



“This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased; hear ye him,”
Matthew 17:5.

The Divine Son

Lesson Aim: The study of Articles 6, 8, 7. 6. The virgin birth and deity of Jesus Christ. 8. His bodily resurrection and ascension back to His Father. 7. Christ’s blood atonement for fallen man.

L338. Date: December 1964. **Text:** Matthew 1:18-25; Hebrews 1:1-4.
Topic: “The Divine Son.”

INTRODUCTION—**“Unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given . . .”** Isaiah 9:6. These glad words must have chorused through the heart of Mary when, in Bethlehem, **“she brought forth her firstborn son, and wrapped him in swaddling clothes, and laid him in a manger . . .”** Luke 2:7. There was something wonderfully different about this child. Before His birth the angel Gabriel had named Him, **“The Son of the Highest,”** Luke 1:32. Upon further angelic instruction He was named **“Jesus”** by His foster-father, Joseph, Matthew 1:21. Another angelic messenger announced His birth to lowly shepherds calling Him, **“a Saviour . . . Christ, the Lord,”** Luke 2:11. Many years after, God the Father spoke from heaven to testify, **“This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased,”** Matthew 3:17. Today's study seeks to make this a blessed Christmas season by devoting special attention to Jesus Christ, the Divine Son of God. Jesus Christ is the heart and life of the Christian religion. “It owes its life and character at every point to Him. Its convictions are convictions about Him. Its hopes are hopes which He has inspired and which it is for Him to fulfill. Its ideas are born of His teaching and His life. Its strength is the strength of His spirit.”—James Denney. A true Christian is personally related to Christ. Through Him has come salvation (Acts 4:12) on the merits of His sacrifice (Ephesians 1:7). In Him one is made a new creature (II Corinthians 5:17). Only in Him can one have access to the Father (John 14:13; 15:16; Hebrews 10:19-25). No

wonder those who serve Him are called “Christians”— “Imitators of Christ.”

Recent lessons have developed the truths of the rapture, resurrections, judgments, and final destiny. Christian hope made each lesson bright. Such hope is built, however, on the birth, life, sacrifice, and resurrection of Jesus. This is the theme of today’s study.

EXPOSITION

I. INCARNATE IN THE FLESH, Matthew 1:18-25.

1. Pre-existence. The birth of Jesus Christ was not the beginning of His existence. He existed before Abraham lived—2,000 years before His birth to Mary, John 8:58. In eternity, before time began in the creation, He dwelt with the Father in glory, John 17:5. The Father loved Him before creation occurred, John 17:24. His birth to Mary was because the Father’s will “sent” Him into the world, John 17:8. Jesus said of Himself what no other man can ever say, **“I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end, the first and the last,”** Revelation 22:13. From eternity before time unto eternity beyond time, He is the same—yesterday, today and forever, Hebrews 13:8. Jesus is the eternal Son of God whose existence as a person does not depend upon His physical birth.

2. Prediction. The birth of Jesus was foretold. Prophets told of the tribe, town, family line, and other details concerning the birth of Jesus. See Isaiah 7:14; 9:6; Micah 5:2; and others. His birth was also foretold to Mary (Luke 1:26-38) and to Joseph (Matthew 1:20-25), including the announcement that the baby would be a boy whose name would be Jesus! Repeatedly, the writers of the Gospel records state, “This was done that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the prophets. . .” From many centuries before His birth to a few months therefrom, God’s plan developed in such perfect order that exact predictions were possible concerning the coming of the Messiah!

3. Problems. One can imagine Joseph’s amazement when he learned that Mary was to bear a child. The wedding had not yet been consummated. Surely he thought she had betrayed his love. His resolve to stop the wedding plans was halted only by an angel message informing him that Mary was to bear the Christ child.

It seems very likely that Mary also suffered because of the seemingly untimely conception. One can imagine how the tongues of the gossips of Nazareth wagged! No, it is not always easy to walk in the way of God. But Mary had already vowed, **“Behold the handmaid of the Lord; be it unto**

me according to thy word,” Luke 1:38. They took no time to offer explanations to those about them, but waited patiently for the birth of a child who was the Divine Son of God.

