

In this installment of "Decoding The Truth," we want to start talking more specifically about who Jesus was and why what He did was so important. In

light of Gnostic belief seeping into the minds of believers, it's very important we understand why Jesus is the only path of salvation, not simply one of many as Gnostics would teach.

As we talked about last time, we are sinners, and even if we somehow became perfect we did not start out that way. This means we have already done things worthy of death. Being born in innocence yet having the knowledge of good and evil in us, means no descendants of Adam will ever be able to live a perfect life. No matter how much we desire the truth, we still make mistakes and fall short of God's perfection. (Rom. 3:19-26) This clearly shows us we will not ascend because becoming godlike would require being perfect not just becoming perfect. Life is not about evolving to something greater and more powerful. Life is about living as God created us to live, and in our current state we have lost even that! Getting back what we have lost is going to take more than any descendant of Adam is capable of achieving; if that were not true we would not have lost it in the first place. This brings us not only to the conclusion that we need God to provide a Saviour, but it tells us a lot about exactly what a Saviour needs to be.

First, a Saviour must be perfect from the beginning; second, He must remain in perfection throughout His life. This is the nature of Jesus which many false teachers and fairy tale writers want to tell us is untrue about Jesus. They want to say Jesus fell to temptations just like any man, and that Jesus joined Himself with a woman or women while here on earth. Then they will try and tell you none of that changes who Jesus was and is. After hearing all this, you need to understand one simple thing, it all comes down to the question of, do you believe the Biblical version of Jesus or the one taught by these storytellers? Because, if Jesus did the things Gnostics teach He did, then He is not

DECODING THE TRUTH

PART III

The Saviour the Old Testament Scriptures tell us we need!

Thus, let us start at the beginning. One of the first

things men want to tell us is that Jesus was not born of a virgin. Sadly, many Christians do not even understand what the significance of saying this is! Many scholars and so called teachers will tell you that not believing in a virgin birth does nothing to affect who Jesus was. If we know the truth, we should understand this to be a clue; these men are speaking of something they know nothing about, or they are teaching something very different altogether! Again, if you're going to be a Saviour, then you have to, from the beginning of your existence, transcend what is common to humanity. Remember, Gnostics do not believe this fact because they do not believe we need a Saviour, only a guide. Thus, we are talking about two different things! God would have to provide Himself a Lamb, (Gen. 22:7-8) because only God could come down to this earth, take on human form, face the trials we face and get out of it alive, making a path we could all then follow. You see, a key difference between Gnostic and true Bible teaching is simply this: Gnostics believe there is a way to go on to a better place which is available to anyone who can obtain enough knowledge; and the Bible tells us only through God's grace is there a path of salvation for those who desire righteousness.

Perhaps the first thing we need to understand is why it was necessary for God to take on human form. Last time, we talked about God's perfection as God. As a perfect God, He is obligated to judge us. We are His creation. Perfection in justice demands wrong must be removed. It is like a cancer, if it is left unchecked it will destroy the entire system. So sin simply demands the death of the sinner. This is the power of death, hell, and the grave, but death belongs to these physical forms, not our mind and spirit. Thus, when we face death, if we are ever going to be whole again, there needs to be a way to replace these physical forms. Now, God can raise up these forms as many times as He

wills, (Matt. 9:1-8) but if we are going to live free from sin, we must dispose of this flesh altogether. Then we need to be reborn in a new form which preserves who we are, but is not vulnerable to the same thing which destroyed us in the first place. That is a tall order. Not destroying who we are and who we were created to be is a critical part of saving us instead of turning us into something altogether different. This is one of the simplest explanations as to why we must choose to live in the spirit. If our desire is the things of this flesh then God cannot give us a new form without violating who we have chosen to be.

Human's were created with a free will. Perfect justice dictates that a freewilled being not be forced, but asked to choose. This is a fundamental part of our creation! This world gave man a shot at perfection and we blew it. Choosing sin means we chose death. God warned us it was so. (Gen. 2:16-17) This dynamic will never change. These physical forms will have to die; which means, if we are going to get a second chance at life, something had to be done which would open a choice which did not exist in the beginning. The problem is that we were never intended to die. God gave us the Tree of Life and the Tree of Knowledge of Good and Evil, but He did not give us a tree of death. The Tree of Knowledge of Good and Evil was simply that - the knowledge of good and evil. The tree did not kill you, but being created in innocence, not perfection, means leaving innocence would bring the judgment of death. Thus, it is important we understand, death exists only because sin exists. (Rom. 5:12) Simply put, in the beginning there was no sin, therefore there was no death. Since there was no death, there was no way out of death made as part of our creation! However, the next part is where we see the truth of Scripture telling us that Jesus was "...the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world." Revelation 13:8 You see, God completed the creation of everything we know in just six days, but God waited one more day before He called creation complete. This left God with one day for Himself, in our creation, which He would hold for His purposes. (Gen. 2:1-3) Creation was complete, but once man fell into sin, death became a part of our existence and this meant a new work needed to be

added, a work which would and could redeem us from death. This is the new covenant Jesus spoke of. It's not the abolishing of the first, it is redemption from the result of our decisions under the first.

