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By Dr. Matthew Crandall, Dean of Students,
Master's International School of Divinity



As I sit here with my parents, enjoying my thanksgiving break, I am struck by how fast the time has gone from Labor Day until now. Oh, I know that there's twenty-four hours in a day ... but with all that has occurred in my life of late, it doesn't feel like it's Thanksgiving weekend at all.

Now we are looking at Christmas, staring us right in the eye (in a metaphoric sense, of course) and I find myself wondering what exactly we were thankful for over this Thanksgiving. Family, friends, and loved ones, certainly. Oh, as a citizen of the United States I have a lot to be thankful for. I have the ability to worship freely, I can own a Bible. I have a wonderful ministry with Master's International School of Divinity. I have an mp3 player with a lot of Christian music on it, and I don't have to worry about it getting confiscated by my government. These are just my Christian liberties; I also have the ability to vote, freely assemble, and so forth. Many good men and women have died for those rights.

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Voting and Christmas Shopping Where It Counts

Dennis D. Frey, Th.D., President, Master's International School of Divinity

There is one way in which every citizen votes ...



every citizen. Not everyone goes into a voting booth on Election Day. Not every citizen attends a political caucus. Not every citizen gives money or volunteers time to a favored candidate. But every citizen votes in at least one way. Every citizen spends money, and money is a vote ... each and every penny.

In fact, it may be argued that the vote of the dollar is sometimes the most powerful vote of all. **The American Family Association** <www.afa.net> has proven that Christians can vote with their dollars and win. This brings us to the point ... Christmas shopping where it counts. Where you choose to spend your hard earned dollars will also be where you vote. If you patronize business and companies that are "Christian friendly" you will be casting a vote to keep them in business.

On the other hand, if you invest your vote in stores that refuse the Salvation Army a spot to post collection volunteers or products made by companies that support godless agendas, then you are helping to support the demise of your own core values. This is an area where Christians need to be savvy, very savvy.



Before you do your dollar voting this Christmas, ask yourself a question, "Is this the best use of my vote?" If not, then go elsewhere or buy something else. If you are not sure, ask your pastor or another person that you can trust to give you a straight answer.

If we use our dollar vote wisely, perhaps we can ring in the New Year without some of the companies and products that are contributing to the decline of moral values in our nation, and help to ensure the economic success of those that are on our page morally and ethically. Just like voting in any election, sometimes the choices are not so clear cut, and we may have to make a value judgment, but let's be smart about the vote this Christmas. It's our duty as permanent citizens of a heavenly country, and as responsible citizens of our temporal country.



Why Jesus' Name Is Controversial At the Celebration of His Own Birth

Dennis D. Frey, Th.D., President,
Master's International School of Divinity



Most Christians are mystified at the resistance to the celebration of Jesus' birth during the season that has born His name for nearly

twenty centuries, and understandably so. However, as the population of the United States of America becomes more diverse and less Christian, we can expect more of the same ... much more.

A quick look back at Biblical prophecy provides a clue as to why this may be so. Consider this verse from the writings of St. Paul, "*As it is written, Behold, I lay in Sion a stumbling stone and rock of offence: and whosoever believeth on Him shall not be ashamed*" (Romans 9:33 KJV). Christians must ever be mindful of the fact that the very name of Jesus brings offense, and causes men to stumble. His Good News is foolishness to them that are perishing. It is only to those who believe on Him that He is the sweet aroma of life itself. To the rest, He brings condemnation and the specter of death.

His Good News is foolishness to them that are perishing. It is only to those who believe on Him that He is the sweet aroma of life itself.

What we Christians believe is that everyone who accepts in saving faith Jesus as Lord has life everlasting, but those who reject Him are under a sentence of eternal death.

This makes unbelievers uncomfortable, and so it ought. I know that I never had a single day of real peace and freedom from fear until I was born again though the power of His blood. The

very name of Jesus is a stone and a rock that presents an obstacle to those who refuse His offer of grace. *(continued on next page)*





PERSPECTIVES

("Why Jesus' Name Is Controversial At the Celebration of His Own Birth" - continued)

Imagine this: Try saying among a crowd of strangers the following (and at the top of your voice) "Do you know who I love the most in this entire world? I love (now insert here one of the following) my wife, my parents, my cat, my new car, my favorite sports team or any other thing you may prefer most!" What kind of a reaction do you expect you would get? Now try the same thing but substitute "The Lord Jesus Christ!" What kind of a reaction do you suppose you might expect?

Yes, we all know that the name of Jesus is different from any other name on earth or under heaven. It is a powerful name. Demons tremble at His name. There is coming a day when every sentient moral being who has ever lived will bow the knee and verbally confess that Jesus Christ is indeed the King of kings and the Lord of lords.

However, that day is yet to come, and in the meantime we have this Christmas season through which to pass. I shall pass it in joyful exultation of His name. Others will pass it trying not to say even the word "Christmas", but one thing will be true; love Him or reject Him, for the next several weeks the peoples of the world will be either saluting His name or stumbling over it. Join me won't you in a great salutation of the One whose name is Jesus!





