

The Trinity and the Incarnation

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[0 : 00] In this particular passage, as well as in numerous other passages, we have all members of the Godhead active. Christ, of course, is here speaking to his apostles. He makes frequent reference to his Father.

And then in chapters 14 and 16, he makes a very pointed reference to the Spirit of God. And in connection with this, we are considering in a brief three-part series, the triune Godhead and the Incarnation.

And first of all, we considered God the Father's role in the Son being made flesh and dwelling among us. And then in the second session, we dealt with the person of Christ who himself was the Word, made flesh and dwelt among us.

And today we are going to focus upon the third person of the triune Godhead, the Holy Spirit. All of these are active in all that the activity that takes place on earth, beginning with creation, beginning with redemption, extending to the resurrection of Christ, and even involving the second coming. All members of the triune Godhead are active. And I realize that in dealing with a subject like the Trinity, whether it's the principle of incarnation or anything else, that we are in over our head right from the very beginning.

[1 : 29] Because we are convinced that this God of the Scriptures, who is set forth in no uncertain terms from Genesis to Revelation, is an infinite being.

He is incalculable. He has wisdom and power. He has intellect that supersedes anything that we can imagine. He has no boundaries that are known to him.

And throughout Scripture, beginning as early as in Genesis, we find a plurality of persons referred to in the constitution of this deity that we call God.

The Bible makes it very, very clear that there is but one God. And we've looked at Deuteronomy 6.4, which is frequently referred to as the Shema.

I don't know that we could say the motto is a correct word, but I suppose it will suffice. If you want to say that the nation of Israel or the Jewish people have a motto, it would be Deuteronomy 6.4.

[2 : 36] Hear, O Israel, the Lord our God is one. We pointed out to you that that one is a compound unity in the same way that a husband and wife are joined together and they too become one flesh.

They do not cease to be two, but there is a sense in which they become one. And this is a feeble illustration of what is involved in the Trinity, but it's probably as good as we can do.

The Bible makes it very clear in numerous places, Old and New Testament, that the Father is God. Not hardly anybody disputes that.

It is also clear that the Son is God. He made claims of deity in so many ways, in so many places, all throughout the four Gospels.

And the Apostle Paul refers to the divine nature of Jesus Christ so that he is not merely a son of God. He is the son of God.

[3 : 35] And we even talked a little bit about the Jewish concept of son, which means the same as. So if you have the son of a horse, it's going to be a horse.

If you have the son of a cow, it's going to be a cow. If you have the son of a frog, it's going to be a frog. When you have the son of God, it is God. He is deity. So the scriptures make it very clear that the Son is God, and the scriptures make it very clear that the Spirit is God.

And today we want to focus on the principal responsibility that the Spirit has for the Incarnation. And we will not turn to it, but for reference sake, I would cite Matthew chapter 1, where Joseph, who is engaged to Mary, has decided that he is going to quietly give her a bill of divorcement, not go through with consummating the union, because Mary is pregnant.

Joseph doesn't know who the father is, but he knows that he is not the father. I'm sure he probably said to himself, I never touched a girl.

I was waiting for that special night. But here she is, pregnant. He could have gone to the authorities and said, the girl to whom I am engaged is great with child, and I am demanding that the law of Moses be carried out.

[5 : 11] The elders of the community would have convened. They would have held a trial, and Mary no doubt would have been found guilty of adultery, the sentence of which is execution.

They would stone her to death. Well, Joseph didn't want that to happen, so he was on the side going to just quietly obtain a legal writ of divorce and have her put away that way and not go through with the marriage.

He was fully committed to doing that and would have done so, except one night the angel of the Lord appeared to Joseph in a dream and said, Joseph, fear not to take unto thee Mary, your espoused wife.

And by the way, she is referred to as his wife, but they are not legally married. They are legally engaged.

They are espoused. And in the Jewish economy and tradition, it is different from ours. We come to the Bible and we try to put our culture and conditions back on the biblical one and then wonder why there seems to be contradictions.

[6 : 28] May I remind you, they were here first, and they had their own traditions and we are the ones who have made changes. In the Jewish culture, and I'll be as rapid with this as I can be, they entered into a period of engagement or an espousal period.

