

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

The Greatest Child Ever Born

Scripture: Luke 1:26-35

Code: 42-7

Those of you who are regularly a part of Grace Church know we are studying the gospel of Luke. We have just recently begun the gospel of Luke. And in our normal week-by-week study of Luke we find ourselves now at chapter 1 verse 26, by the good providences of God and I want you to open your Bible to chapter 1 verse 26. I'm not going to do the normal study of the text that I will do a few Sundays from now when we get back into this text, but I am going to use this text and sort of take a broad look at it to speak about the greatest child ever born.

What child's life, destiny, impact can be specifically and accurately described before the child has ever been conceived? Well, humanly speaking, none. What child ever had all the details of His nature, His character, His life, His accomplishments and His effect clearly laid out before He was born? Well, humanly speaking, none.

But on occasion God chooses to reveal the history of a life before it has ever lived, before a child is ever born, in some cases before a child is even conceived. And that is precisely what we find in the first chapter of Luke. As the gospel story unfolds, it unfolds with the intervention of heaven on a grand scale even if the scenario is simple, it is clearly supernatural. For the first time in 800 years a series of miracles begin to happen. For the first time in 500 years A miracle occurs. For the first time in over 400 years angels appear. For the first time in 400 years God speaks.

As the New Testament begins there is a flurry of supernatural activity. And one of the most remarkable demonstrations of the supernatural invasion that launches the New Testament is that God makes prophecies about people who are not yet born, not yet even conceived. God tells us things that only God could know.

First of all, the angel Gabriel came to a man named Zacharias and told him that he was going to have a son, he and his wife Elizabeth who were past child-bearing age, long passed. They were in their 60's, 70's or possibly their 80's. She had been barren and unable to have children all her life but they were going to have a child and he would have the name John. And verse 15 described the child who was not yet conceived. "He will be great in the sight of the Lord. He will drink no wine or liquor. He will be filled with the Holy Spirit while yet in his mother's womb and he will turn back many of the sons of Israel to the Lord their God. And it is he who will go as a forerunner before Him...that is before the Messiah...in the spirit and power of Elijah. He will turn the hearts of the fathers back to the children and the disobedient to the attitude of the righteous so as to make ready a people prepared for the

Lord." A remarkable, supernatural, description of a life not yet lived, a child not yet born not even conceived. Miraculously Zechariah and Elizabeth would conceive a child who would fulfill all this prophecy.

The angel Gabriel appears again in verse 26, in the sixth month of the pregnancy of Elizabeth. It was true, just as the angel said, she did conceive with her husband, Zacharias, even though they were past that capability humanly speaking. They had a child in her womb. The sixth month of her pregnancy the angel Gabriel returns with another prophecy of an incredible person to be born.

The angel comes to Galilee, a region, to the town of Nazareth, to a home in which there is a virgin engaged to a man named Joseph. Her name, Mary. And the angel says to her that she is favored by God and God will be with her so that she will conceive, verse 31 says, in her womb and bear a son and you shall call His name Jesus, He will be great and will be called the Son of the Most High and the Lord God will give Him the throne of His father David and He will reign over the house of Jacob forever, and His kingdom will have no end.

Here again a remarkable revelation from God about a child to be born. This is the most astonishing, the most amazing, the most startling, the most shocking words that have ever been spoken to any woman that a virgin will have a child. It says in Luke 2:23 that Joseph and Mary were amazed at the things which were being said about this child, two ordinary Jewish young people.

Mary would have been about 13 years of age and Joseph maybe 14 when the incredible word came from God that she would have a child. This child is described in verse 32, "He will be great, called the Son of the Most High, and He will sit on the throne of His father David."

When it says He will be great, what does it mean? Well, really glorious, it could be illustrious, noble, eminent, magnificent, distinguished. In His case, glorious. The greatest child ever born, He will be great, it says. Now it said in verse 15 that John the Baptist would be great in the sight of the Lord, that is God would impute to him a certain greatness. God would credit greatness to his account. But here it says of Jesus, He will be great, and it's unqualified. It isn't something God does for Him, it is something essential to His nature. The greatness of Jesus unfolded as He lived His life. His teaching was unlike any teaching that had ever been heard by anybody, "No man spoke as this man," they said. "No man ever taught with the authority with which He teaches." No man ever had the insights, the divine knowledge, the truth from God to the degree and the extent that this man did.