There's value in the Journey

by Jason Davis, Registrar,
Master's International School of Divinity

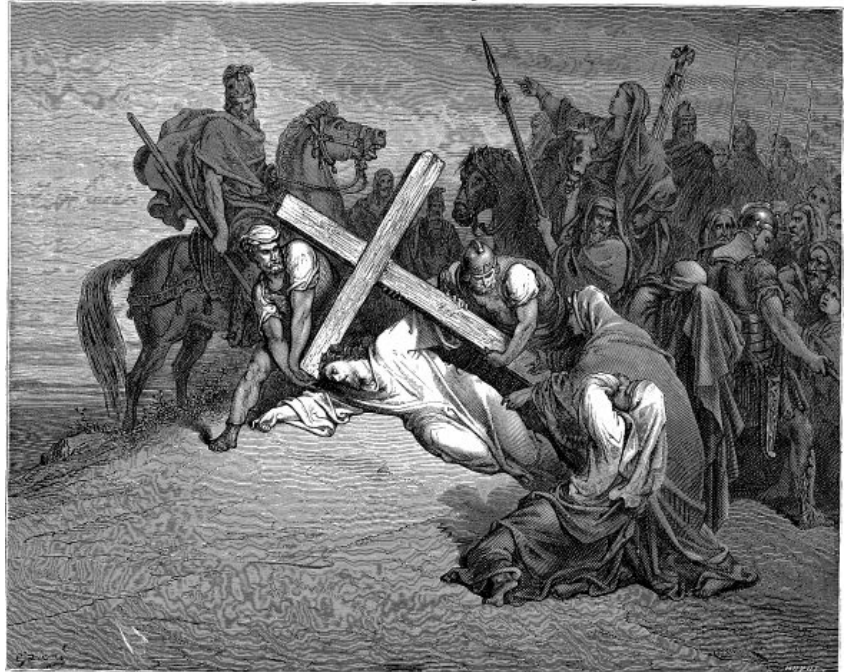


In my office I have an inspirational picture that my parents bought me when I accepted my first full-time employment after graduating college. On the picture it reads “*Success is a journey, not a destination.*” Some fourteen years later, and having traveled along my own journey thus far, I am starting to see the wisdom presented to me by this simple phrase. But the success I am thinking about today is not that of earthly success. I am thinking about the spiritual success of a life spent in service to Christ. We all think fondly to the final destination of Heaven and being with Him, but perhaps there is a hidden value in walking with him in the here and now that we should explore.

Walking with the Lord is not an easy task. It requires discipline, commitment, sacrifice of self, and trust in Him. When we examine the life of Christ, it can be seen as a journey from the cradle to the cross. Each step he took, starting with the first unsteady toddler waddles, through to the final anguished steps up Golgotha, were taken with purpose and service in mind. Have you ever considered that Jesus could have come to earth as a grown man? He could have come down and made himself a sacrifice the very same day. But he did not! Why? I believe it is for the sake of the journey.

Early on we see a pattern emerge in God calling men and women to a journey. God's call of Abram: “Get thee out of thy country,

“The Arrival at Calvary” by Gustave Doré



and from thy kindred, and from thy father's house, unto a land that I will show thee” (Gen. 12:1). God could have blessed him in his own land. Made a mighty nation of Abram there in the land of Ur, but He did

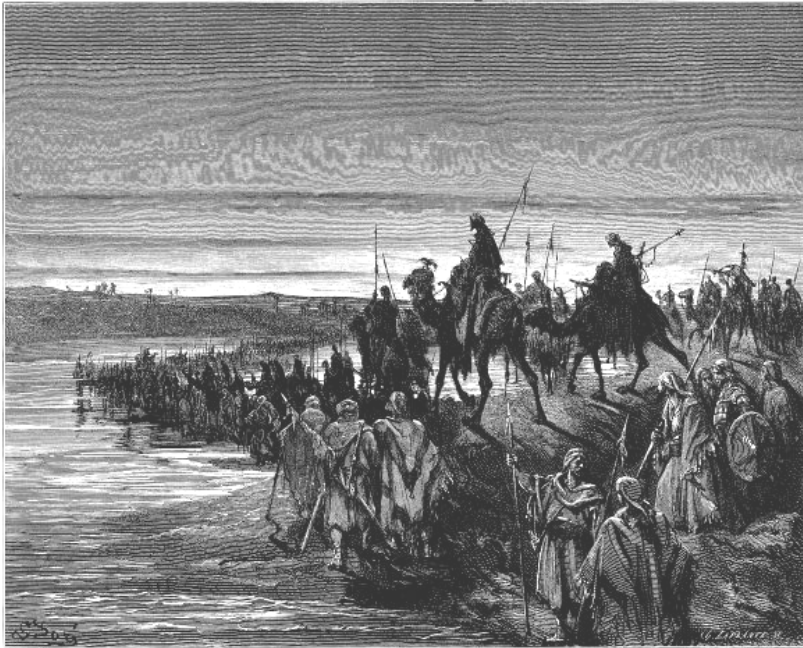


EDITORIAL

(*"There's value in the Journey" - continued*)

not. Why? Because somewhere in the journey with the Lord Abram, the exalted father, became Abraham, a friend of God. Later in Genesis we read where God, through the family of Jacob, brings His

"The Children of Israel Crossing Jordan" by Gustave Doré



people out of the chosen land and saves them with the wealth of Egypt. Their journey there was facilitated by their brother Joseph, a slave who became ruler by walking with the Lord in all circumstances. In Exodus we witness a group of slaves become a nation through a forty year journey through the desert. A journey that was preceded by God's spirit manifested both day and night. His presence was with them, and they were changed because of it.

