Grace to You :: *Unleashing God's Truth, One Verse at a Time*

Examining the Virgin Birth
Scripture: Selected Scriptures
Code: 1265

I'd like to invite you to take your Bible this morning as we look together at the birth of Christ. We're going to consider several passages and so just have it ready, you can follow along as we go from place to place and consider the meaning of the birth of Jesus Christ.

History has revealed some interesting births, some amazing births, some miraculous births. In the Old Testament and New Testament some rather spectacular men were born in rather spectacular fashion. I think for example of the birth of Isaac, born to nearly one hundred year old barren parents who were laughing at the thought that a barren wife could give birth at that age, and Isaac became the fulfillment of the Abrahamic covenant' in its first great step.

I think of the amazing birth of Samson, the wife of Manoah was barren.

her womb by God's omnipotent hand was opened up to give birth to a child who could turn a lion inside out, who could kill a thousand men with the jawbone of an ass and who could pull by his own strength an entire temple down from its top to bottom. I think of the birth of Samuel, to the barren Hannah whose womb the Lord had shut and in providence God opened her womb and she gave birth to that unique prophet, priest and anointer of kings, one of the great men of all time, Samuel.

I think of the birth of John the Baptist, to Zechariah, a humble priest and to Elisabeth who was called barren, but in old age by a miracle of God was given a child who turned out to be the greatest man who had ever lived up until his time. Miracle births, so shocked and unbelieving was Zechariah at the thought of Elisabeth bearing a son that God took away his ability to speak, and he had to endure her entire pregnancy without being able to tell anybody that at last his wife would have a child. miracle births. There have been also in history some astounding births, not miraculous but nonetheless amazing. In the 1930's there was the birth of the Dionne quintuplets and received international attention, five children born at one time to the same mother. More recently we have had further quintuplets and in lg7S in Colorado were born the Stanic sextuplets, six babies. But there has never been as unusual a birth in the human world, the nonmiraculous world as that of little Louise Brown, 5 pounds 12 ounces born to John and Leslie Brown of Lancashire England on July ?5th 1?78. Oh, God has miraculously reversed barrenness in the past' God has opened closed wombs, God has even allowed man to give birth to multiple children but for the first time God permitted a baby to be born which was conceived outside the human body, little Louise Brown was the test tube baby. As a result of twelve years of research the mother's egg was fertilized outside the mother's body, I understand

mineral oil was used as a conductor for that, it was the mother's, it was the mother's own egg and it was the father's own sperm conceived in a test tube then placed back into a prepared uterus to be carried until birth. Well it's amazing, it's not miraculous. But the world has made a monumental issue out of this, the world has made us to think that this was some abnormal birth and in most senses it is not abnormal. First of all conception occurred as conception always occurs by the male seed fertilizing the female egg, and that is exactly the way that conception occurred. Birth occurred according to normal procedure, the mother gave birth to the baby in just the normal way.

The only difference was the location of the original conception was different. But the process of birth was identical to what all births must be in the human realm, the male the female, the seed and the egg.

Science you see desperately wants to create on its own, science desperately wants to give birth on its own, because men more than anything else want to be God. And men today are claiming that we can do it, we don't need to do it in the prescribed manner and there is a developing science now known as parthenogenesis, from two Greek words parthenos. virgin, genesis to begin or birth, birth by virgin, literally virgin birth that's parthenogenesis. And through laboratory experiments we have found that there is the ability to create parthenogenetic life or virgin born life on lower levels of life form. For example, ah, we know that honeybees, the unfertilized eggs develop into the drones or the males. We know that artificial parthenogenesis has been successful with the unfertilized eggs of silkworms since 1888. Since 1?00 Morgan and Meade first started the eggs of sea urchins and marine worms to developing by placing them in a saline solution or sea water. ?inkus in 1?S? and 1g4? was able to produce several rabbits, all of them female through chemical and temperature effects on the egg without the introduction of any sperm from a male rabbit. And so there is claimed today in science that parthenogenetic birth can occur, that there can be such a thing as virgin birth. The problem is that it is biologically impossible to reproduce on the human level. What can be done at that low level of ah, of life, animal life and even below animal complexity of animal life could never be done on a human level. There's a mad effort today to clone, which is nothing but parthenogenetic effort. And from all that I can understand from talking to scientists here in our own church who are involved in genetic research, that's pure science fiction. Far too complex is a human being to produce such a thing. But you know it's amazing how people want to undo the uniqueness of Christ, to undo the uniqueness of the Scriptures, and even when men don't know they're doing it Satan is feverishly at it. The Bible tells us that Jesus was born of a virgin, a virgin who had no knowledge of a man sexually, a virgin who never had had a relationship with a man gave birth to a child, that is a miracle of God, the greatest birth miracle that ever happened and science cannot duplicate it, it cannot be done. Let me take it a step further, even if a, a human level parthenogenesis could occur and it couldn't, but if it could the case of Mary bearing Jesus would be an impossibility for this reason. Geneticists have demonstrated that human beings as other mammals have two x chromosomes in the female and an x and a y chromosome in the male, so that the male always determines the sex of the child that is born. A female with two x chromosomes, a male with an x and a y, when an unfertilized egg cell

parthenogenetically reproduces it will only reproduce the same sex because without the introduction of the male it could not produce the male. The point being this, that even if you want to try to explain the virgin birth of Jesus Christ parthenogenetically, Mary would never have produced a son, she would have produced a daughter.