We would call it an engagement. And that constituted a legal contract. The betrothal or the engagement was a legal arrangement so that if you were not going to go through with the marriage and consummate the marriage, you actually had to obtain a legal writ of divorce through the court. And that's the way they handled it. But today, boy meets girl, they fall in love, they become engaged, he gives her a ring, possibly, and everybody knows that they are designed and intended for each other.

And if something happens during that engagement period, they just call it off and each goes their own way. And she may or may not give back the ring.

Probably depends on the nature of the relationship. But at any rate, you don't have to get a divorce because you've never been married. So you just go your separate ways and that's it.

[7 : 44] But it wasn't so in biblical days. So Joseph was going to have a legal divorce drawn up and serve her with papers and divorce her nice and quietly like on the side.

And the angel appeared to him. Same one that appeared to Mary that made the announcement.

And the angel said, Joseph, fear not to take unto thee, Mary, your espoused wife.

For that which is conceived in her is of the Holy Spirit. I imagine Joseph was probably elated.

I suspect that he was madly in love with this young girl. And we don't know how old she was. She may have been as young as 15 or 16 years of age. And it would not have been unusual at all for girls that age to marry in that day.

They matured a lot more quickly than they do today. And Joseph was all prepared to enter the role of a husband. And then here Mary turns up pregnant.

[8 : 47] I imagine he was disheartened, crushed, disappointed, felt betrayed and everything else. And then to compound matters, when he asks Mary, what is this?

What's going on? You know, as she begins to protrude and be in the family way. I mean, loose garments can cover up a pregnancy only so long. And he's looking for an explanation.

But is one even necessary? Because he knows she's been with somebody. He just knows she hasn't been with him. And then Mary tells him this story about an angel appearing to her and saying, The power of the highest shall come upon you.

And that holy thing which shall be born of thee shall be called the Son of God. Can you imagine Joseph listening to that? What kind of fool do you take me for?

I mean, it's bad enough that you've gone and messed around with somebody and gotten in the family way. But now you're lying on top of it and compounding this cock and bull story about an angel appearing to you.

[10 : 03] And that God has somehow, the spirit of God has somehow impregnated your womb. And that's... Come on, Mary. I mean, fellas.

Try to put yourself in Joseph's position. What would you think? What else could you think? I mean, how many times has the Holy Spirit ever come upon anybody and impregnated their womb without the benefit or the contribution of a male donor?

Never been known in history. And it's never been known in history since. Never has happened.

That's what makes this so special. And here is where all the members of the Trinity are involved.

The Father gave the Son. The Son gave himself. And the Spirit of God is the one who plants the seed in the womb of Mary.

Now, I want to just say this in passing, lest there be any misunderstanding. Our Muslim friends completely misunderstand the whole concept of the Incarnation.

[11:17] I think I mentioned this before, but what really sets them off, and if I can understand it, it would set me off too. They are under the impression that the Christian position is that God had sex with Mary and that the result was Jesus who was born.

Well, it's difficult to dispel that if they insist on believing it, but there's nowhere that the scriptures even begin to teach anything like that.

There was a supernatural implantation in the womb of Mary of that seed. And it was not a human seed.

It was a divine seed. But this divine seed was going to connect with a human body. And the result would be a being who is theanthropic.

God-man. Both. He isn't half God and half man. He is fully God and fully man. How did the Holy Spirit do that?

[12:31] I haven't the slightest idea. Couldn't begin to tell you. I know that the seed that was implanted was a physical seed.

The Spirit of God is not physical. Jesus said, God is spirit.

And those who worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth. Well, we know the Holy Spirit is spiritual. But we are told that God in his essence and character and nature and makeup is spirit.

And this one God, not three, this one God subsists in three persons. Each is co-equal and co-eternal to the others.

And if you are somewhat upset because you can't understand that, what can I say?

[13:38] I can only say that you must be upset because you cannot comprehend the infinite eternal God.

That doesn't upset me. I don't think I should be able to comprehend the infinite eternal God. Do you not think that if he is who the scriptures claim him to be, there ought to be that about his very nature, constitution, and makeup that you ought not be able to grasp?

Do we somehow think that God owes it to us to be able to understand him and explain him inside out? Otherwise, we're not going to accept. And why do we accept it anyway?

It isn't because it's logical to us. It isn't. It transcends human logic. Do you suppose that there might be a number of things that transcend human logic?

