

SERMON TRANSCRIPT

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Take God's Word and turn if you will to Luke chapter 2, the Christmas story. I'm going to begin reading in just a moment in the verse 1 of Luke chapter 2.

Upon an occasion I had an opportunity to witness to Mohammed Ali. And I had prayed much about it, and God arranged it where we could be together in a small room late at night actually before one of his fights, and we were talking about Jesus Christ. And I'd had a prayer in my heart that this man might receive Christ as his personal Lord and Savior. And he was studying the Islamic faith. And so we were talking back and forth. And he challenged me with this question. He said, "You say that Jesus Christ is the Son of God because He was born of a virgin. He didn't have an earthly father." Then he said to me, "Adam didn't have a father or a mother. Wouldn't that make Adam more a Son of God than Jesus?" I said, "Champ, I want you to understand this. Jesus was not the Son of God because He was born of a virgin; He was born of a virgin because He was the Son of God."

You see, Jesus did not have His start in Bethlehem. Jesus stepped out of the glory, as we've already told you. "*Unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given.*" We're going to be talking today about the virgin birth of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. Now, I'm aware that the world laughs at the idea of a virgin birth. They think of that as some sort of primitive, medieval superstition or something. They laugh, they mock at the idea of the virgin birth. I can tell you, furthermore, the devil hates the idea of the virgin birth because it teaches both the humanity and the deity of His nemesis and our Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ. But worse than the mockery of this world and the hatred of Satan is the ignorance of many so-called Christians concerning the virgin birth. Many of them doubt it. Some don't believe it at all. And others think that it is incidental. Friend, I want to show you in this message that you have no hope of salvation apart from the virgin birth. I want to show you that if you take away the virgin birth of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, you have destroyed the whole foundation of Christianity, and it will all collapse like a house of cards. It is not incidental. It is fundamental. Three thoughts this morning.

First of all, I want you to think of **the sacred mystery of His birth**. Now go back to chapter 1. The angel has announced to Mary that she is going to be with child. Now, Mary is a virgin. She is espoused to a man named Joseph, but they've not come together in the act of marriage. The ceremony has not yet transpired. They're not living together as husband and wife. And yet, the angel Gabriel says, "Mary, you're going to have a baby." Now she asked a very pertinent question, beginning in Luke 1 verse 34 through 38, "*Then said Mary unto the angel, 'How shall this be?'*" Big question. "How's this going to happen? This is a mystery to me." "*How shall this be, seeing I know not a man?'*" Now, the word 'know not' literally means that she's not had sexual relations with a man. "*And the angel answered, and said unto her, 'The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee, and the power of the Highest shall overshadow thee,'*" underscore "*the power of the Highest,*" "*shall overshadow thee; therefore also that holy thing which shall be born of thee shall be called the Son of God. And, behold, thy cousin, Elizabeth, she hath also conceived a son in her old age; and*

this is the sixth month with her, who is called barren. For with God,” underscore this now, folks. You might underscore this next phrase two or three times, “For with God nothing shall be impossible.” Can you say Amen to that? Now if you have difficulty with that, you’re going to have difficulty with the virgin birth. “For with God nothing shall be impossible.’ And Mary said, ‘Behold the handmaid of the Lord; be it unto me according to thy word.’ And the angel departed from her.”

Now we’re talking about the mystery of the virgin birth. May I tell you that the virgin birth does not depend upon your understanding for its validation, is that okay? You don’t have to understand it to validate it. There are a lot of things we don’t understand. We don’t understand how a brown cow can eat green grass and give white milk which turns to yellow butter. We don’t understand that. Most of us here don’t even understand how a windshield wiper works. We know it works. I mean, it takes the water off the windshield. But if you had to write a diagram and describe to me what makes the windshield wiper go back and forth, there are many in this building who could not do it. Now some of you engineers could do that. Folks, I’m telling you there are a lot of things we don’t understand, but we experience. The late, great Vance Havner said, “I don’t understand electricity, but I’m not going to sit around in the dark until I do.”

Now, Mary asked a question, a good question, “*How can this be, seeing I know not a man?*” Now there are some people who say, “Is not the idea of a virgin birth, is that not a biological impossibility?” Again, I want to tell you, that it is not a biological impossibility if you let the angel answer the question, “Is there anything too hard for God? With God all things are possible.”