In the New Testament we read about Jesus calling his disciples: "Come. Follow me" he says. For three years he travels, eats, sleeps, laughs, and weeps with them. He teaches

them, admonishes them, and prepares them for his departure. The journey with Christ can lead to the Mount of Transfiguration, to the feeding of the multitudes with scraps, to walking on water, and seeing numerous healings and resurrections of the dead! It also means no place to lay your head. No earthly certainty of provision for tomorrow. It certainly means persecution, ridicule, and alienation by friends and family. But it was the journey that made his twelve disciples such effective evangelists when he left them to their task of making "disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit" (Matthew 28:19).

And now it is our turn. The journey is still available. The Lord waits at the door of our life to take that first step down a path that leads where we don't know. But we can go with Him because we have faith in Him. And that faith is based on "the assurance of things hoped for, the conviction of things not seen" (Hebrews 11:1). The hope and conviction comes from the testimony of those who have gone before us; those who have trusted in the call to come and follow to a place not known yet. They were men and women who experienced the journey and found success. Not always earthly success, but a greater success: "Be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life" (Revelation 2:10). God alone can give true life, and that life is worth the journey!



REFLECTIONS

The Nativity in Images: Remembering When God Became Man

By Paul Abramson, Editor

Christendom has celebrated the Nativity in art for over 800 years. The images of the stable and the animals, together with Joseph and Mary has developed down through time, following artistic styles and interpretative works based on Luke's account. Sometimes shepherds have been added. There are often angels depicted in the scenes. But the wise men (as taught in Matthew) do not enter the portrayals, bearing their gifts (consider that historically they did not arrive until a couple of years



"The Nativity with Six Dominican Monks", Italy, c. 1275



The Birth of Jesus, Italy, c. 1291

later, ... and would have more likely arrived as a large caravan, up north in Nazareth at Joseph & Mary's home, as the census compelling them to go to Bethlehem was by then years earlier).

ABOVE: On left side, they wash the newborn baby. Angels are above, the six monks (not shown) with raised hands are below. Joseph is to the side.

LEFT: Angels and shepherds are visible, with an angel speaking to a shepherd. There is a cow by the manger. Joseph sits to the side.



REFLECTIONS

("The Nativity in Images: Remembering When God Became Man" – continued)



The Coronation of the Virgin, and Other Scenes, by GIUSTO de' Menabuoi, 1367 (At the National Gallery, in London)

The Nativity, Salzburg, c. 1400

Notice that several of the depictions show Joseph as disconnected from the rest of the scene, or at least resting his head in his hand watching.

Often a midwife or two has been added as a part of the Nativity depiction. There are often some swaddling clothes present as well.





REFLECTIONS

("The Nativity in Images: Remembering When God Became Man" – continued)

Nativity, Flemish, c. 1475



The Birth of Christ, by Hans Leonhard Schaufelein, 1505



*La Natividad, by Jose Campeche y Jordan, c. 1799.
Now at the Smithsonian American Art Museum*



REFLECTIONS

("The Nativity in Images: Remembering When God Became Man" – continued)



The Birth, by Andi Harisman, Indonesia, 1990

As the Gospel message has circled the globe the message of Christ's birth has been adapted to reach the cultures of many lands.

Just as Medieval artists in Europe freely added midwives and European clothing to the scene's participants, so modern Asian artists have done the same.

"And the angel said unto them, Fear not: for, behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people. For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, which is Christ the Lord. And this shall be a sign unto you; Ye shall find the babe wrapped in swaddling clothes, lying in a manger. And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host praising God, and saying, Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men." Luke 2:10-14



Nativity, by Lu Lan, China, 1993



PROPER NOUNS PRONOUNS AND PROPER NAMES

A few Sundays ago, I went to church twice. Not in the morning and in the evening (Sunday evening worship services are too hard to locate). I went to two Sunday morning worship services. It was easy since the churches were two of the largest and most respected in the community. Both are well known for being middle of the road evangelical types.

They have a lot in common, especially in the music department. We sang lots of the



We sang lots of the popular praise choruses....

I got to thinking that these songs might be simple love songs...

popular praise choruses. But that Sunday morning I noticed something. Three of the

courses (two at the first church and one at the second) did not use proper nouns for Jesus. Instead, we used pronouns. It was You, Your, He, His and

Him. Nary a proper noun used, and in the other choruses pronouns beat proper nouns ten to one. No one seemed to notice, and sang with great fervor and much clapping of hands.

I got to thinking that these songs might be simple love songs we could sing to just about anyone for whom we had great affection, and upon whom we were dependent. So I did something very unspiritual. I ran through the words of the choruses thinking about my sweetheart, and sure enough, it worked! Great love songs! Yes, yes, I know they are also to be love





ARK ROCKERS

(PROPER NOUNS, PRONOUNS, AND
PROPER NAMES – continued)



songs to Jesus, but usually when you want someone to know of whom you are singing you refer to his or her proper name.

A couple of days later I mentioned this to a friend, and to my surprise, my friend said that the subject had come up before, and my friend's take on it was that the whole thing might not turn out to be a simple change of

culture. It might, as suggested to me, actually be part of a satanic encouragement to deplete Christian music of the proper names for Jesus. Sounds kind of nutty! Where do people come up with such ideas?