The longer I live, the more I'm impressed with my stupidity. Can you identify with that? Or do you think you're just getting smarter and smarter and smarter?

[14:57] The longer I live, the more I realize how dumb I really am. There is so much we don't know. And we don't even know what we don't know.

I mean, it's just we haven't scratched the scratch on this. Do we actually think we ought to be able to comprehend the infinite God? And why do we believe this business about a trinity?

We believe it for one reason and one reason only. It is an item of divine revelation. The scriptures set forth this God as being of this constitution, this nature and this makeup.

And all through the Bible, the father is identified as God. The son is identified as God. The spirit is identified as God. And all three are identified as members of the one true God.

Subsisting in three persons. I can't understand that. Well, neither can I. But I believe it on the basis of revelation. Not because it makes perfect sense to me.

[16:05] It doesn't make perfect sense to me. You know, there is so much going on in this world that just doesn't make any sense to me at all. Dr. James Dobson wrote a book several years ago called When God Doesn't Make Sense.

God always makes good sense to God. But he doesn't always make good sense to us.

And I want to give you just a very simple reason why. And this ought to settle it. God has a perspective that we don't have.

Now, I know you can understand that. God has a perspective. He has a viewpoint. He has a capability of seeing and understanding things that we don't even know exist.

And everything is in God's perspective. Nothing is left out of his perspective. You and I get saddened by situations that come into our life from time to time.

[17 : 19] And they just may devastate us. They may just do us in. They may just so depress us and so confound us and so just make us beside ourselves.

And a couple of days later, something transpires. Something happens. And voila. Everything's changed. Everything's changed.

It's not like what I thought it was at all. But I thought, oh yes, you thought. Because with your limited perspective, with your lack of knowledge and information, you just can't get the full picture of anything.

None of us can. But that's okay. That goes with the territory of being a human being. There's all kinds of things that we just don't understand because our perspective is so limited.

Best illustration, and I think I've probably used this before. You sit at a railroad crossing. And you've got your motor running, burning up that \$3.25 a gallon gas.

[18 : 30] And this freight train is coming by. And good grief, this has got to be the world's longest freight train. And the cars just rumble by.

You can read the letters on it. You can read the graffiti that has been scribbled on it in different towns where it has been. And it just seems like that thing is never going to get by.

And one car after another. One car. You sit there for 15 minutes waiting on this thing to go by. And as it does, you see each car. Each car.

You don't see the first car. You don't see. You see each car. But if you drive out to the plains of Kansas and Nebraska, and you're driving along the interstate out there, you can see that same train.

Same train. Off in the distance. There's the engine. In fact, this thing is so long, it's got three engines on it. There's the engine.

[19 : 28] And way back there is the last car. And you can see the whole thing from the beginning to the end. You see the whole train in one picture.

What's changed? Train hasn't changed. You haven't changed. Your perspective has changed.

God's viewpoint is different from ours because God is able to take everything into consideration. All we can do is try to take into consideration the immediate, the moment, the right now.

Five minutes from now, we don't know what's going to happen. We have a perspective that doesn't extend to that. Our perspective is just now. And so it is with God.

When we get to heaven, we are going to have a new set of eyes and new perspective. And you know what? All of the disappointment and the heartache and the deprivation and even the death and the pain of loved ones.

[20 : 41] The adversity, the losses, the heartaches are all going to be put in perspective. And there's going to be a lot of, oh, now I see.

Now I understand. Now it makes sense. Now, oh, so this is what it's all about. Yeah. And it's all going to come out okay.

But right now, we struggle. We hurt. We moan. We groan. We're disappointed. We're angry. We're frustrated.

We're a whole bunch of things. Just because our perspective is so limited. And you know what God wants you to do? God wants you to say, will you trust me and my perspective?

I really do know what I'm doing. And the time is going to come when you'll understand that. The old song, we'll understand it better in the by and by.

[21 : 50] We will. Our perspective will be different. Then we shall know even as we are known. But for now, we struggle with these things. And we have our questions and all the rest of it.

And Job went through this. Job is a classic example of it. So, in his humanity, do you think Jesus struggled with this?

Of course he did. I do not know. I do not begin to understand how in the God-man that Jesus Christ was.

I don't know how his deity was separated from his humanity. And there appears to have been times when it wasn't. But there also appears to be times when it was.