The late great Robert G. Lee, former pastor of this church, wrote a book that he gave me many years ago before I came to be the pastor of this church, called “*Lord, I Believe,*” and it deals with the miracles. And in that here’s a quotation from Dr. Lee. He said, and I quote, “I don’t believe God is an impotent and puzzled bellhop, running up and down the corridors of the house He designed by His omniscience and created by His omnipotence, having lost the key to some of the mystery rooms of His own house. It is impossible for Him to be baffled or bothered or chained by the physical elements.”

Now what he is saying is that God is not bound by the very laws that He Himself has created in the universe that He Himself has made. He is the Master and the Lord of that universe. Now, God can do anything He well pleases because He is God.

I have no difficulty with the virgin birth if I believe in creation. Friend, I’ve often said if you can get past Genesis 1:1, you’re home free concerning miracles. “*In the beginning God created the Heavens and the earth.*” You have difficulty believing the virgin birth? Listen to me, precious friend! God made the first man without a father or a mother, out of clay that He formed out of nothing. Now it may be a mystery to you, but it is not a mystery to God.

Now, I love this verse, First Timothy 3 verse 16, “*And without controversy great is the mystery of godliness; God was manifest in the flesh.*” Now that’s what the virgin birth is all about. “*God was manifest in the flesh, justified in the Spirit, seen of angels.*” Have you ever thought about that, “*seen of angels?*” Did you know through all eternity, the eons of the ages, no angel had ever seen God because God is invisible? The first time any angel, or anybody, ever saw God was when the Word was made flesh. The angels said, “*Look, there is God lying in a manger.*” “*Seen of angels, preached unto the Gentiles, believed on in the world, and received up into glory.*” Don’t worry if you can’t explain the virgin birth. You couldn’t explain the virgin birth any more than you could explain God. When you can explain God, then perhaps you can explain the virgin birth. You see, there is this sacred mystery of the virgin birth. Great is the mystery of godliness. We join Mary in saying, “*How can this be?*” And we join the angel when we say, “*With God all things are possible.*” And God’s people said [audience: Amen] “*Amen.*” Settled. That’s it. God did it. If you have difficulty believing the virgin birth, I’ll tell you what your real difficulty is. Your God is too small. Your God is too small.

Second point. I want you to see not only the sacred mystery of it, but I want you to see, and this is very important, **the saving ministry of the virgin birth**. Now let’s begin in Luke 2 verses 8 through 14, “*And there were in the same country shepherds abiding in the field, keeping watch over their flock by night. And, lo, the angel of the Lord came upon them, and the glory of the Lord shone round about them; and they were sore afraid.*” That means they were scared out of their wits. “*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,’*” underscore this phrase, “*“a Savior, 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.*” The virgin birth and the incarnation, that is, God being made flesh, was necessary for our salvation.

Now I want you to follow me here. God gave Adam and Eve dominion in the Garden of Eden. They sinned and they lost that dominion. They forfeited it. They turned it over to Satan. And rather than being servants of God, they became slaves of Satan. And they infected the entire human race with sin. Our dominion was lost by a M-A-N, a man. The only way it can ever be returned to us is by a man, another man, and that other man is the Lord Jesus. All of us today, are represented by one of two men, either Adam or Jesus. “*In Adam, all die;*” “*in Christ, all are made alive.*” First Corinthians 15 verse 22. And so, there’re really only two men who’ve ever lived, and the rest of us are part and parcel of those two men.

Now, Jesus Christ, the last Adam, came, born of a virgin, to undo what the first Adam did. Now, apart from the virgin birth, therefore, there is no hope of salvation. Well, how did He come to undo what the first Adam did? Well, the Bible

clearly, plainly teaches in Romans 6:23 that, *“The wages of sin is death.”* In Ezekiel 18 verse 20 we read, *“The soul that sinneth it shall surely die.”* And the Bible says in Hebrews 9 verse 22, *“Without shedding of blood is no remission.”* Now sin must be paid for. It must be atoned. And it must be atoned by shed blood. God in Spirit has no blood. Now God in Spirit, *“God is Spirit,”* the Bible says in John chapter 4 and verse 24. The great, eternal I AM is Spirit. Well, the great, eternal I AM cannot die. The great, eternal I AM cannot bleed. But this salvation was lost by a man. This dominion was lost by a man. Therefore, it must be redeemed by a man. *“For without shedding of blood is no remission.”*

But not just any man can do. This man must be a perfect man. He must be sinless, and He also must be innocent. Now, listen. We’re all sons and daughters of Adam by birth, and no son or daughter of Adam can qualify. Why? Put in your Bible Romans 5:12 in your margin. The Bible says, *“Wherefore, as by one man,”* his name is Adam, *“sin entered into the world, and death by sin, and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned.”* Is there anybody who would dare stand up and say, *“I’ve never sinned?”* Is there anybody who would have the audacity, the unmitigated gall, to stand up and say, *“I’ve never sinned?”* Of course not. We know that we’re sinners, by birth, by choice, by practice, by nature. Romans 3:23, *“For all have sinned and come short of the glory of God.”*

Now had Jesus Christ been born like we were born, He would have been a son of Adam. Had He been a son of Adam, He would have been a sinner. Had He been a sinner, He could not have been innocent. Had He not been innocent, He could have been nobody’s substitute: not mine, not yours, nobody else’s. The only sin He could die for would be His own.

