

Weekly Reflection – Can You Trust this Baby? “God-man”

Is it too good to be true?

How can we know that having faith in this Jesus who was born in a stable, laid in a manger, lived for 33 years, nailed to a cross, rose from the grave on the third day, will save us from sin and eternal death and give us eternal life? We are making a pretty radical claim. What is it about who Jesus is, who this baby is that warrants such a radical claim? Maybe you’re thinking, well He died on the cross. So did many other people and we don’t claim that faith in them will save you. Well, Jesus rose from the grave. So did a few other people (Widow of Zarephath’s son, Shunammite Women’s son, Man in Elisha’s tomb, Jairus’s daughter, son of the widow of Nain, Lazarus, Tabitha, Eutychus) and we don’t claim that faith in them will save you. So, what is it about this baby that qualifies faith in His life, death and resurrection to give us eternal life? The answer is, because He is the “God-man.”

Sin Nature

To understand or see this we must start with an important doctrine that feels very unchristmasy but I feel is necessary if we want to have confidence that this radical claim we are making is not too good to be true.

In Genesis, when Adam eats of the fruit, sin enters the world, and death through sin because of the sin of Adam. And that curse, that sin is passed to all of us who are born by natural means, a man and a woman. We are born with a sinful nature, and we inherited it from Adam. ***“Behold, I was brought forth in iniquity, and in sin did my mother conceive me.” (Psalm 51:5 ESV) “Therefore, just as sin came into the world through one man Adam), and death through sin, and so death spread to all men because all sinned—” (Romans 5:12 ESV) “For as by the one man’s (Adam’s) disobedience the many were made sinners...” (Romans 5:19a ESV)***

We have three problems: Problem number one, we were born in iniquity and sin. Problem number two, we have this law of God that we are commanded to keep, and we have all chosen not to obey this law. Problem number three, that sin must be punished, and the punishment sin against a perfect God deserves is eternal death. The radical claim we are making is that this Jesus, born in a stable, laid in a manger, is the solution to those problems. So, what is it about this baby that qualifies faith in His life, death and resurrection to give us eternal life?

“But when the fullness of time had come, God sent forth his Son, born of woman, born under the law, to redeem those who were under the law, so that we might receive adoption as sons. And because you are sons, God has sent the Spirit of his Son into our hearts, crying, “Abba! Father!” So you are no longer a slave, but a son, and if a son, then an heir through God.” Galatians 4:4-7 ESV

“But when the fullness of time had come.”

The birth of Jesus was providential. In the fullness of time, when everything was exactly right, when everything was exactly as God intended it to be, in the exact moment that God intended it to happen. God was not reacting to situations or circumstances. It was in the fullness of time. God did not decide that things had gotten so out of hand that something had to be done. This was in the fullness of time. God did exactly what He intended, exactly when He intended, exactly how He intended. In other words, the birth of Jesus was part of a plan. A specific plan for a specific purpose.

“But when the fullness of time had come, God sent forth His Son.”

Jesus is not close to God. He is not almost God. Jesus is God. ***"For in him all the fullness of God was pleased to dwell," (Colossians 1:19 ESV)*** In the fullness of time, God is executing a plan exactly when the plan is supposed to be executed; and the nature of the plan is that God the Father will send God the Son. This passage and many others teach us that God sent His Son, that Jesus is divine. It's not only an affirmative statement that Jesus is the Son of God but also that He's not the son of Adam.

"When the fullness of time had come, God sent forth his son, born of a woman."

Jesus is the Son of God and He is born of a woman. And not just any woman, a virgin. ***"And Mary said to the angel, "How will this be, since I am a virgin?" And the angel answered 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."*** (Luke 1:34-35 ESV) Now we have Jesus who is fully divine as the Son of God and fully human born of a woman. Although being fully human, He was not born in the normal way, by a man and a woman, therefore unlike other full humans, He did not inherit Adam's sin.

So, problem number one is resolved; Jesus is not born in iniquity and sin, because He was not born by a man and a woman. But we still have problem number two and three to try and resolve; there is the law of God that needs to be perfectly obeyed, and sin still needs to be punished.

"When the fullness of time had come, God sent forth His Son, born of a woman, born under the law."

This baby has to be born without a sin nature, number one. And number two, He has to be born under the law and keep the whole law, so that He can be actually righteous and actually represent humanity. Jesus was not born in sin and did in fact keep the whole law, and He is actually righteous, which is important because that means He can impute actual righteousness to you and to me.

Just like you and I inherited Adam's sin nature by being born of a man and a woman; when we believe in, have faith in Jesus and all that He did, we are born again and inherit His righteousness and are no longer slaves to sin. When we were born the first time we inherited the sin nature of Adam, when by faith in Jesus we are born again, we inherit the righteousness of Jesus.

Problem number two is resolved, but we still have problem number three, our sin that each one of us has already committed must be punished with death.

But when the fullness of time had come, God sent forth his Son, born of woman, born under the law, to redeem those who were under the law

To redeem is the idea of purchasing out of slavery. We were slaves to the law, sin and death and we need to be purchased out of that slavery. We need to be redeemed. ***"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"—"***

(Galatians 3:13 ESV) "knowing that you were ransomed from the futile ways inherited from your forefathers, not with perishable things such as silver or gold, but with the precious blood of Christ, like that of a lamb without blemish or spot." (1 Peter 1:18-19 ESV)

What qualifies Jesus to be able to pay the price, which is blood or death? One qualification is He must be human, to be a substitute for humans He must be human, He must be a human who has actually obeyed the law of God, and He must be human so that He had blood to shed, and a heart to stop beating so He could actually die.

The second qualification is He must be divine, holy - the Son of God, so that the blood was pure, perfect, spotless, and valuable enough to pay the purchase price. By nature, God's wrath is infinite in quality. In order to bear the weight of wrath, it is necessary that the Savior be divine. But also, in order to

satisfy this wrath, He had to offer a sacrifice of such a value that God would be pleased to accept it. Only Jesus the Son of God could bring a sacrifice of infinite and eternal value to God the Father that would satisfy God's wrath.

"For Christ also suffered once for sins, the righteous for the unrighteous, that he might bring us to God, being put to death in the flesh but made alive in the spirit," (1 Peter 3:18 ESV) Jesus is the God-man. He is 100% divine and 100% man and meets all the requirements to resolve all three problems.

"But when the fullness of time had come, God sent forth his Son, born of woman, born under the law, to redeem those who were under the law, so that we might receive adoption as sons. And because you are sons, God has sent the Spirit of his Son into our hearts, crying, "Abba! Father!" So you are no longer a slave, but a son, and if a son, then an heir through God." Galatians 4:4-7 ESV

All of that's good but there's more. ***"So that we might receive adoption as sons."*** It would be enough if we just missed hell. But He does this so that we might receive adoption as sons. ***"And if a son, then an heir through God."***