These things I have spoken to you, so that in Me you may have peace. In the world you have tribulation, but take courage; I have overcome the world.' (John 16:33)
 - (B) 'The word which He sent to the sons of Israel, preaching peace through Jesus Christ (He is Lord of all)—' (Acts 10:36)
 - g. the peace provided is primarily and ultimately with God.
 - (A) 'namely, that God was in Christ reconciling the world to Himself, not counting their trespasses against them, ...' (2 Corinthians 5:19)
 - (B) 'Therefore, having been justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ,' (Romans 5:1)
 - h. the birth of Jesus glorified God by the peace He brought
3. the birth of Jesus glorified God by the favour in the incarnation
- a. '... among men with whom He is pleased.' Luke 2:14c
 - b. 'to the praise of the glory of His grace, which He freely bestowed on us in the Beloved' (Ephesians 1:6)
 - c. John 1:14 tells us that the incarnation - God becoming man- showed God's glory in His favour, in His grace
 - d. this favour, this goodwill to mankind, was part and parcel of God's incarnation plan and purpose: 'But when the fullness of the time came, God sent forth His Son, born of a woman, born under the Law, so that He might redeem those who were under the Law, that we might receive the adoption as sons.' (Galatians 4:4-5)
 - e. 'Thanks be to God for His indescribable gift!' (2 Cor 9:15)
 - f. 'For you know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that though He was rich, yet for your sake He became poor, so that you through His poverty might

become rich.' (2 Cor 8:9)

g. the birth of Jesus glorified God by the kindness it show

4. by the praise of the heavenly hosts, 'glory in the highest' or, 'glory in the highest heaven' – in Revelation we hear that praise
 - a. 4:11 – 'Worthy are You, our Lord and our God, to receive glory and honour and power; for You created all things, and because of Your will they existed, and were created.'
 - b. 5:9-10 – 'And they sang a new song, saying, "Worthy are You to take the book and to break its seals; for You were slain, and purchased for God with Your blood *men* from every tribe and tongue and people and nation. You have made them *to be* a kingdom and priests to our God; and they will reign upon the earth."
 - c. 5:12-13 – 'saying with a loud voice, "Worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive power and riches and wisdom and might and honour and glory and blessing." And every created thing which is in heaven and on the earth and under the earth and on the sea, and all things in them, I heard saying, "To Him who sits on the throne, and to the Lamb, *be* blessing and honour and glory and dominion forever and ever."
5. but there is another aspect of the incarnation that brings praise to the glory of God; and this arises from the work of Christ

C. The Re-Birth of Believers is to Glorify God

I. by the fact of salvation – some verses from Ephesians 1:

- a. 'He made known to us the mystery of His will, according to His kind intention which He purposed in Him' (1:9)
- b. the incarnation – 'the good tidings of great joy' – the gospel; reveals the kind intentions of God's will and purpose

(A) Zoe was born prematurely, weighing 23 ounces –⁽³⁾.

(B) her grandfather, Max DuPree, visited her and could slip his wedding ring up her arm to her very shoulder

(C) her father had abandoned her mother just a month before her birth

(D) yet, true to her name, Zoe, which means life in Greek, she clung to life

(E) the nurse asked Max to be her surrogate father, to come in regularly, touch Zoe with the tip of his finger, and speak softly and lovingly to her

(F) it was crucial, the nurse said, for Zoe to connect the loving voice with the loving touch

(G) this is what God did in Jesus of Nazareth, His loving voice was connected with His loving touch to mankind

- c. the deed, the fact of salvation was achieved in God's full time in Jesus Christ (verse 10) and brought God's intended result – 'to the end that we who were the first to hope in Christ would be to the praise of His glory'
- d. the intended result? That the salvation of men and women from their sin through faith in Jesus Christ should bring praise to the glory of God

2. Re-Birth of believers is to glorify God by the fruit of salvation
 - a. 'having been filled with the fruit of righteousness which *comes* through Jesus Christ, to the glory and praise of God.' (Philippians 1:11)
 - b. 'when were you saved?' is in some ways a faulty question
 - (A) I was saved from the penalty of sin
 - (B) I am being saved from the power of sin
 - (C) I will be saved from the presence of sin
 - c. it is that second aspect that Paul is discussing in Php 1:9-11, about the believer being filled with the fruit of righteousness through Jesus Christ; such fruit being ...
 - (A) ... abounding love
 - (B) ... real (spiritual) knowledge and discernment (wisdom)
 - (C) ... approving things that are excellent (lit., test the thing that differ) – distinguish between good and evil
 - (D) ... sincerity, purity; used of unalloyed precious metals)
 - (E) ... blameless ... not causing stumbling, void of offense
 - d. these are the qualities that the Holy Spirit would seek to work out in your life, the fruit of righteousness, that your life may attest to the glory of God

3. by the final end of salvation - back to Ephesians 1
 - a. starting at the end of verse 10, "... In Him also we have obtained an inheritance..." (1:10b-11a) – for those who are 'in Him', we are told, there awaits an inheritance
 - b. how can one be 'in Him'? Drop down to verse 13a: 'In Him, you also, after listening to the message of truth, the gospel of your salvation—having also believed...' – being 'in Him' is the result of listening and believing the gospel truth
 - c. what marks your being 'in Him'? The rest of verse 13b – '... you were sealed in Him with the Holy Spirit of promise,'
 - d. That Holy Spirit being, verse 14a, 'who is given as a pledge of our inheritance, ...' a pledge, a down payment toward
 - e. verse 14b, '... the redemption of God's own possession ...' – the first step in God's redeeming His own possession, that is us ... God does not relinquish His possession: US and He has a heavenly inheritance for His children to share
 - f. the objective of this heavenly prospect? 1:14c – '... to the praise of His glory.'

D. Conclusion

1. how can I quickly sum this up?
 - a. the Word, the second Person of the Trinity
 - (A) when he stepped from eternity into time
 - (B) Christ Jesus '...made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men:' (Philippians 2:7 AV)
 - (C) being born, growing up, living, serving, dying

(D) brought glory to God

(1) in the highest – in the heavenly places

(2) in the earth – among men favoured by God

(E) and men beheld the glory of 'the only begotten God'

b. how can the people of this region; of Aurora, Newmarket, be brought to the praise of the glory of God?

(A) by this: that the Word be incarnate in you and me

(B) that they may see 'Christ in you, the hope of glory' (Colossians 1:27)

2. or in the words of the hymn-writer Albert Orsborn ⁻⁽⁴⁾.

Let the beauty of Jesus be seen in me —

All His wonderful passion and purity!

O Thou Spirit divine,

All my nature refine,

Till the beauty of Jesus be seen in me.

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ASV	American Standard Version of 1901
AV	Authorized (King James) Version
ERV	The Revised Version of 1885
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NIV	New International Version © 1984 by the International Bible Society
NKJV	New King James Version © 1979 Thomas Nelson Inc., Publishers
NLT	1996 New Living Translation © 1996 by Tyndale Charitable Trust
NRSV	New Revised Standard Version © 1989 by the Division of Christian Education of the National Council of the Churches of Christ in the U. S. A.
PHIL	New Testament Translation © 1972 by J. B. Phillips
RSV	Revised Standard Version © 1946, 1952 by the National Council of the Churches of Christ in the U. S. A.
WEY	The New Testament in Modern Speech © 1902, 1912 R. F. Weymouth

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2. “Peace on Earth?” from Pastor's Story File - Kerux illustrations #22023
3. From “The Song of the Angels” by Rev. Dr Alan J. Meenan – Kerux sermons #1705
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