4. Metaphysical. The birth of Jesus Christ was supernatural. Gabriel explained it to Mary in these words, **“The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee, and 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,”** Luke 1:35. Jesus was conceived as a man without the agency of a human father. In fact, no coitus of any kind, natural or supernatural, took place. The will of God expressed itself in His power by enabling Mary to conceive and bear the Messiah. The angel said, “The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee. . .” but nowhere is the Holy Spirit called the father of Jesus. Jesus is the “Son of God,” not because of His paternity was of the Holy Spirit, but because of His eternal pre-existent relationship with the Father.

5. Excitement. The birth of the Lord Jesus aroused excitement among angels and men. As if heaven could not contain the blessed news, an angel came to announce His birth. But not one angel, mind you, but “a multitude of the heavenly host” announcing peace on earth among men and glory to God because His grace had produced a Savior. Some among men caught the vision also. Shepherds hastened away from their flocks to see the one born “a Savior . . . Christ the Lord,” Luke 2:15-17. Even men from a foreign country came to see Him and adore Him when they had seen His star from their Eastern home, Matthew 2:1-12. Cruel rulers who feared the increase of righteousness were also excited by His birth and sought to destroy Him, Matthew 2:3-8, 13-18. Yes, angels and men were excited by the birth of the Messiah, some to good deeds and some to evil.

6. Promise. The birth of Jesus Christ is the hope of the world. The angel which appeared to Joseph promised that this baby which Mary would bear “would save his people from their sins,” Matthew 1:21. The angel Gabriel promised Mary that her child “shall be called the Son of God,” Luke 1:35. These promises came true. It was not until thirty years afterward that Jesus revealed Himself as the Messiah. Approximately three years later He was crucified. Three days after burial, He arose from the grave. Now He ever lives to make intercession for us and is, indeed, the hope of the world.

7. Deity. The birth of Jesus as a man does not deny His divine nature. **“The Word was God,”** John 1:1. This statement is eternally true. The fact that the Word became flesh and dwelt among us so that His glory could be beheld does not obscure the fact that Jesus Christ is the Divine Son of God. “The virgin birth was a special miracle wrought by the Third Person of the Trinity, whereby the Second Person of the Trinity, the eternal son of God,

took to Himself a genuine and complete human nature, and was born as a man, without surrendering in any way His complete divine nature.”—Baker's Dictionary of Theology. The entire Gospel of John was written to produce faith that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, John 20:31. In the incarnation God was revealed in human flesh unto the redemption of sinners, Philippians 2:5-11.

II. VICTORIOUS OVER SIN, Hebrews 1:1-4.

1. Pure from sin. The personal life of Jesus Christ was unspotted by sin. His experiences in human flesh were not limited to a manger bed, choiring angels, amazed shepherds, and adoring wise men. He grew to manhood and lived as a man in the midst of man's daily cares. Yet, in it all He “did no sin, neither was guile found in his mouth,” I Peter 2:22. This does not mean He was not tempted as are other men. (See Matthew 4.) On the contrary, He “was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin,” Hebrews 4:15. He was not manifested to sample man's sins, but to take them away. To do this, He must remain pure. His victory over sin assures us that we, too, will surely triumph in Him.

2. Penalty for sin. God hath set Jesus forth to be a propitiation for sins through faith in His blood, Romans 3:25. To perform this purpose, He went to the cross where He died, “the Just for the unjust,” that He might bring us to God, I Peter 3:18. “The Babe of the Manger” and “the Christ of the Cross” are the same divine person! In His atoning death, God permitted the sinless Lord Jesus to become a sin-offering for guilty men so that they might receive forgiveness. Christians may joyfully proclaim, “**Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law. . .**” (Galatians 3:13) so that, “**there is no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus . . .**” Romans 8:1.

3. Power over sin. Jesus could not be held in the clutches of death. He laid down His life as a sin-offering, but He also took it up again to be a living Redeemer, Acts 2:24; John 10:17-18. Because He has paid the penalty for sin, now living with the keys of death and hell, He is able to forgive. The pronouncement of Jesus, and the experience of the redeemed, is that “the Son of man hath power on earth to forgiven sins,” Mark 2:10. Being able to save to the uttermost (Hebrews 7:25), He alone can be our Savior, Acts 4:12.