Couldn't be done. When Mary gave birth to Jesus without a father, and He was a son God for once and for all was saying there is no, there never will be any scientific explanation for this. This is not an issue of science, this is the miraculous hand of God. Since the human male determines the sex of a child it is obvious that the sex of Jesus' human nature was determined by the direct miraculous act of God on the body of Mary, not by some quirk of science or some strange occurrence rare and undefined. He was God the Son not God the daughter. So I agree, there have been some amazing births in human society just on the human level, there have been some miraculous births as God has ah, overridden the natural deadness of a womb and brought to bear a child but none of these things can in any sense measure up to the uniqueness, the incredible quality of this birth. When the Bible says that Christ was born of a virgin, when it tells us that Jesus had no human father, there is nothing in history like it, there is nothing in divine activity like it. He was not born of a barren woman whose womb was opened, He was not born as some parthenogenetic process He was born of a woman who never knew a man and who yet bore a man, an impossibility every way you look at it. Jesus Christ in His birth stands unique in all of human history. It's amazing to me that the virgin birth is so flagrantly denied. The latest survey of protestant seminaries in America indicates that 58% of seminary students believe in the virgin birth, that's all. The rest who will populate our pulpits will continue the lie that Jesus Christ was not virgin born, that the New Testament doesn't tell the truth, that's one option, that's the overriding one, you can't believe what it says when it says a virgin birth. The other, that Jesus was the son of Joseph or worse of some Roman soldier who had a love affair with Mary. Do you know that even the Jewish leaders of the time of Jesus didn't believe in the virgin birth and that's a sad thing because they should have, many rabbis had taught that, many had. Many of the rabbis had taught that Jesusor that Messiah would be virgin born, and many rabbis had taught that the Messiah would be God as well. But when it came to the day of Jesus they were secularists. And for many of them they were not committed that the Messiah would be virgin born or that the Messiah would even be God, in fact when Jesus came along and said He was the son of David and the Son of God they said He was a blasphemer.

They were convinced that their Messiah would be a member of the line of royalty, a son of David but nothing more than that. Oh there were a few among the people who believed He would be God, no doubt and a few who believed perhaps a virgin birth would be the way in which God would enter the human world. But most were skeptics and most of them mocked Jesus and most of them sort of denounced Him, in fact if you want to look at an interesting approach to it, in John chapter S and verse ?i, "They said to him, We are not born of fornication." And the implication is no matter what You say about us we're not as bad as You are, You illegitimate son. You see they had twisted the whole story of Jesus to make Him a, a bastard child. Make Him one who was born illegitimately. They even

said in verse 48, You're a Samaritan. Which denies the fact that He would have been the son of Joseph and Mary, they, they call Him a halfbreed. And maybe in John S:i to ii this conversation came up because you remember He forgave the woman taken in adultery and they might have kind of turned their conversation this way because they felt that He was defending the woman taken in adultery because He was defending His own heritage. And so there were many in that day who mocked and blasphemed against His name and, and denied the fact that He could possibly be the Messiah or in fact that the Messiah would be one so born of a virgin. That was not something they would accept. They thought they had all the answers about where the Messiah would come from. In John 8:42 some of them said, "Is not this Jesus, the son of Joseph, whose father and mother we know? How is it, then, that he saith. I came down from heaven?" Some of them thought He was the son of Joseph and Mary, some of them thought that He was just a normal child, and what in the world are people saying He came from heaven for? Where did that stuff come from? But the implication here is that maybe some of them expected the Messiah to come from heaven. Go over to chapter 7 verse...well the whole section really, verse ?7, "Nevertheless, we know this man, from where he is; but when Christ comes, no man knows from where he is." In other words some of them said oh, He's a child of fornication, some of them said no, He's just the son of Joseph and Mary, plain old ordinary stuff out of Nazareth, and some said well, He can't be the Messiah we know where He's from, the Messiah's going to come from where we don't know, and others said. yes from heaven. And so there was all this ambivalence about who He was. Same thing today. 58% of the seminary students say He was virgin born the other 44% don't know. 5??

of the people surveyed in the major denominations of our country say he was virgin born, 41% say they don't know. William Barclay one of the great Bible commentators of our era, just died last year said the virgin birth doesn't matter, it's not important. A pastor in our own area of a large church has said in print, personally he said, I don't understand the virgin birth, I'm not convinced it's something you need to preach on. Listen, I don't care how many people think Jesus was virgin born or don't think, no major doctrine of Scripture has ever been established by majority vote. In fact if everybody voted against it then I would just quote the Bible, Romans 3:3 and 4, "Let God be true and every man (what?) a liar." Turn with me to Matthew 1? for a moment and I'll show you what the problem is. There's a reason people can't accept the virgin birth of Christ, there's a very clear reason, there's a reason people don't know who Christ is, they don't understand His deity and His humanity for a very obvious reason. Jesus is conversing with His disciples in Matthew 18 and in verse 18 He asks them a very specific question. "When Jesus came into the borders of Caesarea Philippi, he asked his disciples, saying, Who do men say that I, the Son of man, am?" Now that's a fair question, He says I'd like to know popular opinion about Me, who do people think I am? "And they said, (verse 14) Some say that thou art John the Baptist; some, Elijah; and others, Jeremiah, or one of the prophets."