His miracles attested to His glorious greatness. He did miracle after miracle after miracle, both miracles of raising the dead, providing food for multitudes, walking on water. He also did healings. He basically banished illness from Palestine for the duration of His ministry. And not only that, He had total authority over the kingdom of darkness and cast out demons at will whenever He desired to do so. The greatest of all the miracles that attested to His greatness was that He was raised from the

dead. He with His own power shattered the bonds of death and the grave and came forth alive. This is the greatest child ever born.

Here's a humble couple. During their engagement time, waiting for the marriage, here comes the angel Gabriel in a divine invasion, the likes of which no one would ever imagine, to announce to this young girl that she is going to have this incredible child. In the humblest of circumstances, in the most non-descript of towns, in a place called Galilee which was far away from the centers of learning and religion, to this obscure woman comes this amazing angel with this word from God. Angels, miracles, revelations, prophecies, all bespeak God invading normal human history in a monumental way as the great truths of the New Testament begin to unfold.

We're going to go through this text in days ahead carefully, but for this morning I want to take an overview and simply ask one question...what are the components of the greatness of this child? He shall be great, yes. Why? What is it that defines His greatness?

First of all, He is God. This child is God. Verse 32, "He will be great and will be called the Son of the Most High." Over in verse 35 it says at the end of the verse, "He shall be called the Son of God." Luke refers to God as the Most High because that was a very familiar Jewish title given to God. He was the supreme one, the Most High, stressing His majestic sovereignty. This is a title, by the way, first used of God in Genesis, all the way back in the fourteenth chapter of Genesis, verse 18, He is called El Elyon, God Most High, God the supreme One, God the sovereign One, God who is above all. And from that first usage of El Elyon, it sweeps through the Old Testament and is used repeatedly to define God as the supreme being. No one is higher than God. Deuteronomy 32:8 says, "The Most High divided to the nations their inheritance." Psalm 47:2 says, "The Lord Most High is awesome, He is a great King over all the earth." And Daniel 4 talks about the Most High God being the true King of Kings. It shows us that the Most High God is the sovereign over all peoples and nations.

In 2 Samuel 22:14 it says, "The Lord thundered from heaven and the Most High uttered His voice." And It also speaks of clouds and water and skies and lightnings and thunders indicating that the Most High not only rules over men but He rules over nature. Psalm 7 verse 17, Psalm 9:2 says, "Sing praise to the Most High because He is sovereign over the unrighteous." Psalm 21:7 speaks of the mercy of the Most High which is given to those who trust Him to show He is sovereign over not only the unrighteous but the righteous. Psalm 46:4 refers to the tabernacles of the Most High as places of security and protection. He is the sovereign protector of His people who are called in Daniel 7:18 the saints of the Most High. Lamentations 3:37 and 38 says He is the sovereign over all that is evil and all that is good.

So, it is a title of sovereign majesty over everything, all people, all creation, all that is good, all that is evil, all that exists. He is sovereign over all of it. And this little baby is the Son of that sovereign Most High God.

Now what is such a title intended to say? Nothing less than the obvious. Jesus bears the same essence as God. "I am My Father's Son, I bear His characteristics, I bear His nature, it's in the DNA, it's in the chromosomes. I am the product genetically of My Father. I have the same nature as My Father. And that's essential what is being said here. This is the Son of the Most High. This is one who bears the essence of God. This is God, fully God. Hebrews 1:3 says He is the exact reproduction of God, exact and that is very, very specific terminology. He is the radiance of God's glory and the exact reproduction of God's nature.

No writer ever made more of an issue of this than John. John tells us that Jesus repeatedly said that He had a right to do what ever He wanted on the Sabbath because He, like God, was Lord of the Sabbath. He said that He and His Father were one. He said that any man who knows Me knows My Father, who knows the Father knows Me. He said anyone who honors Me honors the Father, anyone who truly honors the Father honors Me. He said if you've seen Me you've seen the Father. He said in John chapter 8, chapter 5 both that He was equal in power, equal in authority, equal in judgment, equal in works, equal in honor with God the Father. In every sense Jesus is God. That's why over in verse 43 of Luke 1 it is said, "And how it has happened to me that the mother of my Lord should come to me?" This isn't the mother of just someone human, this is the mother of the Lord Himself. Chapter 2 of Luke and verse 11, "Today in the city of David there has been for you a Savior who is Christ the Lord." When the angel came to Joseph to announce to Joseph the engaged-to-be husband of Mary, the angel said to Joseph, "This child will be called Immanuel," EI, those two words, E and L is God in Hebrew, this is God with us...God with us.