This is why we talk about the grace of God. (Eph. 2:8) Free will means the world works according to our choices. Our choices brought death, (Prov. 14:12) but the gift of God is a choice between our ways of death or His ways of life! (Rom. 6:23) To provide this, God had to come in the flesh. He had to literally enter our created cycle. He had to become a man, live as a man, make choices as a man, so a path could be cut through our existence which other men could choose to follow. He was a man, who, through His choices, could effect how the world worked. This is why God would take on human form. He would walk down the very same road Adam and Eve had started. God would live in our time constraint. He would have dependence on physical food and water. He would need to sleep when his body needed sleep. He would feel the things we feel, but most important, He would become vulnerable to the same death we are vulnerable to! Yes, God, for the very first time could be killed. He was mortal, and subject to the same perfection in justice that we are subject to, and Satan saw an opportunity like never before! You see, if God was mortal and subject to the same judgment as man, then He could find Himself trapped by death in the same way Adam's descendants had been. This fact very well may have been one of the primary reasons Satan messed with this creation in the first place! Satan knew that God's love would not allow man to simply be swallowed by death. If he could get man to rebel against God's Word, Satan knew the day would come when he would get the chance to attack God in the flesh. It was vital The Messiah live a perfect life or His life would mean nothing to us, but of more importance to Satan was the unfathomable possibility that he could destroy our perfect God!

I don't think we can fully appreciate just what a tremendous work Jesus did for us, what God put on the line for us, and what a disaster could have befallen all which exists if Jesus had not lived a

pure and perfect life! If we grasp it even just a little, we will stop asking why it mattered if Jesus did or didn't refrain from living a typical fleshly existence!

So, again we must return to the point of eternal perfection. It's not just about what we become; it's about what we have been. If Jesus was going to free us from death, He had to be perfect and spotless from the start. This is why the virgin birth was necessary. Saying Jesus was born of a virgin does not simply mean His mother knew no physical father to produce Him; it means Mary was a virgin before Jesus was conceived and after Jesus was born. Virginity in this light does not simply mean she had never known a man, it goes beyond that. Here the term also means her body had never produced a baby. She had carried a baby in her womb and she had given birth to a baby, but Mary's body had in no way produced a baby. After Jesus' birth, Mary and Joseph would have children of their own, but they were not Jesus' blood parents.

Let me say it this way. Jesus was no more a physical part of Mary than He was of Joseph. The angel Gabriel came to Mary and told her "...that which is conceived in your womb is of the Holy Ghost." If we read our biology book, we find conception does not happen in the womb! Jesus is the only begotten Son of God. (John 3:16) Jesus' physical form which contained Him, was created by God Himself and placed in Mary's womb. Adam and Eve were not born of the flesh. Adam was formed from the dust of this ground we live on. Eve was formed from Adam, but there is every reason to believe they were created with adult forms. Every other human to walk this earth would be their descendants, created by the physical process of egg and sperm coming together to provide all the necessary elements for independent human life, every other human except one, the "...only begotten Son of God" John 3:18; and just so there is no room for argument, Jesus, unlike Adam and Eve, would live His life from that very smallest and beginning moment of conception.

Human life begins at conception, and Jesus was created to begin at that moment, then placed by The Holy Ghost into the womb of Mary. There He

would grow and be born just like any other human child. He would live with parents who would worry about Him just like any other child. (Luke 2:48-49) He would eat, He would drink, He would feel cold and heat. He would be tempted by the fleshly desires as any man is tempted. The crucial part would be that Jesus, unlike other human children, would not be born as part of the hopeless cycle of sinful men. Jesus would be up to the challenge of being perfect. Not being part of our physical lineage meant Jesus' body would be as fresh as Adam and Eve's. He would not suffer the imperfection we suffer in the flesh. He would be a human, but His blood would be new. (I Cor. 15:42-47) The real difference would be that Adam was created in innocence and Jesus would be created in perfection!

Next time, we will continue our discussion about the perfection of Jesus. We will also talk more about why Jesus taking part in the kinds of activities many try to say His life consisted of, would have ruined His perfection!

Until next time, may The God of grace and mercy guide you into all truth as you study His Word!

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