And one of those times, in Gethsemane, where he sweat, as it were, great drops of blood, and he cried out in agony, Oh, my Father.

[22 : 57] If it be possible. Let this cup. Pass from me.

Jesus didn't want to drink that cup. That was the cup of suffering, of death, of separation from his father. And he said, if there is any other way.

And then he said, nevertheless, not my will, but yours be done. And this was the culmination of that seed that the Spirit of God implanted in Mary's womb.

Let's go to that passage in Luke's Gospel, chapter 2. Matthew records the incident regarding Joseph.

But this tells us about the actual birth. And the Holy Spirit, in response to what Mary says, she is just absolutely beside herself.

[24 : 07] And, well, we are told in verse 7 that she gave birth to her firstborn son. She wrapped him in cloths and laid him in a manger.

And when the angel gave her this information, in Luke 1, she was greatly troubled. Kept pondering what kind of salutation this would be. And then she asks the question, You're going to conceive in your womb, bear a son.

This is in chapter 1. You shall name him Jesus. And he will be great. He will be called the Son of the Most High. The Lord God will give him the throne of his father, David. He will reign over the house of Jacob forever.

Mary had a logical question that only, that any girl in a position like this would have to ask. I don't understand. How can this be?

Mary knew she was chaste. Mary knew, despite what Joseph was thinking by this time, Mary knew that she was a virgin.

[25 : 14] And she knew how babies are made. So she asked the angel a logical question. Well, how can this possibly be? I know what makes babies.

And I've never been with a man. And here she is told that the power of the highest shall overshadow you. And that holy thing which shall be born of you shall be called the Son of God. And this is the thing that is just so mind-boggling. This is all mind-boggling to me. But listen. God is spirit. There was a time when there was no matter.

I mean, nothing physical existed. No earth, no planets, no stars, no nothing. No air. No anything. Nothing physical existed. There was just God who is spirit. And spirit does not occupy time and space. Time and space were both created by God to accommodate humans and animals.

[26 : 21] Biological life. But before any of this was created, there was no biological life. Because God is not biological life. God is life, but he's not biological life.

God is life. How is it that that which is non-material produces the material?

We look at the creation of Adam and we see that Adam was both created and made. He was made in that God, when something is made, you use pre-alarm.

Pre-existing material. Okay? And Adam was fashioned from the dust of the ground into a body. God made Adam.

But he also created Adam in that Adam had a component about him that was not made with pre-existing material. It was not made with material at all.

[27 : 24] It's called spirit. Spirit is not matter. Spirit does not weigh anything. Spirit is not of any size. Spirit does not occupy space.

Does not occupy time. We're completely out of our bailiwick here. Nobody knows what we're talking about. Including me. But this is what the scriptures make very clear. And out of the existence of this spirit being, matter was created and came forth.

How did that work? How did that happen? We don't have a clue.

We have no idea at all. Where did the seed come from that the spirit of God implanted in the womb of Mary? He created the seed.

He created the seed out of nothing. There were no pre-existing materials. He implanted that seed in the womb of the Virgin Mary.

[28 : 30] Supernaturally. I'm sure she didn't have a clue. She didn't know what was going on. And that seed began to grow. As a normal human would grow in the womb of a woman.

And this is the Holy Spirit's contribution as a member of the triune Godhead to this whole magnificent thing that is going to take place called the incarnation.

So, back in Luke 2, all of this is going to come about in verse 6, that while they were there in the city of Bethlehem, and they were there because they had to register for the census.

And by the way, times really change. You know what they would do if they had this demand made on them today, don't you? They would register online. And it would be very simple.

But when you lived 2,000 years ago, of course, none of this was even thought of. So, they have to make this trek. Here is Mary. Can you imagine? Can you imagine starting out on this trek from Nazareth to Bethlehem?

[29 : 53] You know how far that was? About 90 miles. 90 miles. That's like going from here to downtown Columbus, Ohio and back on foot.

Or maybe on the back of a donkey. And ladies, can you just imagine what a thrilling ride that would be when you're nine months pregnant? Riding on the back of a donkey.

How many miles could they cover in one day? I don't know. But I wouldn't think too many. And yet, they had to do it because they were subjects of the Roman government.

And they could have been penalized in whatever way Rome saw fit. So, they go to Bethlehem because Joseph was of the house and lineage of David.