On the other hand, it is not at the name of "him, he or his" that every knee shall bow and every tongue confess...it is at the name of Jesus. It's not "you" that is the only name under heaven given among men whereby we must be saved...it is the name of Jesus. The prophet did not say that He shall be called He, Him, His, You, or Yours. You can call Him whatever you wish, but after thinking about this seemingly straining at a gnat, I am going to stick to calling Him what the angel of the Lord told his earthly parents to call Him...JESUS, for He shall save His people from their sins. JESUS...that's His proper name! Oh yes, since this is the Christmas season, I thought I'd point out that when the angels announced the birth of the greatest Person who ever lived, they did not say that there was born in Bethlehem a He who is Him. The One born in Bethlehem is the Savior who is Christ the Lord!





BIBLE TRUTHS

BEING PREPARED

*by Jim Petty, Senior Admissions Counselor,
Master's International School of Divinity*

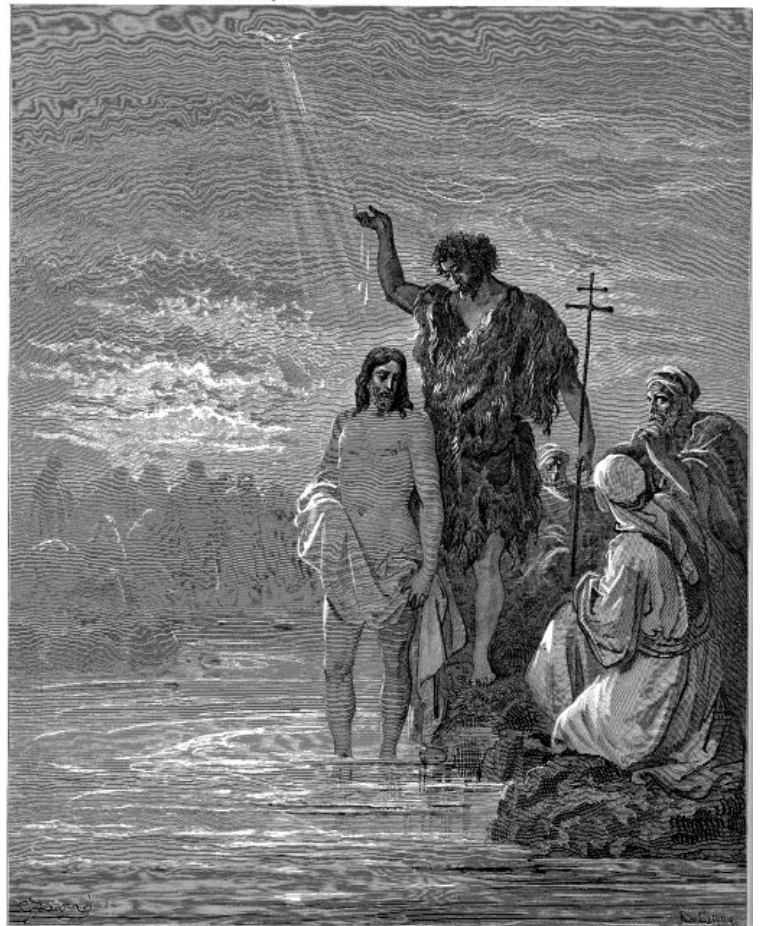
When we begin thinking about the appearance of Jesus Christ the Son of God when He was here on earth, we can bring to mind many of His appearances and how significant they were. We think how He appeared to John the Baptist at the beginning of His earthly ministry.

We think how He appeared to comfort His frightened disciples by the Sea of Galilee and of His appearance at a wedding feast in Cana, when He provided a miracle by turning the water to wine. We can bring to mind the time when He appeared on the side of the mountain to teach the Beatitudes to His disciples and the people who were following Him.

Many of His appearances resulted in a confrontation with the scribes and Pharisees over the law of that day. And after His death, burial and resurrection, He appeared to the woman who come to the tomb to finish embalming His body for burial. But of all appearances, there are three that stand out and carry powerful message to each and every one of us:

The first is when Jesus appeared in the world. Jesus Christ came into this world to seek and save that which was lost, this is according to His very own words that are found in Luke 19:10. He lives His life as an example of how we are to live our lives according to the will of God. He

"The Baptism of Jesus" by Gustave Doré



appeared on earth to take away our sins by His sacrificial death on the cross. Through voluntarily laying down His life on the cross to save us from the penalty of sin, eternal separation from God, His death was the ransom payment for our redemption. Before His sacrifice on the cross, Jesus accomplished many things through His time here on earth. He patiently trained twelve