Philippians 2 records the apostle Paul writing that He was in the form of God but sought it...thought it not something to hold on to, but gave it up, yielded it up, and took upon Him the form of a man." First Timothy 3:16 says, "Jesus was God manifested in the flesh." That's at the heart of our Christian faith. This child is God.

Those who wrote the great hymns of Christmas know it. They've always known it. Our carols celebrate it. "Joy to the world the Lord is come." "Yea, Lord, we great Thee, born this happy morning. Come adore on bended knee Christ the Lord, Christ by highest heaven adored, Christ the everlasting Lord, veiled in flesh the Godhead see, hail the incarnate deity." "Jesus, our Immanuel." "Yet in the dark street shineth the ever lasting light." "O come with us, abide with us, Our Lord Immanuel." The carol says, "Jesus, Lord at Thy birth, Incense own, a deity nigh, the virgin sweet boy is the Lord of the earth," "Word of the Father now in flesh appearing." "How that in Bethlehem was born the Son of God by name." "God with man is now residing, suddenly the Lord descending." The carol says, "Thou didst leave Thy throne and Thy kingly crown when Thou camest to earth for me." "And the Father gave His Son, His own beloved One." The Son of the Most High, Son of God, God in human flesh. This amazing child is God come down.

Secondly, He is God, He is man. Back to verse 31 of this text, the most incredible message ever given to a woman, "Behold, you will conceive in your womb and bear a son and shall name Him Jesus." You will conceive in your womb. This woman was a virgin. It tells us in verse 27, a virgin. As I said, she would have been about 13 years of age, very likely. She affirms her virginity when she asks in verse 34, "Mary said to the angel, 'How can this be since I am a virgin?'" How can it be? Physical conception without a man? How can that be?

But that's what happened. Chapter 2 verse 7, "She gave birth to her firstborn son. She wrapped Him in cloths and laid Him in a manger cause there was no room for them at the inn."

Let me tell you something about the birth of Jesus. The conception was supernatural, the rest followed the normal course. The miracle is in the conception, that a woman would become pregnant without a man. That's the miracle, that the Holy Spirit would overshadow, that the Holy Spirit would do the miracle of fertilizing an egg in the womb of a woman without a man. Unheard of, never happened, never will happen in human history apart from this. Physical conception without a man. But after that there was a normal nine-month development of that little life in the womb of that mother until she gave birth and it was a normal birth, just like every other child is born. Normal nine months, normal birth...this is truly a man, human.

Mary actually had other children later on in the same manner with the exception of the conception. She carried them in her womb and she gave birth to them. They were human and He was human. And so it tells us, verse 7 of chapter 2, she gave birth to her firstborn son, just like all women give birth in the same manner. Verse 12, the shepherds were told you'll find a baby, not an extraterrestrial, a baby in a manger. Verse 21, when eight days were completed, before His circumcision, His name was then called Jesus...the name given by the angel before He was conceived in the womb. He was conceived in the womb, she carried Him for nine months, she gave birth and eight days He was circumcised like all other Jewish children. They wanted Him to be a child of the law. He was born a man, therefore Galatians 4:4 says He was born of a woman, born under the law.

In verse 40 of chapter 2, the child continued to grow like all children grow, normal bone developed, normal tissue development, cardio-vascular development, became strong and growing increased in wisdom and the grace of God was upon Him, or the favor of God. Verse 52, He kept increasing in wisdom and stature, favor with God and man, growing intellectually, growing physically, growing spiritually, growing socially. Just like all other children grow. His human growth was normal. That's why He can be a sympathetic High Priest, He was in all points tempted as we are. He's touched with the feelings of our infirmities. He knows what it is to be human. He was born just like everyone else is born.