Now notice that they all had a human answer. They all say that You're either John the Baptist, Elijah, Jeremiah, or one of the prophets, nobody ever saw the deity of Jesus Christ, do you see? This was a question they never could handle, they couldn't handle His birth, they couldn't figure out the whole

thing but...about Nazareth and Joseph and Mary, and all of this kind of thing, and no doubt when Joseph would disclaim being the father and they would hear the story of the virgin birth they would conclude well He was an illegitimate son born to some Roman soldier or some Greek merchant traveling through Nazareth or whatever else, they just couldn't handle the virgin birth and they couldn't handle the deity of Christ so their answers were always that He was a man, a ranking man but nonetheless a man. And so Jesus pursued it further in verse 15, "He said unto them' But who say ye that I am?" Obviously there's more to this than they know, can you take it a step further? "And Simon Peter answered and said, Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God." You see the part that men never recognized was the deity and that's the part that Peter saw. Thou art the Christ, yes You are the human Messiah, You are the anointed one, You are the promised son of David, but more You are the Son of the living God. And then Jesus introduced the problem in verse i7, "Jesus answered and said to him, Blessed art thou, Simon Barjona; for flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee, but my Father, who is in heaven." Now stop right there, the only way that Peter or anybody else will ever know the deity of Jesus Christ is by the divine revelatory act of God, do you see it? So man if he fuddles around with his science and fuddles around with his human philosophy and piddles around with his religion is always going to come up short. He's going to come up with Jesus as a great teacher, a great leader, a prophet of God, or whatever but he'll miss the fact that He is the Son of the living God because flesh and blood does not reveal that. That's the whole point.

So we're not surprised when the world today full of skeptics and atheists and agnostics and religious liberals want to deny the deity of Jesus Christ because that's been going on all along, we're not surprised when they want to immediately deny its corollary, the virgin birth because the virgin birth and the deity of Christ are inseparable.

Listen, if Jesus is God then He must be born of God. Joseph a man and Mary a woman cannot produce God. It can't be done. God alone can be born in this world by His own power not by some human agency.

So if we're going to deny the deity of Christ naturally we'll deny the virgin birth and conversely if you deny the virgin birth you will deny also the deity of Jesus Christ. It is ludicrous to say, yes I believe He's God He just wasn't virgin born. Well then there's no way He could be God apart from being conceived by God Himself.

So I want to talk to you this morning about the virgin birth, I want to show you why we believe the virgin birth, why we believe He was born of a virgin, conceived in Mary by God Himself the Holy Spirit.

First I want to talk about the foundations of the virgin birth, the foundations of the virgin birth, there are three. Number one, is the Old Testament record, turn to Genesis chapter S verse 15, the Old Testament record. The virgin birth isn't some Johnny comelately thing that popped up in the New Testament, it isn't something added years later, the virgin birth is in the oldest ah, the first book

chronologically the record of the oldest period of human history. Genesis 8:15, now in Genesis chapter 8 Adam and Eve have taken of the fruit ah, the knowledge of good and evil and they have fallen, sin has entered the world and God is bringing judgment to bear, and in verse i4 He brings His judgment to bear upon Satan the serpent, "And the Lord God said to the serpent, Behold thou hast done this, thou art cursed above all cattle, and above every beast of the field; upon thy belly shalt thou go, and dust shalt thou eat all the days of thy life." Now, the curse expands itself directly to Satan in verse i5, "I will put enmity" or antagonism or opposition "between thee and the woman," in other words there is going to be antagonism and antipathy and animosity and war between Satan and the woman, we don't know what woman yet until we go further, "between thy seed and her seed;" now there is only one woman who ever lived in the history of the world who had a seed. Anybody knows the seed is in the man not the woman. And that's never said anywhere else in the Bible, in the very same book of Genesis you come into chapter i2 and you find it talks about Abraham and his seed, the Bible always recognizes the seed is in the man.

Only one time in all of the annals of the Word of God is it ever said that a woman had a seed, her seed and that's an indication of something special. Satan is going to be in antipathy against the woman's seed. That which Satan produces will mitigate against the seed and it'll all ultimately of course come to a final battle and it says, "he shall bruise thy head," in other words the seed of the woman will destroy the head of Satan, "and thou shalt bruise his heel." And we know what the story is, on the cross Satan could apply a bruise to Christ but it only bruised His heel where at the same time Christ was dying on the cross He was rendering the crushing blow to the head of Satan.

Now we know who the seed of the woman is it's Jesus Christ and the very fact that it says her seed is a Genesis chapter S prophecy of the virgin birth of Jesus Christ, a woman doesn't have a seed, but here is God the Holy Spirit laying out the foundation of the virgin birth in the third chapter of Genesis, the only time in history the seed was ever in the woman. And always from here on out it is always spoken of as his seed, his seed whenever progeny is spoken of, whenever somebody's family is spoken of never her seed, that's the only place it ever happens in the whole Bible. And Christ the Messiah the seed of the woman is set against Satan. Look with me at Isaiah chapter 7, and again we see the Old Testament record laying the foundation for the virgin birth. In Isaiah chapter ? and verse 14 now listen this is most important, "Therefore the Lord himself shall give you a sign;"