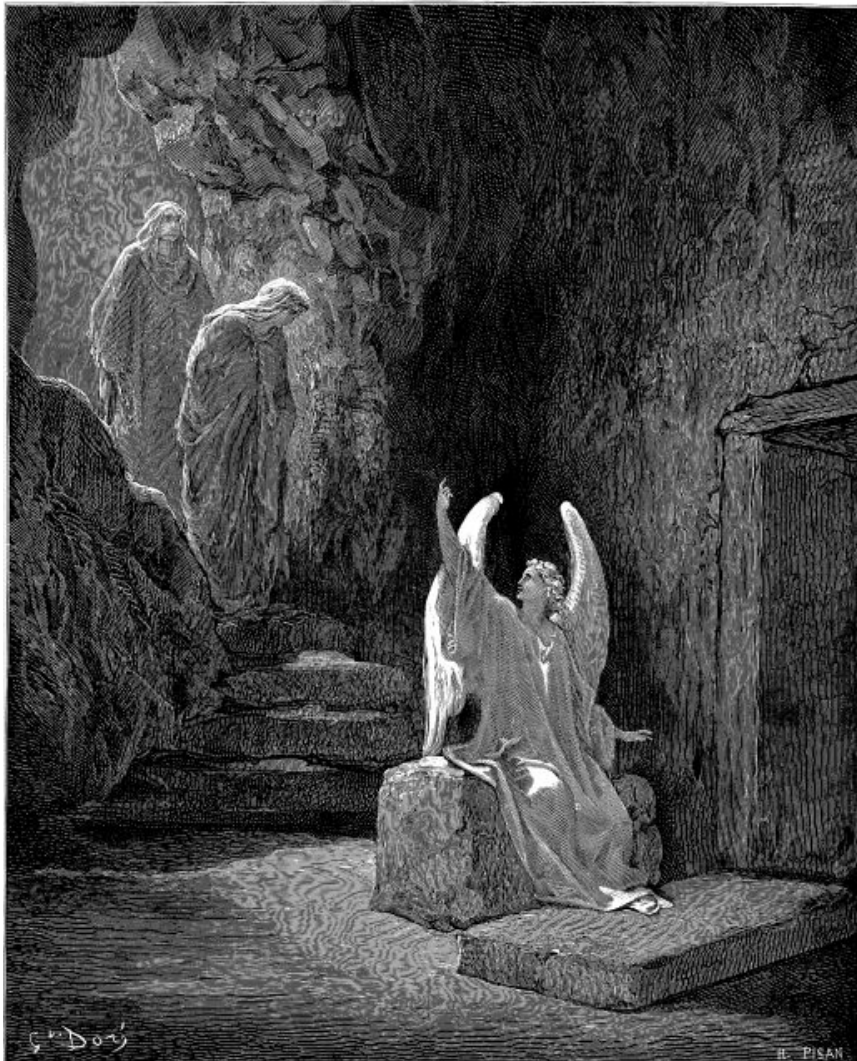


BIBLE TRUTHS

(BEING PREPARED – continued)

men to carry on His ministry after His ascension back into heaven. He taught them the things of God and how to trust the Father's leading for their lives. He proved to them, through His power, His miracles and His words that He truly was the Son of God.

"The Resurrection" by Gustave Doré



The second appearance that held so much power for us was after His resurrection. He appeared many times to provide the indisputable evidence that He was truly the Son of God. Many people will say, "That is

humanly impossible!" I would have to agree. It is humanly impossible, but with God all things are possible. God, who had the power to bring this world into existence and breathe the breath of life into the crown of His creation - man, created in His very own image, has surely brought to us the life of His Son, who was promised to us for our redemption. Now Jesus Christ sits at the right hand of God waiting for the Father to give His word for Christ to return once again and redeem His church.

This brings us to the third appearance, His second coming. This time Christ will come to bring judgment and redemption. To those who through faith have accepted Him as their Lord and Savior and long for His coming, this day will be a wonderful day. To those who are not prepared for His second coming this will be a sad day. The amazing thing about our brothers and sisters in Christ of the first century was that they lived each day as if this was going to be the day that Christ would return. They were prepared for His coming.

We as Christians of the twenty-first century, need to live with that same expectation, that this day could be the day that Christ is coming back. Today is the day for us to get our lives in order to meet Jesus Christ when He returns. Let us live with the anticipation that ***THIS IS THE DAY*** of Christ's return.



COVER STORY

(Cover Story - Thanksgiving for Christmas – Continued)

It seems to me that we bypass Thanksgiving all too quickly these days. From a solely retail standpoint, it's hard to market thankfulness. There's no money to be made in being thankful, and it is almost to the point where we make it all about family and travel, this national Thanksgiving holiday. Our national consciousness seems more attuned to football, family, and feasting than true thankfulness. I'm guilty of this as well—I like being home with friends and loved ones that I don't get to spend as much time with as I'd like to.

And yet, as I sit here, in my parent's house—warm, clothed and well-fed (maybe too much so)—I wonder about how thankful we as Christians are. Not only for the holiday that has been, but also for the holiday that is to come. That's right: Are we thankful for Christmas? I'm not in a turkey-induced stupor...nor am I talking about the crass commercialism that the retailers want us to believe is the Christmas we really want. Are we thankful for the truth that Christmas brings?

I want to look at the truth of Christmas. This is from Luke, chapter 2:

1 Now in those days a decree went out from Caesar Augustus, that a census be taken of all the inhabited earth.

2 This was the first census taken while Quirinius was governor of Syria.

3 And everyone was on his way to register for the census, each to his own city.

4 Joseph also went up from Galilee, from the city of Nazareth, to Judea, to the city of David which is called Bethlehem, because he was of the house and family of David,

5 in order to register along with Mary, who was engaged to him, and was with child.

6 While they were there, the days were completed for her to give birth.

7 And she gave birth to her firstborn son; and she wrapped Him in cloths, and laid Him in a manger, because there was no room for them in the inn.

8 In the same region there were some shepherds staying out in the fields and keeping watch over their flock by night.

9 And an angel of the Lord suddenly stood before them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them; and they were terribly frightened.

10 But the angel said to them, "Do not be afraid; for behold, I bring you good news of great joy which will be for all the people;

11 for today in the city of David there has been born for you a Savior, who is Christ the Lord.