Now God wants us saved. John 3:16, *“For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son,”* that we might be saved. And so, therefore, God’s answer is a man, but a sinless man, a perfect man, the God-man, the Lord Jesus Christ; someone who was both truly human and fully sinless. Human, that He might undo what the first Adam did, that He might shed blood, but that blood must be sinless blood.

Whose blood was in that baby? Wasn’t Mary’s blood. By the way, when a little baby is being carried in its mother’s womb, that little baby has a separate life from that mother. Sometimes these who call themselves pro-choice, I wish they would finish that sentence: choice to kill a baby. Somebody says, *“Well, we’ve decided not to have this baby.”* No, that’s not your decision. You’re going to have a baby. The only question is, are you going to have a dead one or a live one? There is a baby! There! *“Well, I have control over my own body.”* That’s not your body. It’s somebody else’s body. There’s a different blood in that baby. The mother may have one blood type; the baby has another blood type. Sometimes in a paternity suit in a law court a father may prove that he did not sire a baby by blood tests. How is that? Because the blood line is not determined by the mother, but by the father.

Whose blood circulated in that little baby? It was the blood of God. Now you say, “Now, wait a minute. You said a while back, God doesn’t have blood. God is Spirit.” Now you’re catching on. Listen. Acts chapter 20 verse 28. Put it down. Paul is talking to the Ephesian elders, and he said, “*Take heed, therefore, unto yourselves, and to all the flock, over which the Holy Ghost hath made you overseers,*” that is, a pastor better be careful because he has an obligation from God. The Holy Ghost has made him an overseer. That literally means a bishop. “*Take heed,*” he says, now listen, “*to feed the church of God, which He hath purchased with His own blood.*” “*Feed the church of God, which He,*” God, “*has purchased with His own blood.*” The blood of God circulated through that little baby in its mother’s womb. Sinless blood. Innocent blood. That’s the reason I said, “You take away the virgin birth, you have no hope of Heaven.”

He came as He did, born of a virgin, to be what He was, sinless. He was what He was sinless, to do what He did, die a substitutionary death. He died a substitutionary death to do what He did, atone for sin. He did what He did that we might be born again and go to Heaven. No sinless sacrifice, no atonement. No atonement, no new birth. No new birth, no new hope of Heaven. He was born of a virgin that we might be born again. He came to earth that we might go to Heaven. He became the Son of man that we might become the sons and the daughters of God. That’s what it’s all about. That is why we have the virgin birth. Now, had He not been born of a virgin, He would have been a son of Adam.

Mendel, who did his great work in genetics, said this, concerning genetics; that is the effect of our genetic code, our DNA on the rest of us. Here’s what he said, and I want you to listen to this. Mendel’s Law of Genetics, “Every individual is the sum total of the characteristics, recessive or dominant, in its two progenitors.” Every individual, everybody here, is the sum total of the characteristics, recessive or dominant, in its two progenitors; that is, its two parents. Now let me put that in plain English. All that was in your father and mother is in you. All! Not some, all. You are the sum total of the genetic characteristics of your father and mother.

Now, second thing, those characteristics, according to Mendel, may be recessive or they may be dominant. Now it may be they’re just kind-of lying low. So, your parents may have had good characteristics that are recessive in you, or they may have had bad characteristics that are recessive in you. Or they may have had good characteristics that are dominant in you or bad characteristics that are dominant in you, but it’s all there in you. And so it may in a way, skip a generation, apparently. That’s the reason you can blame your parents for your bad behavior. But, friend, it is there.

Now, you have to understand this. Now you can understand the reason for the virgin birth. Now remember, all that’s in your parents is in you. Now suppose the parents of the Lord Jesus Christ had been both deity, God plus God. Then He would have been God, because all that was in His parents was in Him. He would

have been God, fully God, yes, perfectly God. But there'd be no humanity there. He would be remote, unapproachable. There's no way that He could save.