Hebrews 2:17 and 18 says He had to be made like His brethren in all things, He had to be in order that He might be a substitute for us. If there was to be a substitute for men, it had to be a man...a man to die for men...a man to suffer the sufferings that humans suffer. He became our sympathizer, a merciful and faithful High Priest. He was hungry. He was thirsty. He was overcome with fatigue. He slept. He was taught. He grew. He loved. He was astonished. He was glad. He was angry. He was indignant. He was sarcastic. He was grieved. He was troubled. He was overcome by future events. He exercised faith. He read the Scriptures. He prayed. He sighed in His heart when He saw someone in illness. He cried when His heart ached, just like we cry. He felt what we feel. He felt physical pain, physical hurt. He bled, He suffered, He died. He felt temptation to a degree that we could not possibly experience because we cave in at some point and He never did, so all temptation ran its full course. That's why 1 Timothy 2:5 calls Him the Man, Christ Jesus. He was not some apparition. He was not some spiritual entity. As I said, He was not someone from another dimension, He was one of us.

His parents actually were astonished and so was everybody else that a son could be born without a human father, conceived by the Holy Spirit and still be human. Verse 37, however, says nothing is impossible with God. God could give a child to Zacharias and Elizabeth when they couldn't bear a child. Why couldn't God give a child to Mary without a husband? This child is fully man...fully man.

And you know, the Christmas carol writers through the ages have recognized that. "Holy infant, so tender and mild...Word of the Father now in flesh appearing...See Him in the manger lay...a baby like any baby...veiled in flesh, the Godhead see...what child is this who laid to rest on Mary's lap is sleeping?...the babe, the son of Mary...but of lowly birth didst Thou come to earth in greatest humility." The carol says He was born of David's line, another one says He was an offspring of the virgin's womb. It says He was pleased as man with men to well...Jesus our Immanuel...For Christ is born of Mary. God and Man, that's who He was and the only time God ever came into the world in human form.

Thirdly, this wonderful announcement by Gabriel by Mary tells us that He was not only God and Man but He was sinless, holy. Look at verse 35, toward the end of the verse it says, "The holy offspring,"...the holy offspring, the Most High is going to overshadow you, the Spirit is going to come upon you to make this possible, and this child is called "The holy offspring."

I have to tell you the truth, you've never had one of those. All we ever have is unholy offspring. It's true. Never before and never since has a mother held in her arms a holy child. Now John the Baptist was filled with the Holy Spirit, does tell us that even from his mother's womb back in verse 15, but that's not to say he was holy. What is a holy child like?

Well I can only know that by contrast. It's not like I was or any children I've had or any grandchildren have had. And it's not like any children that I know, or you know.

I mean what...what is a holy child? Never a moment of unhappiness did He cause, never a wrong thought, never a bad attitude, never an unkind word, never an act of disrespect, never a disobedient motion or movement, never a wrong attitude, never a thoughtless, unkind or selfish act. Umph..... He produced wonder and awe and worship.

I can imagine when Jesus was a two-year-old He took whatever was on a shelf...shouldn't have but didn't know that and I cannot imagine though that when His mother said....He put it back. A holy offspring.

As often as you look at your children you see the heartbreaking proof that your child has not been born as Mary's child was born. And I think God brings them into the world so lovely, they smell good, they feel good, they're irresistible. And I think that's really important because we've got to start off with some attractiveness. And so that depravity is wrapped in the sweetest package. But as you look at your child and as you feel in your innermost heart, your child's fretfulness, quarrelsomeness, rudeness, sulkiness, impudence, pride, anger, unbroken will, rebellion, disrespect, you know you do not have a holy offspring. The challenge of parenting is to pray passionately and relentlessly that your child may become holy. Pray without ceasing that your child may be justified and sanctified.

But this was a holy offspring. No child had ever been without the need of discipline. No child had ever been without the need of correction. No child had ever been without the need of forgiveness and restoration and salvation but this child. Jesus even said, unlike American politicians, which of you convicts me of sin? Look at the record, examine every inch of My life, you won't find any sin. And 2 Corinthians 5:21 calls Him, "Him who knew no sin." And Hebrews 7:26 says, "He was holy, harmless, undefiled and separate from sinners." And Hebrews 4:15 says, "He was without sin."

Since Cain and Abel, all children have been unholy offspring. The Holy Spirit took the substance of Mary, the physical substance of Mary and strained out the sin creating a holy child. Peter's mother had no holy child. Paul's mother had no holy child. John's mother had no holy child. In fact, the apostle Paul testified that the whole body of death was waging war all his life, but Jesus is called in Acts 4:27 and 30 "your holy servant Jesus." Holiness in the matter of body and spirit. The Lord Jesus...listen to this...began where we will end. He entered in holy, we won't know that holiness until we exist. He was holy from the day of His birth.