now a sign is something that points to somewhere, a sign is something to get your attention, to show you something greater. You see a sign that says Los Angeles and you know you're coming to the place, the place is always greater than the sign, there's always something beyond what the sign is and yet the sign must be unique, it must be very easily identifiable. If you were driving somewhere and all you saw was a sign that said: City Limits, it wouldn't help you much if you didn't know what city. When God gives signs they are very specific, very particular, and we find that here, so there's a sign, what is the sign? "The virgin shall conceive, and bear a son, and shall call his name Immanuel." Now listen, some people say the word almah just means a young girl, the liberals say it's just a young

girl, a young girl will conceive and have a son and name him Immanuel. For all we know it could be the mother of Immanuel Kant or Immanuel Escobeido or anybody else. People say, and it's just a young woman who's conceiving and bearing a son. Listen beloved, if this is just a lady having a baby that's no sign, lots of ladies have lots of babies, and lots of them have named them Immanuel, that doesn't prove anything, what kind of a sign is that? You can't take the word almah here and make it mean anything but virgin. The world almah only appears nine times in the Old Testament and eight times of its nine appearances it must demand pure virginity. The translation is right, the virgin shall conceive, and I want you to know virgins don't conceive. And watch this one, further a virgin shall bear a son, now I want to tell you something very interesting, you notice what it says here, "the virgin shall conceive," that's not a verb, that's an adjective. It literally translates the pregnant virgin shall bear a son. Now people have said, well okay we'll allow the word virgin, the virgin conceived but at that point she stopped being a virgin, that isn't what the verse says.

The already pregnant virgin bears a son, do you see the point? A virgin bearing a son? Impossible, that's the sign. When you see a virgin bear a son then you have met her seed and then his head is about to be bruised and His name shall be called Immanuel which the New Testament says means God with us. That's the sign, that's the sign.

It's a fantastic thing, the literal Hebrew is, Behold, the pregnant virgin is bearing a son and she calls His name Immanuel. That's the sign, when you see a pregnant virgin bear a son and even after the son is born she has never known a man then you take note, if the child's name is Immanuel that is the one who will come to bruise the serpents head, prophecy of the virgin birth. And by the way in Matthew chapter 1 we have the divine interpretation of Isaiah 7:11, and the angel of the Lord came and the angel of the Lord interprets Isaiah 7:14, and what does it say? Verse 2i, "She shall bring forth a son, shall call his name Jesus; for he shall save his people from their sins." Verse 23, "The virgin shall be with child, shall bring forth a son, shall call his name Immanuel." There's the quote, this whole thing, verse 2? says, "That it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the Lord through the prophet." The Lord spoke it in Isaiah 7:14 and the angel interpreted it here and he uses the word virgin here which is parthenos and parthenos can't mean anything but virgin. In First Corinthians 7 Paul contrasts virgin from the word wife, it means virgin a one...one who has known only sexual abstinence. She was a virgin, she was a virgin when she conceived and she was a virgin when she gave birth. God wanted it well known that this was His Son, not the son of Joseph, and Joseph knew it. Joseph was shocked that his beloved betrothed Mary whom he knew to be so pure and so good would be pregnant. Listen, in Jeremiah 31:22 there's a fascinating verse it says this, "The Lord hath created a new thing in the earth," this is a prophecy, "The Lord hath created a new thing in the earth," what is it? "A woman shall encompass a man." It never happened in history.

And the rabbis said this, the rabbis interpreted that verse this way, quote, "Messiah is to have no earthly father. The birth of Messiah will be without defect. The birth of Messiah will be like that of no other man." One rabbi said, "The birth of Messiah will be like the dew of the Lord as drops on the

grass without the action of a man."

So the Old Testament laid it out, the virgin birth, virgin birth.

Secondly, I believe that the foundation of the virgin birth is not only the Old Testament record but the doctrine of the Trinity.

I think the doctrine of the Trinity lays the foundation also for the virgin birth. Let me show you what I mean, in Deuteronomy 8:4 and 5 you have the great statement of Israel, "Hear, O Israel: The Lord our God is one Lord." Right? Now we know that God is one, right? Just one. "Hear, O Israel: The Lord our God is one Lord." And the Old Testament and the New Testament ring again to say, "Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God with all their heart, soul, mind, and strength."

In other words all our worship is to Him, He allows no other gods, no other idols, no graven images, we worship the one true God, and that is reiterated all throughout the Scripture in fact, "Thou sayest thou believest in one God: thou doest well. The devils also believe, and tremble." Even the demons know there's only one God. There are people who try to teach there are three gods and so forth, there is only one God, only one God and listen to me' ii God calls all of us to worship only Him all the time then He'd have to be one. If there were three gods as some have taught throughout history then we'd have to worship all three of them so we'd give a third of our worship to each of them.

But that's not what the Bible says. If we're to worship God at all times with all our worship, then He must be one God, and yet the Bible says He's three persons. In Genesis i:1 it says "In the beginning God,"

and it uses Elohim not El. im on the end of a Hebrew word means plural.

It says, In the beginning God, plural. And later on in verse 28, "Let us make man in our image." God sees Himself as a plurality. When God was calling Isaiah, God says, "Whom shall I send and who will go for us?" And then God tells us how many are in His Trinity when He says, "Holy, holy, holy is the Lord of hosts." Thrice holy because thrice persons. In Isaiah 48:18 you hear the preincarnate Christ say this, "And now the Lord God, and his Spirit, have sent me." Isaiah 48:I8.

