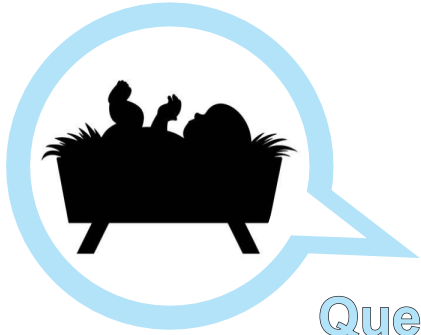


The Christmas Child

Part 2: Who Is He?

TALKINGPOINTS WALKINGPOINTS

2019.12.8



Talk together about the glory of God's kingdom. —Psalm 145:11
Love the Lord your God and **walk** in all his ways. —Joshua 22:5

Questions for Discussion & Application

Triangle Community Church aims to be a “transforming church”. We exist to be used by God as He transforms ordinary people into extraordinary followers of Jesus Christ. TCC believes not only that life-change is possible—but that it is to be expected. Growth is God's will for *all* his people. But transformation **does not** happen by accident. It requires intentional, intelligent action. 1 Timothy 4:7 instructs you to “discipline yourself for the purpose of godliness.” Since “**Talking Points, Walking Points**” is intended both for individual reflection and for group discussion, questions vary in degree of vulnerability required. Generally it is best to begin group discussions with questions which involve less personal disclosure—but don't linger there. Be sure to “dive deep” too! The questions which require the greatest openness and honesty, as well as those in the section entitled “**Digging Deeper in your Daily Quiet Time**”, are perfect for private reflection.

- Read Colossians 1:15-20. Is the profile of Christ presented there compatible with the view that Christianity is “just one way, among many, to get to God”? Why or why not?

Why is that view so attractive? Have you bought into it?

- From Colossians 1:15-20, list each truth you can find about Christ's identity and accomplishments.

Which of those truths would your non-believing friends or neighbors scoff at?

If all of these truths happened to be true, what sorts of life-changes would they need to make?

Which of these truths alter **your** understanding of “that baby in the manger”?

Since all of these truths **are** true, what sorts of life-changes will **you** need to make?

- What might appropriate worship of “the Christ of Colossians” look like?

Which of those elements currently are not part of **your** daily life?

What changes will you need to make?

Do you feel disconnected from God?

For free biblical counseling, write to:
BiblicalHopeAndHelp@gmail.com

Application-Challenge

- If you never have been reconciled to God through Jesus Christ—do so today! (If you make that decision, please note it on the “**connect FAMILY card**” so we can get you some helpful information that will help you grow in your faith.)
- Submit to Jesus as Lord of your life. Seek to please him in all you do.

Sermon Summary Key Passage: Colossians 1:15-20

During the Christmas season, it used to be common to find nativity manger scenes on public property. But that has become quite controversial today, sometimes bringing lawsuits. To be honest there has always been controversy surrounding this baby. Who was that baby in the manger? Some would say he is a mythical character. Others would say, a historical figure. Is he a created being or the Creator himself? Was he born of two human parents, or was he the child of one virgin? Was he just a great teacher or the author of truth itself? Is Jesus subordinate to God? Did God create Jesus as a kind of “junior partner” in the universe? Is Jesus just a divine ideal as New Agers conceive him, the divine spark in all of us, or is he the Lord of all? Who do you think He is—and why does it matter? Four questions help us identify any person: Colossians 1:15-20 answers all of these questions for us.