Well, suppose that the parents of the Lord Jesus Christ had not been God plus God, but human plus human. Then Jesus would have been fully human. He would have inherited the characteristics of His Father and His mother. And, "*In Adam all die.*" He would have been a sinner and could have been nobody's Savior.

But now let's suppose that His Father, not suppose, but learn, that His Father is truly God. His mother is truly human. Then who is He? He is God in human flesh. He is the God-man. Not half God and half man. Not all God and no man. Not all man and no God. He is the only begotten Son of God. He is the only one qualified to die upon that cross for our salvation!

Never overlook, never mock the virgin birth. Thank God that God stepped out of Heaven and was born of a virgin. That's the reason the angel said in Luke 2 verse 10, "*This is good tidings of great joy which shall be to all people.*" Jesus Christ is not the white man's Savior, the black man's Savior, the yellow man's Savior, the western Savior, the eastern Savior. He is the Savior of the world. This is, "*Good news which is to all people.*"

The world needs Jesus. Jews and Gentiles need Jesus. Young and old need Jesus. Rich and poor need Jesus. Intellectual and illiterate, we all need Jesus. White man, black man, yellow man, red man, here, there, everywhere, this world needs Jesus. He is the virgin-born Son of God.

Now I come to the third and final point. I've talked about the sacred mystery of His birth. I've talked about the saving ministry of His birth. Let me talk to you about **the sovereign majesty of His birth**. Look again in Luke chapter 1 verse 30 to 33. Let's begin in verse 30, "*And the angel said unto her,*" the angel now is Gabriel; her is Mary. "*Fear not, Mary; for thou hast found favor with God. And, behold, thou shalt conceive in thy womb, and bring forth a son, and thou shalt call His name Jesus.*" And by the way, the name "Jesus," the Old Testament name, Joshua, same name, means Jehovah Saves. Now notice verse 32, "*And He shall be great, and shall be called the Son of the Highest; and the Lord God shall give unto Him the throne of His father, David.*" Now we're talking about the sovereign majesty of this baby, "*The throne of His father, David. And He shall reign over the house of Jacob forever; and of His kingdom there shall be no end.*"

Now as the Son of God, He shares the nature of God; like Father, like Son. Who is this baby, virgin-born? Plain, straight, simple, listen to me: He is God in human flesh.

Now, the Mormons don't accept this. Oh, they believe He is a God, but not the one true God. Jehovah's Witnesses do not accept this. Those of the Islamic faith do not accept this. The Unitarians do not accept this. The liberal theologians do not accept this. But let me tell you what the Bible says. Put in your margin Hebrews 1

verse 8, *“But unto the Son He saith, ‘Thy throne, O God,’”* now listen. He’s talking to the Son, to the Son, S-O-N, *“He saith, ‘Thy throne, O God, is forever and ever; a scepter of righteousness is the scepter of Thy kingdom.’”* This baby is as much God as if He were not man at all. He is the earthly child of a heavenly Father and the heavenly child of an earthly mother. That little baby lying in a manger, wrapped in swaddling clothes, with His dimpled feet touching the straw is the Mighty God of Genesis 1:1.

Do you believe it? I believe it. The apostle John believed it. John 1 verses 1 through 3, listen, *“In the beginning was the Word,”* the Word is another name for Jesus, *“In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God,”* now here it comes, *“and the Word was God. And the same was in the beginning with God. All things were made by Him; and without Him was not anything made that was made.”* He made the manger that He lie in. He is God from everlasting. Jesus did not begin with Mary in Bethlehem. He existed as ageless with His Father in Heaven. As has been well said, when He was born, He was as ageless as His Father and older than His mother. And He has come to rule and to reign.

What’s the world coming to? It’s coming to Jesus. His is the cradle that will rock the world. You can believe that.

One day our dear Savior is going to step out of the glory. And those blessed nail-pierced feet will touch the Mount of Olives, and there will be a great earthquake. And Jesus is going to make His way, ah, to Jerusalem. Read Isaiah chapter 9 verse 6, *“And the government shall be upon His shoulders.”* What’s wrong with the world today? Have you read the news this morning, yesterday, last week? Pick up any newspaper and you know there is something tragically wrong with our world, and it looks like we’re looking into the barrel of a loaded canon. There can be no real peace without the Prince of Peace. The answer to this world’s problems is the Second Coming of the Lord Jesus Christ. And the hope of the individual, the hope of the Church, the hope of the family, the hope of this nation, and the hope of this world is Jesus Christ.