COVER STORY

(Cover Story - Thanksgiving for Christmas – Continued)

How simple! How elegant! No rushing around, trying to figure out what to do or what to get. It's all been bought and paid for by God the Father. This is the wonderful, glorious truth of Christmas: God the Son left Heaven, which He did not have to do, and came to us in the form of a man that we might have life eternal...which we did not deserve. We all too often forget, in the midst of all the parties, social events, gift exchanges, the buying of gifts for everybody including your Aunt Mae, as well as those folks you only hear from once a year (if then), and all the frenzy and hoopla that seems to multiply with the very end of November and the whole of December...that Christmas is about the birth of the baby Jesus. Even our churches seem to forget this, what with all the cantatas, pageants, living Christmas Trees, small group gatherings, and even the ministering to others that we do as a body of believers this time of year. We, of all people on Earth, should be thankful for the birth of Jesus, and yet, it is we as Christians who all too often forget the reality that this time of year brings. It's about the birth of the Savior, the birth that has puzzled men for centuries:

Philippians 2:6-8 *"...who, although He existed in the form of God, did not regard equality with God a thing to be grasped, but emptied Himself, taking the form of a bond-servant, and being made in the likeness of men. Being found in appearance as a man,*

He humbled Himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross."

This is the source of our thankfulness. We don't have to understand the "why" of it all, nor do we have to work to repay the most magnificent gift God could ever give us. Not that we could ever repay it; God the Son, in the human form of Jesus, died that we may be found righteous in the sight of God the Father. All we need to do is accept this gift, and receive it as the gift it is.

We as believers have an obligation to slow down, to take the time to be thankful for the birth of the Lord Jesus Christ in human form. We need to be the example for the world, not caught up in the frenzy of what the world wants us to believe about one of the two most important dates on our calendar as Christians.

This Holiday season, this time between Thanksgiving and Christmas, take the time to be thankful for this gift. And if you haven't received it, don't wait for Christmas. Accept it now, for the days grow short, just as the holiday season gets shorter daily. And oh, yes—don't forget to get a little something for your Aunt Mae.

(All Bible quotes taken from the NEW AMERICAN STANDARD BIBLE, Copyright © 1995 by THE LOCKMAN FOUNDATION.)





JUST A MINUTE!

ISLAND RESCUE!

The navy ship was passing a small island far away in ocean waters. Gazing ashore the watchman spotted something – it appeared to be three huts. But this is supposed to be an uninhabited island. They rowed ashore and found a man. He had been shipwrecked there for years.

They brought him aboard. They asked him if there were other survivors. He replied that he was the only one. They then asked why they spotted three different huts on the island. He said that he could easily explain.

He had to live somewhere, so he built the first hut. And then he said, “I used the second hut to go to church.”

That did not explain the third hut. “Oh,” he replied, “You see, the third hut is where I used to go to church.”

HOW TO MAKE YOUR PASTOR FAINT:



“Please let me help teach the junior high class next week.”

“We’re competing to see who gets to sit in the front pew today!”

“Is it okay if we start the service early from now on?”

“Oh, your sermon lasted 30 minutes longer? I barely noticed.”

“I find witnessing a lot more fun than going golfing.”

“So 10% tithing is not the maximum? Boy am I relieved to learn that!”

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4 Gospels: 1 Lord Jesus Christ by Paul Abramson



Time began according to God's Word when He spoke the universe into existence. The clock started 6000 years ago; a Creation Week of 6 days, plus one day of rest. All was perfect. The Creation was completed.

Soon though there was sin. Suffering and death began at once. Adam and Eve were compelled to leave the Garden of Eden. A Savior was needed. A Second Adam was required to undo the damage caused by the First Adam. 4000 years and untold millions of lives passed by on the Earth. Each child was born into a family and into a culture and language. In each family, in each generation, there was darkness and fear, longing, victories and defeats, love, hate, diseases, and death.

Then the Savior came. Time as we know it – was divided into two.

The New Testament begins with four Gospels; four accounts of the life of the Christ. Matthew starts with these words:

Matthew 1:1 *“The book of the generation of Jesus Christ, the son of David, the son of Abraham.”*

Each of the Four Gospels presents the Messiah to us in a different light. His genealogy is presented in three of the four. And its total absence in the fourth is consistent with its general theme. Various parables and teachings cross between one,

"Adam and Eve Driven Out of Eden" by Gustave Doré



two, three, or even all four Gospel accounts. His death at the hands of men, and Resurrection from death is in all four.

Why four Gospels?

Couldn't one compiled account have taught us just as sufficiently? But our God has done this before. Many of the teachings of Exodus are repeated in Deuteronomy. In Proverbs some sayings come back more than one time, with interesting variations on the wisdom presented. Indeed some prophecies in completely different books compliment and validate each other with their varying details.



EDITOR'S CORNER

(4 Gospels: 1 Lord Jesus Christ – continued)

Christ, as Creator and Lord of all, has many facets to His Being. The Four Gospels reflect upon and highlight each other. And each shows a facet. One could even contend that each was written to show a different perspective of our Risen Lord.