At His birth He entered into full holiness. At our birth we entered into full sinfulness. He began where we will end. And, you know, that's too a part of the great music of Christmas. Morning stars together proclaim Thy holy birth...holy infant so tender and mild...radiant beams from thy holy face. The church has always recognized "O holy child of Bethlehem, descend to us, we pray...But in

Bethlehem's home was there found no room for Thy holy nativity." This isn't some recent understanding of Christ. This is what His people have always believed, amazing child, God, Man, holy.

Fourthly, the angel Gabriel introduces to Mary that the child will be sovereign Lord...sovereign Lord or King. In verse 32 it says, "The Lord God will give Him the throne of His father David," and in verse 33, "He will reign over the house of Jacob forever and His Kingdom will have no end." The house of Jacob means Israel. He will not only rule Israel but He will have an eternal Kingdom over all. He will be King. He was born a King. If you look at the genealogy in Matthew chapter 1, it is the genealogy of His father Joseph and it descends from David. If you look at the genealogy of Luke 3, it is most likely the genealogy of His mother Mary and it too descends from David. He was born of royal blood and had there been at the time the Davidic monarchy in place in Israel rather than a stranger, a foreigner, an Edomite king by the name of Herod on the throne and Roman occupation, had there been the throne of David in existence, He would have been one who was in line for the throne. He received royal blood from His mother and a right to rule from His father who carried that right to pass on even to an adopted child. He was born a king in every sense.

The magi from the east, Matthew 2, recognized that and they came all the way from the east, they were the Oriental Chaldean king-makers and they were looking for a great king who could come and rule that part of the world. And they came to the Christ child, led by God by means of a remarkable phenomenon in the sky, the great star that brought them to the King. He was a King. He would be given a Kingdom not only over Israel, but over the world and forever.

This is the fulfillment of the prophecy of 2 Samuel 7 where the prophet Nathan speaks for God to tell David that David will not be allowed to build the temple of God. David won't have that privilege cause David's hands are bloody from as many wars, but God will raise up from David's loins a son, namely Solomon, and Solomon will build God a temple. And Solomon did build the great Solomonic temple, but beyond that there will come one greater than David and greater than Solomon who will build the Davidic house forever, and that is a Messianic prophecy of 2 Samuel chapter 7. Jesus came to fulfill that. He is the Messiah. He is the One who will be given the throne of His father David, and He will have a spiritual Kingdom, an earthly Kingdom, and an eternal Kingdom. And we'll look at that in more detail when we study the specifics of the passage. This child is the King of Kings and Lord of Lords, the great Monarch of all monarchs. The word "Christ" means "anointed one," and has primary reference to His kingship. As I said, His father was in the line of David, His mother was in the line of David, He had the right to rule. He had royal blood. He also had authority from God to rule and in the appropriate time He will be the King of a renewed universe. Now He is a King in the spiritual realm, ruling over the hearts and lives of those who are His. Some day He will take His authority in the world and establish an eternal Kingdom.

He came a King, humblest of surrounding. Can you imagine? He was in a stinky, smelly barn lying in a feed trough surrounded by animals. The humblest imaginable condition to a humble non-descript young couple was given the greatest King the world will ever know.

We understand that. We understand that He is a King. Pilate said, "Are you a king?" He said, "You said it, I'm a king. You don't understand My Kingdom cause it's not of this world." They treated Him as a criminal, but He was a King. "Joy to the world the Lord is come, let earth receive her King...Joy to the earth a Savior reigns, come and behold Him, born the King of angels...come adore on bended knee Christ the Lord, the newborn King...born a King in Bethlehem's plain...gold I bring to crown Him again...King forever, ceasing never over the world to reign...that's a great carol. Hark the herald angels sing, glory to the newborn King...King and God and sacrifice this...this is Christ the King of Kings salvation brings...let loving hearts enthrone Him...born to reign in us forever...now Thy gracious kingdom bring...rule in all our hearts alone...raise us to Thy glorious throne...come and worship, come and worship, come and worship Christ the newborn King. That simple carol for the manger of Bethlehem cradles a King and we greet in His cradle our Savior and King. Peace on earth, good will to men from heaven's all gracious King. This is no ordinary child. This is God, Man, holy, sovereign.