In Matthew 8:i7 Jesus is being baptized, the Father says, "Thou art my beloved Son in whom I am well pleased." The Son is being baptized, the Spirit descends as a dove. In Second Corinthians chapter I3 and verse I4 the benediction is, "The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit." You have the Lord Jesus Christ, God and the Holy Spirit. In Matthew 28 the end of the great commission we find, "Go ye, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit." From cover to cover of the Bible you find the same three persons in the one God. It's a mystery, people say it's like an egg, it's three in one like an

egg, yoke, white and shell, no it's not like an egg. People says it's like H2O it's steam, ice and water, no it's not like H2O.

Others say it's like light, it has radiation, heat and illumination, no it's not like light, it's just like what it is and it's not like anything. Listen, God is one God and yet three persons, now listen, if Jesus Christ is God then the virgin birth occurred and the incarnation is real, this is the logical extension. If the second person of the Triune God enters the world then it is God who bears God into this world, not man, not man. You can't have God produced from two human beings. So the Old Testament demands a virgin birth and the Trinity demands a virgin birth.

Thirdly, Messianic prophecy demands it. Look at Isaiah 43 I'm just going to go through it rapidly, we could spend weeks on Isaiah 48, a phenomenal chapter and I want to show you something. This is one of the chapters in the middle section here of Isaiah where God keeps reiterating His nature and His character. It's a great experience to read in the 40's chapters of ah, of Isaiah because they talk so much about God's nature. But I want you to see something fascinating here, in Isaiah 40 verse 11 I want you to see a Messianic picture here. Here's God talking and all through this section He talks about Himself, "I, even I, am the Lord, and beside me there is no savior."

And the verb isn't even there, beside Me, no Savior. Now the point of the verse is God is the only Savior, beside Me no Savior. You know what it says in Matthew 1:21? "He shall call his name Jesus; for he shall (what?) save his people from their sins." You say, wait a minute, God says He's the only Savior, and yet God says this is the Savior which is tantamount to saying this child is God, you see? Look at verse 14, "Thus saith the Lord, your redeemer," stop right there. God says I'm your redeemer, I'm the one who redeemed you. In Hosea He says it again, "I will redeem them from death." God is the redeemer, and yet in Galatians S:13 the Spirit of God says, "Christ has redeemed us."

If God is the redeemer and the only redeemer and Christ is the redeemer then Christ is God, do you see? That demands a virgin birth. Then God is intolerant of anybody taking His place. So if He gives the right of Saviorhood and redemption to somebody it is only an extension of His own person. Look again at verse 15, "I am the Lord, your Holy One,"

He alone is holy, He is the holy one and yet again when Christ was born He is called that holy thing, and the Epistles tell us that He was without spot and blemish, that He was without sin, that He knew no sin. Listen if God alone is holy and Christ is holy then Christ is God, and if Christ is God then He was born of God not of Joseph and Mary or some Roman soldier. Look again at verse 15, it says, "I am the Lord, your Holy One, the creator of Israel," God is the Creator and yet in John 1:I it says, "IN the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God." All and "All things were made by him; and without him was not anything made that was made."

If God is the Creator in Isaiah and Christ is the Creator in John 1 then Christ is God and that demands a virgin birth. And further in verse 15 He says, "I am the creator of Israel, your King." He is the King and yet in Revelation it tells us that Jesus Christ is King of Kings and Lord of Lords. He is God. In Deuteronomy 8:lS it says, "Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve."

And yet God Himself says in Hebrews 1:8, "And again, when he brought forth the firstborn into the world, he saith, And let the angels of God worship him." If Deuteronomy ? says God is only to be worshiped and Hebrews 1 says worship Christ then Christ is God. Look at Isaiah ??:23, a great statement. "I have sworn by myself, the word is gone out of my mouth in righteousness, and shall not return, that unto me," says God, unto Me "every knee shall bow." God says, every knee will bow to Me and in Philippians chapter 2 it says that, "God highly exalted Jesus Christ, and gave him a name above every name, That at the name of Jesus every knee should (what?) bow." He's God. You look at chapter 42 of Isaiah and verse 8 and this will sum it up. It says this, "Behold, the formerer rather verse 8, "I am the Lord: that is my name; and my glory will I not give to another." God says, I will never give My glory to another, and yet in John i:i4 it says and when we saw Christ, "we beheld his (what?) glory." Don't you miss the point people Jesus is God and that's the crux of Christianity and that's the heart of Christmas, God entering the human world. That's the foundation of the virgin birth, Messianic prophecy, the doctrine of the Trinity and the Old Testament record.

Now let me take you to a second major point. In addition to the foundation of the virgin birth I want to mention very briefly the fallacies about the virgin birth. You know there are always efforts by Satan to discredit it they come in two kinds, denial and counterfeit.

