

The University Heights Messenger

December 26, 2010

That Baby Grew Up

This year Jackie and I have received several Christmas cards from Christians with the little baby Jesus surrounded by his parents, shepherds, and magi displayed prominently on the front. Some of those cards from brethren say things like, "Remember Jesus, the reason for the season!"

As most Bible Christians know (or should) nowhere does Scripture ever tell Christians to celebrate the birth of Jesus Christ. If we *were* to celebrate then certainly God would have told us in Scripture when Jesus was born and what actions we were to take in celebrating His birth, which He did not. Christmas is a nice time to gather with family, exchange gifts, and enjoy one another's company. Is it a *religious* holiday? Scripture is completely silent on it so that tells us that in God's eyes the answer is absolutely not.

Having said all of that, this article is not about Christmas and the religious implications most of the world considers attached to it. This article is about that little baby on the front of Christmas cards and in nativity scenes across this country and other parts of the world this time of year. Quite simply, that baby grew up.

Several passages come to mind. When Gabriel spoke to Mary in Luke 1:31-33 he said, **"And behold, you will conceive in your womb and bear a son, and you shall call his name Jesus. He will be great and be called the Son of the Most High. And the Lord God will give to him the throne of his father David, and he will reign over the house of Jacob forever, and of his kingdom there will be no end."** In Luke 2:11 an angel, in speaking to the shepherds, said, **"For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, who is Christ the Lord."**

Do you realize that the entirety of Jesus' life before His baptism by John is recorded in Luke 2:7-45 and Matthew 2? Next to nothing is revealed about Him until around His thirtieth year. Why would that be? Simply because the One who would sit on David's throne and reign over the house of Jacob forever, the One whose kingdom would never end, the One who would be a Savior to His people was the *man* Jesus, not the baby.

When the baptizer saw Jesus walking toward he and his disciples he exclaimed, **"Behold, the Lamb of God, who takes away the sins of the world!"** (John 1:29). John was indicating the man Jesus, not the baby. In Matthew 7:28-29 we read, **"And when Jesus finished these sayings, the crowds were astonished at his teaching, for he was teaching them as one who had authority, and not as their scribes."** It was not the cooings of a baby that astonished them but the authoritative teaching of an extraordinary man. In Matthew 28:18-20 we read, **"All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you. And behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age."** Our Lord's disciples were gazing upon the resurrected Jesus Christ, not a mewling infant wrapped in swaddling.

What's the point? Far too many rediscover their "Christianity" for a few weeks at this time of year. Far too many see that helpless baby in the manger and feel a momentary pang in their heart. They feel drawn toward the nearest church building, a number of whom will be performing their yearly nativity of Christ plays, accompanied by

beautiful music and singing. Some of them will even have real life animals and a specially built structure to make the entire thing seem more real. Before the play is through tears will flow, joyful shouts will sound, and enthusiastic clapping will reverberate through the building. People will leave those buildings feeling refreshed, rejuvenated, and with that tiny baby on their mind. Many of them will not be bothered with spiritual thoughts until about a year from then when they do it all over again. Could that be one reason God never told us to celebrate Jesus' birth?

In Matthew 26:26-29 our Lord instituted the Lord's Supper with His apostles. In 1 Corinthians 11:23-25, the apostle Paul said, **"For I received from the Lord what I also delivered to you, that the Lord Jesus on the night when he was betrayed took bread, and when he had given thanks, he broke it, and said, 'This is my body which is for you. Do this in remembrance of me.' In the same way also he took the cup, after supper, saying, 'This cup is the new covenant in my blood. Do this, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of me.'"** Here is the Christian's memorial, received from the mouth of the Lord Jesus Himself. It is a memorial to be celebrated each first day (Acts 20:7).

It was truly wonderful that the baby Jesus entered this world. We ought to be grateful for it. But the man Jesus had the words of eternal life. Be grateful that Jesus the baby came, but remember that He grew up. Let us listen to and obey the man Jesus every day of our lives! In that way lies salvation.

AL

IN NEED OF PRAYERS:

Jeff Howerton continues his recovery in Cardinal Hill. He is also mourning the loss of his mother, **Vera Howerton**.

Joseph Miller (Jackie's brother) is recovering from having his tonsils removed last Wednesday.

Glyon Hill, a friend of Pat Seabolt, has been diagnosed with colon cancer.

Vina Krassow (friend of the Morelan's) is suffering kidney difficulties.

Our members: **Jim Edwards, The Daniels' family, Glenn Davis, Glenn Kimberlin, Janet Brundige, Harrod family.**

Others: **Robin Miller, Tom Curtis, Ann Sego, John Bennett, Dennis Brennan, Sara Phillips, Robert and Sarah Brundige, Kay Montgomery, Donald Dawson, Jean Gartland, Wes Kidd, Gail Stein, Shannon Gilbert, Chuck McDavitt**

UPCOMING EVENTS:

Streaming Bible study every Tuesday at 7. Please remember to tell people about this effort.

BIBLE READING SCHEDULE

Sun: Ezek 19-20, Ps 119:137-144, Col 1-2
Mon: Ezek 21-22, Ps 119: 145-152, Col 3-4
Tue: Ezek 23, Ps 119:153-160, 1 Thes 1-2
Wed: Ezek 24-26, Ps 119:161-168, 1 Thes 3-5
Thu: Ezek 27-28, Ps 119:169-176, 2 Thes 1
Fri: Ezek 29-31, Ps 120, 2 Thes 2-3
Sat: Ezek 32-33, Ps 121, 1 Tim 1-3

SERMON TOPICS:

Sunday AM.
Sunday PM.