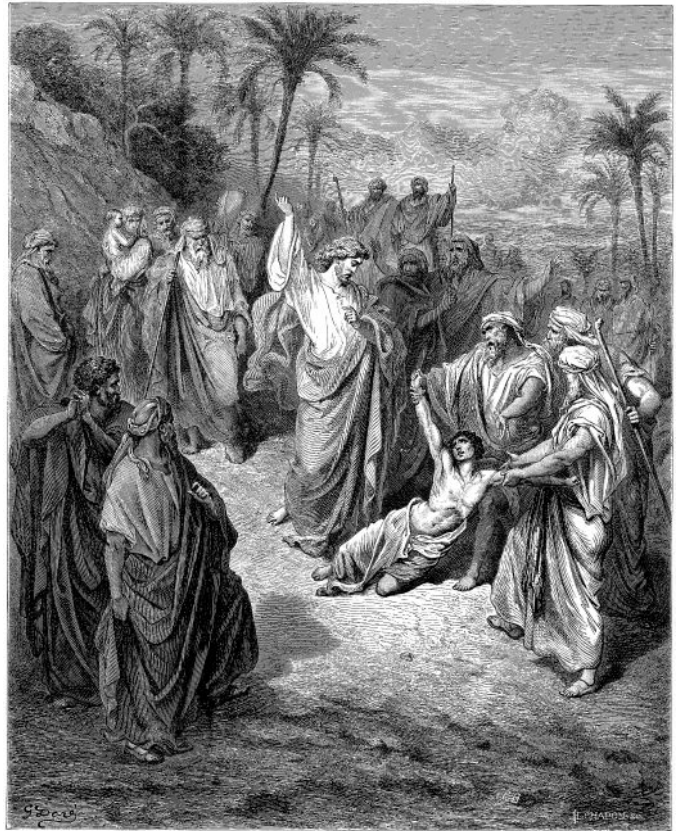
There are two things we need to be reminded of, in discussing this. The first is the “four living creatures” as described in Ezekial.

Ezekial 1:10 "As for the likeness of their faces, they four had the face of a man, and the face of a lion, on the right side: and they four had the face of an ox on the left side; they four also had the face of an eagle."

And secondly, though I do not pretend to understand why – is God's detailed description of a variety of creatures to Job, in chapters 38-41. Most Bible scholars contend that Job is the oldest written book of the Bible (though now placed just before Psalms, among the “wisdom books”). The Father asks Job about a wide variety of creatures. Animals are important to God's plan. (...“Preach the Gospel to every creature...” is the command.) And they will be with humans in the Millennium too. They were in Eden; they will still exist in the future. Intriguing. Their essence and their attributes can teach us much. And we are the lesser when we neglect to ponder such things.

You and I tend to think of a “human-centric” environment. But is that really so?

"Jesus Healing the Lunatic" by Gustave Doré



MATTHEW

Jesus is the Messiah – written for the Jews; under Joseph's lineage, Jesus' legal father (Lion face).

The genealogy in Matthew follows the descendants from Abraham, down through David, to Joseph, who was Christ's legal father in Jewish society. Note the women mentioned: Tamar (with Judah as the father, her father-in-law, see Genesis 38); Ruth (the gentile wife of Boaz, see Ruth); and Uriah's widow (with David, see II Samuel 11).



EDITOR'S CORNER

(4 Gospels: 1 Lord Jesus Christ – continued)

The orientation is toward showing the Old Testament fulfillment of prophecies in Jesus' life and ministry. He is generally presented as the Messiah, the coming king; the Lion of the Tribe of Judah.

Matthew himself was a Levite, formerly in government employment, of a despised (though elevated) class – a tax collector. He must have been fully literate and possibly even able to take shorthand, keeping up with sermons as they were spoken. He emphasizes what Jesus said.

Matthew begins with Christ's genealogy (of Abraham and of David) and with the wise men coming to Jerusalem in their quest, (Matthew 2:2)

"Saying, Where is he that is born King of the Jews? for we have seen his star in the east, and are come to worship him."



Matthew ends summarily with the Resurrection and the Great Commission. Matthew 28:18-20 *"And Jesus came and spake unto them, saying, All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth. Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world. Amen."*

MARK

Jesus is the suffering servant. A servant (or slave) has no genealogy, that is unimportant (Ox face).

This is the only Gospel that does not tell us any intrinsic credentials for Jesus. Mark opens instead with the account of John the Baptist, making straight the way for the Lord.

Mark himself was a servant to Peter. And he wrote of Jesus as a servant. Essentially this is Peter's Gospel, but written by a servant. The ox plods along, it is a servant. It is the shortest of the Gospel accounts, with vivid imagery. Mark focuses on what Jesus did.

Mark begins with John, (Mark 1:3) *"The voice of one crying in the wilderness, Prepare ye the way of the Lord, make his paths straight."* John the Baptist was the last of the Old Testament prophets. His baptism of Jesus is recorded in all four Gospels: Matthew 3:16-17; Mark 1:10-11; Luke 3:22; and John 1:32.

Mark ends with Christ's ascension up out of their sight returning to Heaven. (Mark 16:19-20) *"So then after the Lord had spoken unto them, he was received up into heaven, and sat on the right hand of God. And they went forth, and preached every where, the Lord working with them, and confirming the word with signs following. Amen."*



EDITOR'S CORNER

(4 Gospels: 1 Lord Jesus Christ – continued)

LUKE

Jesus came for all humankind - the genealogy (for Mary, His blood line) goes back to Adam (Man face).