Finally, and this is where it has to come for us. He is Savior, verse 31, it says, "You'll bear a Son and you shall name Him Jesus." You shall name Him Jesus and they did. They named Him Jesus when He was born, just as they had been instructed.

Is that important? It is. When the angel appeared to Joseph, appearing first to Mary and later to Joseph, Joseph was very troubled. How could this sweet young girl who had just reached puberty, a virgin girl be pregnant? Joseph...Joseph was floored, overwhelmed, no doubt heartsick and was trying to figure out whether he should divorce her or take her life. The Old Testament called for, Deuteronomy, the death of an engaged person who engaged in sexual sin. He decided that his love for her, his respect, wouldn't allow him to see her executed and so he would opt to put her away. And then an angel came and said, "Hold it, that which is in her is conceived by the Holy Spirit. She has not been unfaithful, she is still a virgin and she will bring forth a Son."

And the angel said to Joseph, Matthew chapter 1 verse 21, "You shall call His name Jesus for He shall...what?...save His people from their sins." Jesus is a great name. It means...Jesus means Jehovah saves, it's the Old Testament name Joshua, or better Jeshua...Jeshua. You hear people talk about the Messiah as Jeshua. Jeshua, Jehovah saves, the Savior has come. And for the only time in the gospels of Matthew, Mark and Luke in chapter 2 and verse 11 it uses that word. "Today in the city of David there has been born for you a Savior...a Savior." Be my example, yes...and my bride, my friend, yes everything beside, but first, last and best whatever betide, be though to me a Savior.

I can stand back and admire God in human flesh. I can stand back and admire the perfect Man Jesus. I can stand back and admire the sinless, holy One. I can admire Him for His sovereign kingship. But the only way I can ever know Him is if He will forgive my sins. And He came to do just that.

There were two old folks in the temple when His parents brought Him there. In Luke 2, an old man by the name of Simeon, and old Simeon took Jesus in His arms, that little baby, in verse 28 and blessed God and said, "Now, Lord, Thou doest let Thy bondservant depart in peace according to Thy word...I can die now...for my eyes have seen Thy salvation which Thou hast prepared in the presence of all peoples, a light of revelation to the Gentiles and the glory of Thy people Israel." And Simon...Simeon was saying this is not just the Savior of Israel, this is the Savior of the world...the world.

Simeon's peace, the Savior has come. Christ came to the world, 1 Timothy 1:15, to save sinners. Luke 19:10, Jesus said, "I'm come to seek and to save that which is lost." He is the Savior and that meant He had to go to the cross and provide a ransom for sin. He had to be our substitute and die on a cross in our place so that God having been satisfied that our sins were paid for could then give us forgiveness. It never would have been enough if He had just come as the God/Man, the sinless sovereign if He didn't die and rise again. And that's why the Christmas carols make so much of that...Christ the Savior is born...Christ the Savior is born, they say...every year we sing to you in David's town...this day is born of David's line the Savior who is Christ the Lord...we sing joy to the world, the Savior reigns...peace on earth and mercy mild, God and sinners...what?...reconciled...born to raise the sons of earth, born to give them second birth...then let us all with one accord sing praises to the heavenly Lord who hath made heaven and earth of naught and with His blood mankind hath bought. Another carol says...The King of kings salvation brings...we remember these words, Good Christian men rejoice with heart and soul and voice, now ye need not fear the grave, Christ was born to save, Christ was born to save, Christ was born to save...Remember Christ our Savior was born on Christmas day to save us all from Satan's power when we were gone astray...Thou camest, O Lord, with the living word that shall set Thy people free but with mocking scorn and with crown of thorn they led Thee to Calvary.

Well, it's the sum of it all. An astonishing announcement, there will be a child, a virgin-born child, God, Man, sinless, sovereign, Savior...that's the child. Because of the greatness of this child we are invited to worship Him. Many of the songs we sing at this time of the year do that...O come let us adore Him...and let us all of one accord sing praises to our heavenly Lord...come rich and poor to own Him...the King of kings salvations brings, let loving hearts enthrone Him...O holy child of Bethlehem, descend to us, we pray, cast out our sin and enter in, be born in us today...O come to us, abide with us, O Lord Immanuel. I love that line, O come to my heart, Lord, Jesus, there's room in my heart for Thee...Be near me, Lord Jesus, I ask Thee to stay close by me forever, and love me, I pray...bless all the dear children in Thy tender care, and take us to heaven to dwell with Thee there.

