

IMPLICATIONS OF A CELEBRATION

By

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To celebrate the birth of Christ is far more significant than is realized by a great many who revel in the celebration but fail to connect it with the issues that affect life and society.

The tradition carols and pageantry that go with Christmas are filled with the supernatural. Remove the miraculous star, the appearance s of the angel Gabriel, the trauma of a supernatural pregnancy and the whole event would soon disappear from the calendar.

From outside the scientifically known world of man, another Man invaded the human realm. He was not the product of man's will or action; rather, he came in spite of man's purposes and designs. He was not born in the normal process of reproduction. His conception was entirely without any human act or will at all. The holy Spirit acted completely independently of any human thought or design to "overshadow" the woman and cause her to conceive to bring this life — life from outside the material world — into the stream of humanity.

The familiar carols reflect this truth. "Silent Night" speaks of "yon virgin mother and child." Another describes Jesus as "Word of the Father, now in flesh appearing." "Hark the Herald Angels Sing" tells of "God and sinners reconciled...Offspring of the virgin's womb...Veiled in flesh the Godhead see, Hail the 'incarnate Deity. Pleased as man with men to dwell...mild He lays His glory by, Born that man no more may die...Rise, the woman's seed, Bruise in us the serpent's head." It is no wonder that the ACLU and the ADL are so persistent in trying to rid the nation of these songs. If one believes what the carols say, he cannot accept the world view of atheistic humanism.

If Christ was born according to the record given in the Gospels as the Western world has always acknowledged, then a great many issues of our day are settled.

The birth of Jesus settles the issue of abortion. He was Jesus, the Christ, in the womb of Mary *before* the birth.

It settles the issue of morals and ethics. No longer can we arbitrarily select our own standard of what is right and wrong. "For the grace of God has appeared...instructing us to the intent that denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly and righteously and godly in this present world" (Titus 2:11-12).

It settles the issue of law. It was never intended that a few men should sit down together and out of their own minds and wills determine for all others what is lawful and what is not. This can come only from the One who created man, and with the birth of Jesus it has been not only declared from His lips but also personalized and exemplified for all to see. "The word that I spoke, the same shall judge him in the last day" (John 12:48).

The issue of religion is settled by Christ's entrance into the world. Prophets and charismatic gurus may speak in other worldly tones and establish religions which captivate million. But Jesus is the only One who came from the eternal world of heaven to give the authentic message of God. All others, in spite of their influence and following, are only false prophets.

The question of immortality is settled in Christ's birth. He was born a mortal baby and died as mortal man. He became flesh and blood because he was to take the place of flesh and blood humanity under the sentence of death for sin. "Since then the children are sharers in flesh and blood, he also himself in like manner partook of the same; that through death he might bring to nought him that had the power of death, that is, the devil; and might deliver all them who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage" (Heb. 2:13-15). The Son of God came as mortal man because man is mortal.

Scripture says absolutely nothing of an "immortal soul" but clearly states that death awaits all except those who are redeemed from sin by Christ. Jesus said that He came into the world to give life. Man has no inherent immortality; life must be received from the Creator. Coming directly from the Father, Jesus declared, "Even so the Son also gives life to whom he will." He said that all who believe in Him "should have eternal life; and I will raise him up at the last day" (John 5:21, 6:40).

It is a strange phenomenon that so many who celebrate the birth of One who strongly claimed that eternal life depended on a relationship to Him, at the same time advocate the tradition of endless torture for most of the human race, a tradition based on Greek mythology and not on the clear statements of Scripture. Christ took on mortality because man is mortal and Christ died for our sins because the wages (punishment) of sin is death.

The birth of Jesus is a clear refutation of humanism. Those who continue to advocate the world view of Humanism and yet join in the celebration of Christ's birth must be seen as rank hypocrites, for Christ came to authenticate a world view that irrefutably denies Humanism. Humanism is the world view that believes that man is the measure of all things, that there is no higher being or intelligence to instruct and order our lives. Jesus' birth was the disclosure of this higher being and intelligence. He claimed that he came from heaven, that, in fact, He was sent from the Father in heaven, and that it is imperative that man hear and obey His voice.

The supernatural entrance of Christ into the stream of human life is a demonstration of the fact that God is not a vague power somewhere out there who cannot or will not intervene in the affairs of man, but that He is a person whose chief concern is His creatures and that He not only can intervene in human affairs but that He has done so in the most deliberate, intimate and supernatural way that can be imagined and will do so again.

To celebrate Christ's birth is to celebrate the reality of God. It is to admit that man is not self-sufficient, that he cannot, as humanism teaches, reach a state of peace and happiness by his own power and intelligence.

It is to celebrate man's creature-ship, that he is God's creation, the principle object of God's concern and purpose.

It is a celebration of life, the promise of immortality that is made possible only through the coming of Christ, His death and resurrection.

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