This is fascinating, throughout history Satan has always tried to deny the virgin birth on the one hand. There have always been people who deny it. Nels Ferre a very well known philosopher, theologian of sorts has written a book called, The Christian Understanding of God.

which is a nonChristian misunderstanding of God, but nonetheless, in this book he claims that Jesus is not the natural son of Joseph but the illegitimate child of a Roman soldier who had a love affair with Mary. This is common, the rock opera, Jesus Christ Superstar has the lead song sung by Mary Magdalene, say it over and over again, He's a man just a man, He's a man just a man, He's a man just a man, that's always where the attack comes, always at the point of deity and at the corollary, the virgin birth. And they've always said, you know, Nazareth was located on the main highway between Jerusalem and the phoenician cities of Tyre and Sidon, it was full of Roman soldiers, full of Greek merchants, it was notorious for corruption, was was notorious for vice and prostitution and Nathanael himself even said, "Can there any good thing come out of Nazareth?" And out of that kind of a tradition grew what is known as the Panthera or the Panthera tradition, that a soldier named Panthera lay with Mary and produced a child. You know where that first came? In 8th century and then repeated in 11th century Jewish writings, that by the 8th and the 11 centuries the Jewish people were

still trying to get rid of Jesus Christ and they came up with that tradition. And out of that grew another one that there was a Joseph Panthera who was married to Mary, but a neighbor named Jocquinin came in when Mary was having her period and separated from Joseph, he came in the night, she thought it was Joseph and so he lay with her, Jocquinin did, produced a child, she never knew the difference, Joseph did, stayed around until the baby was born and then took off. The purpose of such blasphemy is to make Jesus illegitimate, it's to make Jesus' Kingly right null and void, it's to remove His divine nature. This is always the attack. Hugh Schoenfield in the passover plot which masquerades his scholarship has claimed that Jesus is the natural son of Joseph and Mary he takes another approach, but he says, "He was nothing but a master conspirator who thought He could be the Messiah and so purposely tried to fulfill the Messianic prophecies." And Schoenfield's entire approach is to remove the threat of deicide from the Jewish race. In other words he is so burdened by the fact that they were guilty of crucifying the Son of God that in order to get rid of that problem he just eliminates the fact that Jesus is the Son of God. So it doesn't matter if you kill Him, He was a master conspirator who was trying to pull a hoax. Denial. Schoenfield says, and I quote, "There was nothing peculiar about the birth of Jesus, He was not God incarnate, and no virgin mother bore Him. The church in its ancient zeal fathered a myth and became bound to it as a dogma." End quote. The question is, do you trust the Bible or do you trust? Hugh Schoenfield? There's another man writing, a man named Boslooper who'd written a lot of critical stuff on the virgin birth, he says, "The virgin birth is a myth, but (he says) that's okay, the virgin birth is a myth in the highest and best sense of the word." The highest and bestbest sense of the word, what is that? That's that sort of ah, ah, hilagashicktalicta, that's that superduper stuff' you know. You people who are German know what I'm saying.

Schoenfield says, "The virgin birth story takes the reader out of this world of sober reality into the world of fairy tale." And he charges that the evangelicals have applied to their eyes the fairy dust of faith. Bishop Robinson said, "It's a story on the level of an Andy Capp comic." But he says, that's okay because Andy Capp's true. He's true in our imagination and so is the virgin birth. What kind of gobbledygook is that? The virgin birth in my imagination is nothing. A Christ without a virgin birth would be another man and another man is going to start another philosophy and if that's true we're doomed. So Satan denies it, but he's smart enough to know that some people won't buy that so he just counterfeits it in other places.

And you know we've got so many virgin births all over this world you couldn't count them, really, the claims are ad infinitum, ad nauseam, they're all over the place. Everyalmost every major religion in the worlds history has had some kind of a virgin birth attached to it to try to be a, a Satanic smoke screen away from the reality of Christ. For example I told you a few weeks ago about the fact that the, the Greeks used to teach that Dionysius the great Greek god, the lord of the earth was born to, to ah, Semilee and Semilee as his mother conceived without ever seeing Zeus who was his father, somehow she was impregnated by a miracle. I've told you about Semiramis the wife of Nimrod who gave birth to Tammuz. Semiramis is the high priestess of all the cults of the world, all the false

religious systems, and she gave birth to Tammuz the, the story goes she did not have the impregnation by her husband Nimrod by rather she was, she was conceived as a result of a sun beam. Now that legend passed into all the cultures in Egypt the legend of Semiramis and Tammuz comes out as Isis and Osiris, in India it's Esee and Eswyra. Did you know there's the same mother cult thing in China called Ching Moo, the holy mother and holds a baby in her arm? It's all over the world, the counterfeit of the virgin birth of Christ, it's been around for centuries. In Phoenicia it was Ashtaroth and Baal was the child, in Greece it's Aphrodite and, and Eros. Even in the ancient Sumarian and Akkadian cultures there is a record of a Ticultierta the Second in S00 B.C. whose supposedly was created in his mothers womb by the gods, so the Sumarians and the Akkadians and the Greeks and the Egyptians and the Chinese and everybody's got one. It may be interesting for you to know that King Sennacherib claimed to be virgin born. I don't know if you've ever read about the, the birth of Buddha but that's really one for the books. This is what his mother said, quote, "A noble elephant (now you get the picture, a noble elephant, that's what's going on you know a block down the road here, folks, that's not very far away. This is what they believe. A noble elephant) white as silver and snow having six tusks, well proportioned trunk and feet, blood red feet veins, adamantive firmness of joints and easy pace has entered my belly." End quote. Ten months later Buddha was born. Hinduism claimed that the divine Vishnu who is the overarching father god had seven reincarnations, he was reincarnated as a fish and a tortoise and a boar and a lion, and finally Vishnu reincarnated himself in the womb of Davoci and was born as her son, Krishna. It's all over the place in GrecomythoGrecoRoman mythology the mother of Perseus ah, conceived him by Jupiter and Jupiter never came near he just dropped a golden rain shower on her. Alexander the Great claimed to have been virgin born when a snake got in bed with his mother. In the pagan account of the birth of Pallas Athena who supposedly sprang out of the head of Zeus full grown in full armor, it's a good trick. But you see all of this strange bizarre myths that Satan has tried to spawn as a smoke screen so you can't find the real. See, Satan always counterfeits, you see, always counterfeits. Those are the fallacies of the virgin birth, those who deny it, those who counterfeit it. But beloved the facts are here, they're in the Bible. And I don't know but I, I'm convinced the Bible is the Word of God after years and years and years and years of study, and the more I study it the more convinced I am. The virgin birth is here.