There used to be an old English evangelist. His name was Henry Morehouse. And Henry Morehouse was a fearless preacher. He told a story I want to share with you. It’s, it’s an interesting story to me. He said in London there were a group of men many years ago who were in the London Zoo. And they were having a little contest to see how many rats a terrier dog could kill. And they were betting on these things, very much like men bet on horse races or bet on dog races, they go over there to the dog track. You know, that’s one of the few places where the windows clean the people. And they were betting on how many rats a terrier could kill in a given period of time. And they took this little terrier and put him in a pen with 25 vicious rats. And the terrier was killing those rats rapidly, but he didn’t kill enough. His owner lost some money on him. His owner pulled him out of that pit and kicked him and beat him mercilessly, and then in a fit of anger took the little dog and threw him over the fence into the lion cage, thinking the lion would devour

him. That old lion came over and looked at that pitiful creature there, beaten and bloody. The lion just kind of nosed him and cuddled him, and then kind of put his paws over him to protect him and looked at the man who had done such a thing. The old lion had seen it all. He was angry that such a thing had been done to another creature. About that time the zookeeper came, according to Henry Morehouse, and said, "Who did this? Who threw that dog in there?" And the man said, "Well, I did. I was just excited. I want you to get him out for me." The zookeeper acted like he didn't even hear it. Then again, the man got belligerent. He said, "I said I want my dog back." And there's the dog there, being protected by the lion. The zookeeper said, "You do? All right, I'll open the gate and let you go in and get him." Then Henry Morehouse said, "You know, I was like that, beaten, bruised, maimed, and wounded by Satan and by sin. And the Lion of Judah, the Lord Jesus, has come as my Savior and my Protector."

I'm so glad that we have such a wonderful Savior this Christmas season. You know, this is a wonderful, wonderful, wonderful time to tell about Jesus.

Some time ago, a lady received a telegram, she was middle-aged. The telegram told her that she had inherited a fortune in this day when a million dollars was truly a million dollars. She had inherited more than a million dollars. She was flabbergasted. She didn't even know that she had a relative that had that kind of money. She was so excited she didn't know what to do. She was home by herself. She went to the telephone, picked it up, and said, "Operator!" "Get me somebody on the line! Anybody!" Anybody! I want to tell them what has happened." Shouldn't we feel that way about Jesus? Oh, I just want to tell people about the Lord Jesus Christ.

Why the virgin birth? He came to earth that we might go to Heaven. The whole purpose is wrapped up in the substitutionary death. You see, the Bible says in Isaiah chapter 53 and verse 6, "*All we like sheep have gone astray. We have turned everyone to his own way; and the Lord hath laid on Him,*" on Jesus, "*the iniquity of us all.*"

Let this hand represent you. Let this Bible that tells about sin represent sin. You are a sinner, you know. You know that the Bible says in Romans 6:23, "*The wages of sin is death.*" You know that you are destined and doomed to eternity without Christ if something is not done about your sin. Because I can tell you, there is one thing God will not do, and that is, He will never overlook your sin. Is this getting through? There you are, there's your sin. Here's Jesus, virgin-born, the sinless Son of God! No taint in Him, no sin in Him, no blame on Him. And the Bible says, "*And the Lord hath laid on Him the iniquity of us all.*" Our sins are laid on Jesus. The sinless One carried those sins to the cross. And in agony and blood He died upon that cross to pay our sin debt. Because our sin is on Jesus, thank God, His righteousness is on us. That's good news. That's good news. And in Acts 16 verse 31 the Bible says it clearly, plainly, simply, sweetly, sublimely, "*Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and you will be saved.*"

If I could do it for you, I would. God knows I've preached as best I know how. If I could do it better, I would. God wants you saved. Why should you die and go to Hell when we have such a wonderful salvation? Why?

Bow your heads in prayer. Now, if you're not saved, truly saved, this is the time when you need to get saved. And I want to lead you in a prayer. And in this prayer this morning, you can pray and receive the Lord Jesus Christ as your personal Savior and Lord. Pray this way, "Lord God, I confess that I'm a sinner; that I need to be saved. Jesus, You died to save me, You promised to save me, if would trust You. I do trust You. I believe You shed Your blood on the cross to pay for my sin. I believe that God raised You from the dead. And I now receive You by faith as my personal Lord and Savior. Forgive my sin, cleanse me, save me, come into my life and begin now to make me the person You want me to be. And help me never, ever to be ashamed of You. Give me the courage to make this public, because I really mean business. In your name I pray, Amen."