

Going Beyond the Birth of Jesus

No one has ever been born like Jesus (Luke 2:1-14). The birth of Jesus is one of the most amazing events to occur in the history of the world.

- It was miraculous (Matthew 1:18, 23). Jesus was born of a virgin.
- It was announced by angels (Luke 2:8-14). Powerful heavenly beings told shepherds in the field that Jesus was born! These angels were seen praising God, celebrating, and expressing great joy because they knew that Jesus had come into the world to bring spiritual peace.
- It angered Satan (Matthew 2:16). While angels and shepherds celebrated the birth of Jesus, Herod (the king of Judea) did not. Since he viewed Jesus as a threat to his rule, he ordered the murder of innocent children throughout Bethlehem in effort to destroy Him. Herod was a vicious worker of Satan!
- It marked the arrival of God in the flesh (Matthew 1:22-23). Jesus was God among men. He left the realm of eternity to be born of a woman and live among His creation.

While the birth story is certainly biblical, it does not tell the whole story of Jesus. It does not tell us things about Jesus that challenge and test our love and devotion to God.

The Jesus who preaches

- He preached a message of repentance (Matthew 4:17). Repentance requires turning from sin. It requires godly sorrow and reformation.
- In the Sermon on the Mount, Jesus preached against slander, revenge, lust, adultery, unlawful divorce, promise-breaking, and hatred of enemies (Matthew 5:21-28).
- He preached about genuine and authentic discipleship (Luke 9:23).
- He preached about forgiveness and reconciliation (Luke 17:1-4). Obeying this commandment can be extremely difficult!
- His words are not merely suggestions or wise sayings. They are words that will serve as the standard by which God will judge us (John 12:48).

The Jesus who takes a firm stance against religious error

- He stood against corruption being promoted in the temple (John 2:13-17).
- He exposed the hypocrisy of the scribes and Pharisees (Matthew 23:13-33).
- He preached against putting man-made rules and traditions on the same level as God's Law (Matthew 15:1-9).
- Do we want the Jesus who challenges us to avoid corrupt religious practices and avoid inclinations to engage in hypocritical behavior?

The Jesus who dies and is raised

- Jesus came into the world to die for the sins of the world (1 Corinthians 15:1-4; Matthew 1:21; 16:21).
- His death emphasizes the seriousness of sin and our inability to save ourselves from it.

Conclusion:

Are you willing to accept all of what the gospel reveals about Jesus?

Shawn Jeffries