4. Power over death. The babe of Bethlehem grew into the man of Nazareth. In due time, He became the sin-offering victim on the cross at Calvary. He died. His body was hastily prepared for burial as the Sabbath was drawing near. He was placed in a tomb. But, upon the first day of the week certain women found His tomb empty. He had arisen from the dead!

To all believers He testifies, **“Because I live, ye shall live also,”** John 14:19. Again He bears witness, **“I am he that liveth, and was dead; and, behold, I am alive for evermore, Amen; and have the keys of hell and of death,”** Revelation 1:18. He has gained the victory already, and we gain it through Him! See John 5:24-29.

5. Power to forgive. Jesus has the ability to bestow forgiveness wherein the guilt of sin is completely removed. Paul alludes to this in Romans 8:1. The reason one “in Christ Jesus” has “no condemnation” is because there is no guilt of sin imputed to him. Through faith in Him, each believer is freely forgiven every sin, Acts 13:39. Not only has Jesus power to forgive, He is also willing to forgive. No one who comes to Him is ever cast away, John 6:37. In His grace, those sins which are as scarlet find themselves made as white as snow, Isaiah 1:18.

6. Deliverance from bondage. **“The law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death,”** Romans 8:2. Paul argues in Romans 6 that, in salvation, Christ delivers us from sin's dominion as well as from its penalty. This is the message of this holiday season: In the Lord Jesus, God's grace has provided complete deliverance from sin's penalty, bondage, and even from its presence after the rapture. Blessed message indeed!

III. SAVIOUR OF MEN, I John 1:9—2:2.

The angels announced the birth of a “Saviour.” Though the verses given above are not in the lesson text, they should be considered as a part of this study and in exposition of the seventh Article given in the Lesson Aim: “Christ's blood atonement for fallen man.” How can a man be saved?

1. Confession, verse 9. Though God knows all, He wishes that we admit our sin and need of mercy before forgiveness is granted. Hence confession and faith walk hand in hand in the redeeming miracle, Romans 10:9-13. He who refuses to confess his sins and need of grace will never enjoy the forgiveness which grace brings. Covering sins brings judgment but confessing them moves mercy, Proverbs 28:13. The confession of sins is to be made to God and not to man. After all, only God is able to forgive so He alone needs to hear our admission of need and call for mercy.

2. Jesus, verse 2. Forgiveness comes only through Jesus. There is no other name mentioned among men which brings redemption save the name of Jesus, Acts 1:12. He alone has the words of eternal life (John 6:68) and God cannot be approached except through Him, John 14:6. It is in Him only

that a sinner can receive the righteousness of God, II Corinthians 5:21. As enticing as other plans may sound, a man is saved through Jesus Christ or he is never saved at all. It Is Jesus only, but He is enough!

3. Blood, verse 2. **“He is the propitiation for our sins.”** The word of God says that salvation is through the blood of Jesus, Ephesians 1:7; I Peter 1:18-20; etc. Jesus Himself said, **“My blood . . . is shed for many for the remission of sins,”** Matthew 26:28. God adds that without the shedding of blood there is no remission, Hebrews 9:22. Paul says Jesus is the One, **“Whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation through faith in his blood . . .”** Romans 4:25. Men may deny it, ignore it, contest it, debate it, or believe it. Their opinions make no difference! God's Word still says that there is no forgiveness of sins apart from the atonement which Jesus brought by His sacrifice on the cross. This sacrifice is demonstrated in His shed blood. All Old Testament sacrifices predicted it. Those who believe have experienced it: “redemption through His blood,” Ephesians 1:7.

QUESTIONS

1. Why is the religion about Jesus called “Christianity”?
2. What does “pre-existence” mean as related to Christ?
3. What two angelic appearances announced the coming birth of Jesus?
4. What is the meaning of “virgin birth”?
5. How did Jesus become the penalty for our sins?