There's a reason these songs last. There's a reason they've been around generation after generation after generation and that is because they accurately reflect the truth of the Christmas story. This is not something new. This isn't something modern. This isn't something we recently invented. This is the age-old truth that flows so clearly out of the Scripture.

Who is this child? The most astonishing child ever given to parents is still amazing. Think about it. Mary must have been amazed at what she heard. She must have been amazed when never having known her husband physically she became pregnant. She must have been continually amazed to contemplate and ponder what was in her womb as it grew. She must have been amazed when the day of birth came and that little life came out. She must have been amazed when she wrapped that little life and looked into the face of that God/Man and laid Him in a manger. She must have been amazed as she nursed and cared for that little life in those early days. She must have been amazed when shepherds came, and later when wise men came.

She must have been amazed as she contemplated what was going on in the early years when as a toddler the God/Man moved through her life and the life of her husband Joseph. She must have been astounded at His holiness, at the absence of any sin in His life. She must have been astonished at it all. She must have been amazed that day when her heart was pierced and she stood at the foot of the cross and saw what was going on to this holy offspring. Equally amazed at the resurrection and when she gathered in the Upper Room with the 120 disciples and received the Holy Spirit in the launch of the church she must have continually been amazed. And she must have told the amazing reality of all of that to Luke whom she, no doubt, met and who wrote this account and may well have had first-hand information from Mary herself.

Joseph, too, must have been amazed and astonished all the way along from the very outset when an angel came to him, a remarkable thing that didn't happen to anybody and it happened to him. And he was to be the earthly father, the adopted father of the God/Man, the holy, sovereign Savior. He must have been amazed at everything that the child did, everything that the young man did. He must have been amazed at everything Him. He must have been amazed to see Him pick up a tool and use it in the carpenter shop in Nazareth. He must have been amazed at how He treated His friends and the people and the society around Him.

Elizabeth was amazed and Zacharias was amazed and the family friends were amazed and it was all amazing. If they were amazed, how amazed should we be when they didn't even know the whole story, did they? They were just looking at the front end, here we are, we know it all. They just knew He'd be a Savior at the first, that was amazing enough. They didn't understand all that meant. They didn't understand what it meant yet to go to the cross and to rise from the dead. They didn't understand what it meant to extend the gospel to the ends of the earth. They knew they had one that would be a King, they didn't understand that...what that meant, they hadn't heard Jesus preach the

Olivet Discourse. They hadn't read the book of Revelation. There was no book of Revelation till long after they were dead. They didn't know what the fullness of His Kingdom was going to be like. They didn't know that one day He would rule on this earth for 1000 years and following that He would uncreate the world and create a new heaven and a new earth in which He would be the sovereign forever.

If they had reason to be amazed, we have more reason to be amazed. Don't we? Cause we have the fullness of the revelation of the greatness of the child. At some point that amazement must turn to faith in which we embrace Him as the God/Man, the sinless Savior who will some day be the sovereign King of the universe. I trust that you know Him as Savior, the One who forgives your sins by His mercy and His grace.

Father, we know this great story so well. It's so familiar to us and yet we never cease to tell it again with wonder. Thank You, thank You for this great revelation which helps us to clearly understand unmistakably identify who Jesus Christ is. It is absolutely beyond understanding that He would come to His own, the Jewish nation and with all of this information they would reject Him, execute Him. That He would be known to the Gentile world, the Romans, who would participate in the execution. It's unthinkable that with this clarity of Scripture cults would arise, denying that there is a trinity, denying that the second member of the trinity came into the world as the God/Man, denying that He provided a salvation which is offered free to any who will believe and receive it cause the Word is so clear. And as we gather in our memory all these Christmas songs and hymns and carols from...from all the centuries, we are reminded of how clear the message is, how well told the years and years of music coming from all parts of the world and all languages, the story is so clear. This amazing child, God, Man, sinless, sovereign, Savior...and may we adore Him, may we worship Him as our Savior and our King. Amen.

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