And this is a beautiful thing. Just a beautiful thing. Who was David? David was the king. David was the kid that slew the giant.

[30 : 59] Okay? But that was a thousand years earlier. A thousand years earlier. And now, Joseph is a direct descendant of David the king.

And Mary is a direct descendant of David the king. Mary came through the line of Nathan. Joseph came through the line of Solomon. And they both have royal blood in their veins.

And because Bethlehem was David's city, that was his homeland, that was his home turf, that's where Joseph had to go to register because he was of the house and lineage of David.

He was of the seat of David, the house of David. And Bethlehem, the name Bethlehem means the house of bread.

I think it's a wonderful thing that the one who was going to turn out to be the bread of life would be born in Bethlehem.

[32 : 02] How appropriate. So, they arrived there and we are told in Luke chapter 6 that it came about that while they were there, the days were completed for her to give birth.

What is it? 270 days or thereabouts? Roughly nine months. And she gave birth to her firstborn son. Probably no miracle about that.

And we often refer to this as the miracle of the virgin birth. It's probably technically misnamed.

Because we don't have any reason to believe that the birth of Jesus was miraculous at all.

It was probably a standard kind of a physical birth that babies go through. But where the miracle was, was the conception. That was the miracle.

It was the miraculous conception. 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.

[33 : 04] Now, don't have a big pity party for the royal family because they couldn't get a room. This was not all that unusual at all. It was just, in this time and place, it was not at all unusual for families to sleep in the barn with the animals.

They enjoyed the heat that they put off. And it was not considered a great deprivation and it was not considered backwoodsy or anything of the kind.

This is standard operating procedure. And I'm sure they probably would have stayed in the inn if there had been room. But there wasn't. So it's no big deal. They'll go out and they may not have been the only ones there.

We're not told. But it's entirely possible there may have been others there as well. She wrapped him in cloths. These are the swaddling clothes. And what the swaddling clothes were was just strips six or eight inches wide of linen cloth long.

And they would wind these around the baby almost like a mummy. Just wrap the baby up so the poor little thing was just kind of stiff as a board. And it was a tradition in their culture.

[34 : 12] And you did that because you wanted the baby to grow up to be straight and true. So you wrapped him in swaddling clothes.

Oh, but before you wrapped him in swaddling clothes, you salted him. Ezekiel talks about this when he chides his covenant people Israel. And he rebukes them.

And what he's saying in essence is you people have no integrity at all. You are a bunch of prevaricators and liars and backstabbers and betrayers. You were not salted, neither were you swaddled.

And that was a real put down in that culture. He was saying you grew up as a nation Israel. You grew up to be as crooked as a dog's hind leg. Can't trust you at all. And you weren't salted at all. So the seeds of betrayal were sown in you. I can't trust you any further than... It was not a complimentary thing. But Jesus, I'm sure, was salted. I don't know what that must have felt like on that newborn baby flesh to have salt sprinkled all over you and then rubbed in.

[35 : 17] But I'm sure it was probably considered very antiseptic also. And probably helped to ward off any disease or infections or anything like that. So she wrapped him in swaddling clothes and laid him in a manger.

That's the feeding trough. And that too was not that big a deal. Oh, this is terrible. Baby Jesus doesn't have a cradle, a proper crib, the kind with the music on it that swings.

You know, I'm sure they never considered this a great deprivation at all. You do what you have to do, and this would have just been standard operating procedure. Put him in the animal feeding trough.

No room in the inn. And in the same region, there were some shepherds staying out in the fields. And you need to know a little bit about the shepherds. These people were considered the dregs of society.

If you were a shepherd, there might be certain places you wouldn't even be admitted to if you were a shepherd.

[36 : 24] In fact, if you were a shepherd in Israel at this time, your word was not considered acceptable in the law court. So, if the only person you've got to testify on your behalf is a shepherd by occupation, good luck.

Because nobody's going to take his testimony. And you know something? God demonstrates his delight in honoring people we call nobodies.

Shepherds. I mean, the least he could do is send an angel to inform royalty. But no. The dregs of society, and here they are out in the field, keeping watch over their flock by night, and an angel of the Lord suddenly stood before them.

And the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were terribly frightened. You need to understand what's happening here. When it says the angel of the Lord suddenly stood before them, that means that the angel was there just like that.