Let's go from the foundation and the fallacies to the fact of the virgin birth, Luke i:28. The fact of the virgin birth, I just want you to see it, and then I'm going to close with the favor of the virgin birth. But the fact, listen, "In the sixth month the angel, Gabriel, was sent from God to a city of Galilee, named Nazareth, To a virgin espoused," and by the way espousal or betrothal was a nine month plus period of time, after a marriage was contracted the consummation didn't occur for from nine to twelve months, and during that period of time was the testing time of the purity of the wife. In other words if she were pregnant that would become manifest and the man would know that he had a fornicating wife. In other words he was marrying this virgin on good faith, there weren't supposed to be many loose virgins or rather two many virpeople running around who weren't virgins, I'll put it that way, because if you lost your virginity you also lost your life according to the legal law of Israel. So in order

to verify the purity of that wife, when the contract was made there was at least a nine month period so that if there was a child born or if there was a pregnancy they would know the unfaithfulness of that woman, and then the marriage would be off and they could deal with her the way Joseph wanted to deal with Mary, remember? By killing her or putting her away privately. So the point is there weren't any shotgun weddings in Israel, there was a proving time, there was a testing time.

That's one of the things I think is a real curse in our society, we have a way of legalizing fornication without any consequences, they didn't have that, they gave that period. And so there was this betrothal, this espousal period, not the marriage itself hadn't taken place, this is the espousal period, the contract was signed and now was the proving time. And they were espoused, "and the virgin's name was Mary. The angel came into her. and said, Hail, thou who art highly favored, the Lord is with thee; blessed art thou among women. (And when he saw him she was troubled) When she saw him, she was troubled at his saying. and considered in her mind what manner of greeting this should be." She was shocked by it. "The angel said unto her, Fear not, Mary; for thou hast found favor with God. And, behold, thou shalt conceive in thy womb, and bring forth a son, and shall call his name JESUS. He shall be great, and shall be called the Son of the Highest; and the Lord God shall give unto him the throne of his father, David." Boy, she knew now He'd be the messiah, and He'd be the Son of God, and He'd be the son of man. "He shall reign over the house of Jacob forever; and of his kingdom there shall be no end." There's Isaiah ? as I read it earlier. "Then said Mary unto the angel, How shall this be, seeing I know not a man?"

She had had no relationships with a man, she was a virgin. "And the angel answered, and said unto her, The Holy Spirit shall come upon thee, the power of the Highest shall overshadow thee, therefore also that holy thing which shall be born of thee shall be called the Son of God." You can stop right there. Listen beloved, the virgin birth is taught here and it's obvious from several points, number one the supernatural tone of the whole passage, here is an angel. here is the activity of God, here is the Holy Spirit at work, God is doing something marvelous. The fact that Mary was a virgin is mentioned twice in this passage, that's clear here. And later on Joseph was so shocked because he knew she was a virgin, he couldn't believe that this had happened. By the way I'll add this the child is never anyplace in all the record of Holy Scripture called the Son of Joseph, never.

This is not the son of Joseph, this is the Son of God. In Mary's Magnificat beginning in verse ?8 she does nothing but glorify God, she never even mentions the name of Joseph, he had absolutely no part. And when Jesus was born He knew also, He knew that He was the Son of God. When they found Him in the temple in Luke chapter 2, "He said I must be about my (what?) Father's business." He knew who His Father was. And Joseph also as indicated in the Matthew passage knew that this was not his son. The facts are there beloved. And maybe the greatest fact is this, somebody came to a Christian and said, what do you expect, if I told you that a child had been born in this city without a father would you believe it? And the Christian answered, yes ii he lived like Jesus lived. To me that's the greatest proof, the greatest proof of Jesus' virgin birth is not the data surrounding His birth it's the

life He lived afterwards that proved He was God. There is no other explanation for one who lived as He lived, taught as He taught, healed as He healed, raised the dead as He raised the dead, cast out demons as He cast out demons, died as He died, rose from the dead as He did, ascended as He did, is alive at the Father's right hand as He is and will return as He will. There is no other explanation than that this is God in human flesh and beloved if it's God in human flesh then He was born of God.

Not of man.