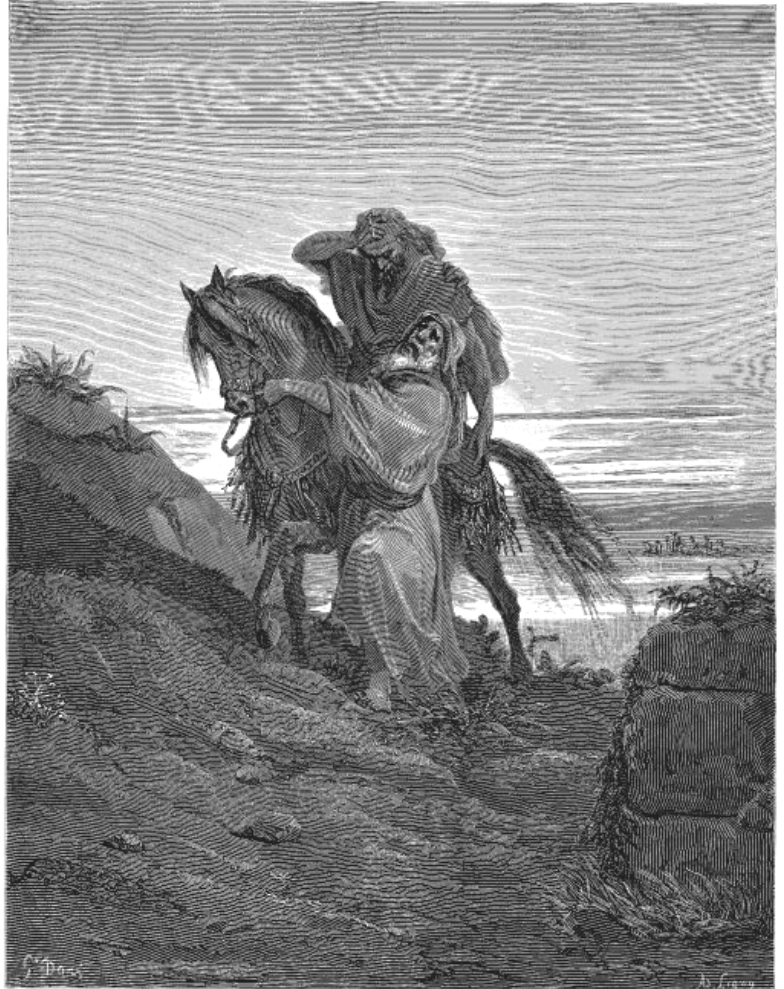
Luke was a gentile, a well educated doctor. The genealogy starts with his Mother, then goes all the way back to Adam, the first man, as a “son of God” himself, i.e. a direct creation of God.

Luke’s status also (like Matthew’s and Mark’s) mirrors his Gospel’s orientation. The Christ came for all humankind, for both Jew and for Gentile. Luke emphasizes Christ’s humanity. Thus we see most of the Christmas story in Luke, plus an occasion when the Messiah is only 12 years old, reasoning with the scholars in the Temple for several days (Luke 2:43-52). Luke emphasizes what Jesus felt.

Luke begins with the then contemporary Roman setting and the child’s birth. Roman centurians are always shown as professional in his account. (Some theologians speculate that a copy of this particular Gospel may have accompanied St. Paul when he went to Rome to plead his case, as a historical basis for his actions.)

Luke ends shortly after the Resurrection, and the Ascension is mentioned at the very

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end. But Luke’s Gospel ends where the Book of Acts (“Luke II”), also written by Luke, begins.

Luke 24:51-53 *"And it came to pass, while he blessed them, he was parted from them, and carried up into heaven. And they worshiped him, and returned to Jerusalem with great joy: And were continually in the temple, praising and blessing God. Amen."*



EDITOR'S CORNER

(4 Gospels: 1 Lord Jesus Christ – continued)

JOHN

Jesus is the pre-existing Creator of all, with an origin before the Creation (Eagle face).

The “genealogy” which establishes the origin of the Christ is often not recognized as such. But read again these words:

John 1:1-5 *"In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. The same was in the beginning with God. All things were made by him; and without him was not any thing made that was made. In him was life; and the life was the light of men. And the light shineth in darkness; and the darkness comprehended it not."*

Christ is established as the Alpha and the Omega; the first and the last. He is not descendant, which is clarified in this establishment of who He really is.

John's status himself was as a disciple, a close confidant of the man, Jesus. John shows us the Christ as the son of God.

John's Gospel (like his later Book of Revelation) is partially mystical. There are seven discourses. There are seven miracles.

There are seven “I AM” statements. It is not in chronological order; it follows a more thematic orientation. Many believers contend that for a young believer to begin reading the Bible, the Gospel of John is the best starting point.

John ends with the anticipation that Christ will come again, setting the stage for his later work, Revelation. John 21:24-25 *"This is the disciple which testifieth of these things, and wrote these things: and we know that his testimony is true. And there are also many other things which Jesus did, the which, if they should be written every one, I suppose that even the world itself could not contain the books that should be written. Amen."*

Each of the four Gospels has a different orientation and a different emphasis. Most of what we know of Christ's life comes from only one or two Gospel accounts. Few events are directly recorded in all four. We are looking at four different views of: the Messiah (Matthew), as the suffering servant (Mark), the Redeemer for all (Luke), who came down from Heaven (John) to live among us as a man and to die for our sins, then to conquer even death itself.

Luke 24:32 *"And they said one to another, Did not our heart burn within us, while he talked with us by the way, and while he opened to us the Scriptures?"*