Where there was nobody before, there's the angel. They didn't see him coming. There was nothing there. Then there's something there. And it's an angel. That is enough in and of itself to scare you witless.

[37 : 51] Because we know things don't just appear out of nowhere, and all at once they are there before us. And they are appropriately terrified. And the angel said to them, seems like every time an angel appears to somebody, first thing he always has to say is, fear not, because they're already shaking and trembling.

Fear not, do not be afraid, for behold, I bring you good news of a great joy, which shall be for all the people.

Now, if I could just take the liberty of inserting something in the white spaces, and I'm not saying that this belongs here, because it doesn't, because if it belonged there, the Spirit of God would have put it there.

But theologically, it is not correct. The angel could have said, fear not, behold, I bring you great tidings of great joy, because after waiting for 4,000 years, God is going to do what he promised. Can you imagine yourself being on the receiving end of the fulfillment of a promise that was given 4,000 years ago?

[39 : 16] And you probably thought, after all this time, it's never going to happen. And here, to you, this information is given.

Information the world has awaited for 4,000 years, given to you. Who are you? You're a shepherd. Dregs of society.

You're as much a nobody as you can be. And maybe, maybe it could be exceeded only by, shall we say, a woman of the evening, like Mary Magdalene, who's also going to have a very special revelation given to her at the tomb, when Jesus just utters that word, Mary.

Mary. But Jesus had a way of saying, Mary, that Mary did a... She thought he was the gardener. But nobody says, Mary, like Jesus said, Mary.

And he appeared to her, the Magdalene. Converted prostitute. Talk about the dregs of society. My, oh my. Today, in the city of David, there has been born for you a Savior who is Christ the Lord.

[40 : 45] And now, he's just hours old. Hours old. And this will be a sign for you. This is how you will identify him. You will find a baby wrapped in cloths and lying in a manger.

Well, I don't think it was too unusual to find a baby wrapped in cloths. But probably most of them were not lying in mangers. That would be a little different. So, they went into town, left Shepherd's Field.

And by the way, you can still visit Shepherd's Field outside of Bethlehem. There are scores of pilgrims there. As I speak in Shepherd's Field and going and visiting the Church of the Nativity. And when they got into town, they began saying to one another, Let us go straight to Bethlehem then and see this thing.

Can you imagine one of the angels saying, Well, actually, I don't want to go there straight. I want to stop off at the house first and pick up thus and so on. None of that. None of that. They are electrified.

[41 : 49] They leave there. We are told that they came in haste. They are just moving out and getting there as quickly as they can. Let us go straight to Bethlehem and see this thing that has happened, which the Lord has made known to us.

And they came in haste and found their way to Mary and Joseph and the baby as he lay in the manger. And when they had seen this, they made known the statement which had been told them about this child.

Can you see these stragglers coming in? We don't know how many shepherds there were. Could have been two. Could have been a half a dozen. We don't know how many. But they're all standing around there. And Mary and Joseph are wondering, What's with this?

What's this invasion? This is a very private moment, you know. And here they all come in there.

And they're talking and elbowing each other and pointing to the baby.

And Mary and Joseph, they don't know that these shepherds have been visited by the angel. They don't know what's going on there. It's like Grand Central Station. Here's this woman just had a baby. And one of these shepherds comes over and says to Mary, and you're the mother, Well, let me tell you what happened.

[43 : 11] We were out in the field. We were just minding our own business. It was just in ordinary. And all of a sudden, Wow! There's this dazzling light. Never seen anything like it.

And this strange being told us about this little baby. And Wow!

We just never heard anything like this day here in Bethlehem. Us? This? They were beside themselves. And as they relate all of this excitedly and tell to Mary, it says, They made known the statement which had been told them about this child.

And all who heard it wondered at the things which were told them by the shepherds. But Mary treasured up all these things pondering them in her heart.

You know, Mary, as a mother, has a lockbox in her heart. And she deposited these things in mother's lockbox.

[44 : 28] And if you read over just a little bit, 30 years later, she's going to be thinking back on this. Because 30 years later, this little baby in a manger is going to be a man on the cross.

And that's why there was a manger. So there could be a cross. And she's going to be putting all of that together.

And the shepherds went back glorifying and praising God for all that they had heard and seen. Just as had been told them. And here we are, folks, 2,000 years later, and we are still telling this same old story.