And so we see the foundation, the fallacies and the facts and we close with the favor. You say, well, what does all this mean, is it important? Yes it's important, look at Galatians 4:4, I could show you a dozen Scriptures but for times sake we'll take one. Galatians 4:4 listen to it, this is the application of the virgin birth, God has done us an inestimable favor, God has benefited us, God has done something to our advantage that is beyond description in the virgin birth, listen to what it says, "But, when the fullness of time was come," oh listen we could talk so much about that, when everything was right, when God's clock hit the exact hour, when all the parts of the puzzle came together, when it was the perfect timing in the history of the world and eternity, when the fullness of time was come, "God sent forth his Son," beloved who sent the Son, who? God sent the Son, God sent the Son, "made of a woman," not made of a man and a woman, made of a woman. The Son of God made of a woman, "made under the law." In other words He fell into all of the human life, He came to live according to God's prescription, and He did it didn't He? The Son of God made of a woman was made under the law, He came not to destroy the law but to fulfill the law, He came not to break the law but to keep the law, He came as a law abiding human being, and yet He was God the Son. Beloved the virgin birth is in verse 4, "God sent forth his Son, made of a woman." The reason for the virgin birth is in verse 5. Why? Here's the purpose clause, "In order to redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons." There's a negative and a positive, to redeem us from sin that's the negative, to make us sons that's the positive. To save us from judgment, to bring us to sonship, to redeem them that were under the law. What does it mean to be under the law? I'll tell you what it means. If you're under the law beloved you're cursed, why? Because being under the law means that you are required to keep the law. And you know as well as I do that you can't, right?

The law of God you cannot keep, if you've ever lied in your whole life you've violated the law of God, ii you've offended in one part you've broken the whole law, the Bible says. You areevery human being born into this world is demanded to keep God's law, and when you break God's law you come under the curse, you come under the judgment, you come under the fire of God's wrath. There's no hope for us unless someone redeems us, someone buys us out, someone rescues us and that someone had to be one of us and yet beyond us to reach down and pick us up, and so He was virgin born first to redeem us, that's talking about His humanity, He came as a man, and you say how did He redeem you? By paying your penalty, right? Jesus was born made of a woman, there was a humanness there, He was a human being in order that He might die for human beings. Ii He was to be a substitute for us He had to be one of us, and so He goes to the cross and He pays the penalty and

He takes all the fury of God's judgment, He takes all the wrath of God upon Himself, He bears all of God's judgment, and in so doing He rescues us from having to take that judgment. When you put your faith in Jesus Christ you can be redeemed from under the law because He's paid the penalty, the law demands death. The wages of sin is death, Christ paid the wages.

I was listening to a tape, Marv Rosenthal was sharing a wonderful illustration of this, he said there was a group of pioneers coming across America on the prairies and as they were moving between two mountains in this one area they saw a prairie fire coming at them, and of course those were just devastating and deadly. High winds were blowing the fire furiously at them and they could see the smoke and the flames moving their way and they were panicked because they had no way out. They couldn't go to either side and they couldn't escape fast enough in the rear. Finally the wagon master ran to the rear of the last wagon and furiously began to set a fire in the rear, and he got it started finally with the help of some others and the same wind that blew the fire toward them started blowing that fire away from them, and as the fire away from them began to move they backed their wagons up onto the place that was burned behind them, and finally they were on the already burned part and as the fire finally caught them of course that part being burned it went right around them and passed them by. And somebody asked them later on how they escaped the prairie fire and they said, it was easy we just stood where the tire had already been. That's the way it is at the cross of Christ, that's the place the fire has already been and if you stand there you can be redeemed from the consequence of the law, you see?

The second part of it is not negative but positive. He was man to die as man to redeem man, He was God in order that He might bring us to the family of God, adoption comes from the divine side. He had to be God to bring us into God's family, you see. He had to be God to have the right to say we could be a son. And so as sons of God we come into the adoption that gives us the inheritance. So two sides, negative, He redeemed us from the law, positive, He made us sons. Don't say the virgin birth isn't important, the virgin birth is absolutely important. If there's no virgin birth then Jesus isn't God, if Jesus isn't God then we are not redeemed, and we are not His sons. But if Jesus is God then He is virgin born, and ii He is virgin born Son of God then He can go to a cross as man and pay our penalty and He can come to us as God and make us His sons, you see?

That's Christmas. Not all the rest of this stuff, not Santa Claus, Christmas trees, bells and packages. God incarnate that's Christmas.

And if you don't know that and you don't know Him you don't have any Christmas, you just think you do. Let's pray together.

Father thank You for our time this morning, for clarifying again in our minds the meaning of this season of the year, Lord we thank You for the tremendous truth of the virgin birth of Christ. Oh God, our hearts go out to these folks that are with us this morning, because we know in our midst are some

dear precious people whom You love with an everlasting love, who are beloved to those perhaps sitting around them, but they don't know Jesus Christ. To them Christmas has no meaning at all really, it's another excuse to celebrate maybe, another time to be together with people they love but ultimately it has no meaning at all, Lord I pray today that this might be the day they open their heart and invite Jesus Christ in.

While your heads are bowed just silently in your heart I want you to kind of examine your own life, is Christ alive in you? Have you been redeemed from the consequence of sin, have you been made a son of God, adopted into His family? You can be just by asking, it's a gift. That's what Christmas is all about and the greatest gift you could receive this Christmas would be the gift of salvation, the gift of forgiveness, the gift of sonship, the gift of redemption.

Pray a simple prayer, won't you? Lord Jesus, I receive the gift, I receive the salvation You offer, redeem me from my sin, make me a son of God. Will you pray that prayer? I hope you did. Some of you have already done that, you can thank God for the salvation you already have.

Father even as we anticipate the wonder of tomorrow, as we enjoy it with those we love we pray Lord that we might never lose the real meaning for one moment, but that ever and always we might have hearts filled with thanksgiving for the wondrous gift of Jesus Christ, in whose name we pray, Amen.

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