[1] Where is Jesus from? (v. 15) Jesus is “the image of the invisible God” and “the first born over all creation”. In Greek, the word “image” is “icon”. Hebrews 1:3 says that Jesus is “the radiance of God’s glory and the exact representation of His nature, and upholds all things by the word of His power.” Jesus makes the invisible God visible (also see John 14:7-9). Back to Colossians; Jesus also is called “the first born over all creation”. In Greek thought, “first born” doesn’t refer to birth order, but to rank and honor. Jesus is the physical revelation of the invisible God. He is the preeminent One. He is sovereign over creation, for he is the Creator. Jesus has existed from all time and eternity (John 1:1-3, 14, 18). Jesus came from heaven. He came to make the invisible God visible. Jesus is co-equal and co-existent with the Father. Equal in glory and honor and worship. And because of that, we can know God personally through Jesus. If you want to know what God is like, look at how Jesus lived, spoke and responded—to those who were really repentant when they sinned and to those who were hard-hearted and self-righteous.

[2] What does Jesus do? (v. 16-17) All things were created by Jesus! Everything—things in heaven and on earth. Things that are visible and invisible. Bacteria and galaxies. Angels, and their associated thrones, dominions, rulers, and authorities. Jesus existed before every created thing. He’s not just the Creator of everything, but also the sustainer of everything. He causes all things to hold together—keeps stars from falling out of the sky, keeps the seas at bay, keeps your heart pumping. And someone who can do all of that is worthy of our trust. Jesus is sovereign. He’s in control. Not a single sparrow falls to the ground without his knowledge and permission. God wants us to move beyond our images of a cute little baby in a manger to who that baby really was.

[3] What is Jesus’ role? (v. 18) Being Creator and Sustainer of all things and revealing the invisible God is only part of his job description. Jesus also is the founder and CEO of the church. By “church”, he doesn’t mean a building; he is talking about every born-again person in whom the Spirit of God dwells. If that describes you, Jesus is your head. And, Jesus is “the firstborn from the dead”. The Bible records ten individuals who were resurrected (see: 1 Kings 17:17-24; 2 Kings 4:18-37; 2 Kings 13:20-21; Matthew 27:50-54; 28:1-20; Luke 7:11-17; 8:49-56; John 11:1-44; Acts 9:36-42; 20:7-12). Nine of these died again, but Jesus is preeminent because when he rose he never died again! And, Jesus’ resurrection guarantees ours; Jesus is the source of resurrection life (1 Corinthians 15). Half of American Christians between the ages of 18-30 currently live with their boyfriend or girlfriend. They’ll say, “I believe in Christianity but this no sex before marriage thing...this is the 21st century. Give me a break!” About a third of Christian teens believe that same sex unions are OK as long as people love each other. But Jesus is our CEO, and we must obey him fully. Lord Jesus is not content to be among the gods you worship and obey; he demands first place (v. 18c). If Jesus does not have first place in your life right now, what are you going to do about it?

[4] What are Jesus’ goals? (v. 19-20) In coming as a baby, Jesus came to reconcile all things to himself. He came to make adversaries into friends! Jesus came to reconcile all of that through his substitutionary death on the cross. Through the cross, Jesus removed the barrier between God and man caused by our sin and rebellion; the ball is in our court now! To become reconciled to God, we have to place our trust in Jesus as our Savior.

Digging Deeper in Your Daily Quiet Time

“Five Question Bible Study” (see page below) is a simple way to study any topic. Throughout this week, let's learn more about the **mystery** of the Christmas Child...

Monday— Study Colossians 2:2, 3, 9. Jesus is God incarnate.

Tuesday— Study Ephesians 3:3-6. Jesus brings Jews and Gentiles together.

Wednesday— Study 1 Corinthians 15:51. Jesus will rapture his church.

Thursday— Study Colossians 1:27. Jesus in us guarantees our glorification.

Friday— Study Romans 11:25. Jesus' own people, Israel, do not believe.

Saturday— ***In preparation for worshiping your risen Lord tomorrow with your church family,*** study Colossians 1:21-28.

Bible Text: _____

Date: _____



What idea particularly strikes me from this text? [Note in which verse(s) it is found.]



What question does this text raise in my mind—and how would **this text** answer it?



What about Jesus Christ—his character and/or his redemption—relates to this text?



What action must I take as a result of this text? Be concrete and specific.



With whom will I share what I learned from this text? [and what was their response?]