Calvin Miller in a book called The Singer has written a poem and I'm going to close with it. I want you to get the message of it.

This is a transaction that took place between God the Father and God the Son. And the Father is called the Earthmaker and God the Son, Jesus, is referred to as the Singer and the Troubadour.

[45 : 57] The Earth is the globe, the ball, and terra. The Father and his Troubadour sat down upon the outer rim of space.

And here, my Singer, said Earthmaker, is the crown of all my endless skies, the green-brown sphere of all my hopes.

He reached and took the round new planet down and held it to his ear. Their crying troubadour, he said, they cry so hopelessly.

He gave the little ball unto his son who also held it by his ear. Year after weary year, they all keep crying. They seem born to weep and then die.

Our new man taught them crying in the fall. It is a peaceless globe. Some are sincere in desperate desire to see her freed of her absurdity.

[47 : 05] But war is here. Men die in conflict, bathed in blood and greed. Then with his nail he scraped the atmosphere and both of them beheld the planet bleed.

Earthmaker set the earth spinning on its way and said, Give me your vast infinity, my son. I'll wrap it in a bit of clay.

Then enter Terra microscopically to love the little souls who weep away. I will, I said, set Terra free. Then I fell asleep and all awareness fled. I felt my very being shrinking down. My vastness ebbed away.

In dwindling dread all sighs decayed. The universe around drew back. I woke upon a tiny bed of straw in one of Terra's smaller towns.

[48 : 13] And now the great reduction has begun. Earthmaker and his troubadour are one. And here's the new redeeming melody, the only song that can set Terra free.

The shrine of older days must be laid by. Mankind must see Earthmaker left the sky and he is with us.

They must concede that I am he. They must believe the song or die. the song is the death, burial, and resurrection of the God who was made flesh.

That's the song that troubadour came to live out that song and then to sing it. And today we sing that song and we call it the gospel, the good news. And this is the only good news in the world that can transform a life that can make someone pass from death unto life.

This is the only good news that can extend forgiveness to the recipient. It's the only provision that God has made for man to become reconnected with himself.

[49 : 40] It's a glorious, glorious message. Nothing like it. The world has never seen anything like it. Never will see anything like it again. Have you connected with the message?

Because there is no other way of connecting with the God of the message. This good news that Christ died for our sins. That's the good news.

Good news is you do not have to die for your sins because Jesus did. You know what he wants you to do? He wants you to respond to what he has already done for you.

And you respond to him by giving him yourself. Out of gratitude, you just respond to what he did in Christ by trusting him as your Lord and Savior.

That's being born again. That's becoming a Christian. And by the way, it has nothing to do with joining a church or anything like that. It's just between you and God.

[50 : 48] Nobody else. Would you pray with me? Father, we do not begin to understand the love and the grace that prompted this activity.

We just stand in utter amazement of it. But we who have partaken of it know wherein we have to rejoice in the cause that is there.

and we so deeply appreciate your forgiveness and your love extended to us that we want everybody to know it and to share it and to enjoy it.

And that's why we're here is to just keep telling people about it and extending the offer to them and trusting and hoping that they will receive your love through the person of Christ.

And while we remain with the hearts and heads bowed would you in your heart of hearts and in the privacy of where you are right now would you be willing to say just between you and God I want to connect with you and if this is what you did to make that connection possible I want to cooperate with it.

[52 : 14] I don't know what all is involved in this but I do know one thing. I know I have a need and I'm willing to admit it and I believe that Jesus can meet that need.

He can connect me in a way that I could never be connected otherwise. So I best as I know how I just want to turn myself over to this God who loves me like that.

I want to trust him. I want to believe on the Lord Jesus as my Savior. Dear God here is my heart. I give it to you. Thank you for dying to make it possible.

Dear friend if you made that your prayer you need to tell somebody let me know or talk to someone so we can give you the encouragement and some literature and send you on your way.

Father we are so privileged to not only know this message but to be able to communicate it to others and we know that when it comes through human instrumentality it's always a flawed message but the core of it is accurate.

[53 : 31] that Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures. May that truth burrow into the heart and mind of everyone here who's never embraced Christ.

May you see fit never to release them until they put their trust and their faith in you. We ask it in Christ's name. Amen.