

Beyond The Manger

(Matthew 1:23-25)

- Introduction:
1. The virgin birth of Jesus is a central truth of Christianity.
 2. The fact that God relinquished heaven to come to the earth and live as a man is captivating to say the least (John 1:1,14).
 3. While the facts surrounding the birth of Jesus are firmly rooted in Scripture, the special celebration of his birth is a man made event.
 - a. It wasn't until 354 A.D. that the Bishop of Rome decided to observe December 25th, formerly a pagan holiday observed intended to honor the God, Saturn to a celebration of the birth of Jesus.
 4. This morning, I wish for us to focus on the Jesus beyond the manger.

I. As a Baby, He Was Helpless – As A Man, He Was All Powerful

- A. As a Baby, he was totally dependant on others for survival.
- B. As a man, we becoe totally dependant on him for survival.
- C. (Matthew 28:19-20).
- D. The power of Jesus must have been, and still is awe inspiring (John 11:43; Mark 9:39; Matthew 8:28-34; Matthew 14:22-33).
- E. This sort of power demands our respect.

II. As A Baby, He Was Loved – As A Man, He Was Hated

- A. While it is true that Herod hated Jesus when he was born (Matthew 2), most people love a baby.
- B. (John 15:18-20) Jesus was different and thus hated.
- C. By his light, he exposed the darkness and the shame in others (John 3:19).

III. As A Baby, He Made Demands Of His Mother – As A Man, He Makes Demands Of Everyone

- A. Every parent knows from experience the taxing demands of an infant.
- B. But as Jesus grew, so did the scope of his demands.
- C. He began to call all men to repentance and a change of lifestyle (John 8:11; Luke 13:3; Matthew 16:24).

IV. Jesus Was Born To Die So That We Can Be Born To Live

- A. Christianity is full of paradoxes.
- B. It was God's plan from before the creation of the world to send Jesus to the earth to die (Revelation 13:8; Luke 24:46-47).
- C. Today, those who are born again can have life (John 3:3-5; 1 Peter 1:23; 1 John 5:4).

- Conclusion:
1. As important as the birth of Jesus is, we must look beyond the manger; beyond the babe; and see the Christ of the cross who has all authority, who makes demands of your life, but who also promises you everlasting life.