

Matthew 1:18-25 sermon study -His Terms

The problem as we get into this study of the virgin conception of Mary is illustrated by Dawkins well:

The nineteenth century is the last time when it was possible for an educated person to admit to believing in miracles like the virgin birth without embarrassment. When pressed, many educated Christians today are too loyal to deny the virgin birth and the resurrection. But it embarrasses them because their rational minds know it is absurd, so they would much rather not be asked. God Delusion pg 157

Nobody wants to look foolish so we have found two ways to make the incarnation less foolish.

1. We accept the shame of infidelity and a sinful birth of Christ in order to make our new Jesus more palatable
 - a. *Rob bell says:- What if tomorrow someone digs up definitive proof that Jesus has a real, earthly, biological father named Larry, and archaeologists find Larry's tomb and do DNA samples and prove beyond a shadow of a doubt that the virgin birth was really just a bit of mythologizing the Gospel writers threw in to appeal to the followers of Mithra and Dionysian religious cults that were hugely popular at the time of Jesus, whose gods had virgin births? Rob Bell -Velvet Elvis*
2. We make the incarnation less offensive by making Mary somehow more than a normal human. Some kind of superwoman without sin - this has been the catholic strategy - immaculate conception.
 - a. This is a highly recommended sermon by John Macarthur regarding this problem in full:
 - i. <http://www.gty.org/Resources/Sermons/90-317>

The world does not want a savior on these terms.

The central proposition of the text is that...

It is either the shame of infidelity or the scandal of the incarnation. Choose.

Its either the shame of Infidelity (Matthew 1:18-19)

-His line shows who his father was (Matt. 1:1-17 Son of David legally through Joseph- also through Mary biologically). His birth shows who his father wasn't (not the physical son of Joseph- but instead the Son of God). Discuss.

-Read Deuteronomy 22:13-21. If Mary were not a virgin, if Jesus' real father was named 'larry' as Rob Bell stated earlier what would she be?

-Read John 8:39-42. If Mary was not a virgin, what would that make Jesus?

-Read the following article and discuss:

<http://pleaseconvinceme.com/2012/was-jesus-really-conceived-of-a-virgin/>

Or the scandal of Incarnation Matthew 1:20-23

-The world is not ashamed of infidelity but it is scandalized by the incarnation. One main attack is to divorce Isaiah from Matthew

-Take the time to read the following article and discuss (it seems long because of footnotes):

<http://pleaseconvinceme.com/2012/was-jesus-really-conceived-of-a-virgin/>

Choose Matthew 1:24-25

-Regarding the superhero side of Mary presented at the intro. The Catholic Church insists that Mary remained a perpetual virgin. Read Matthew 13:55-56. What do you think of that?

-not only did she have other children but they chose the shame of a brother born through whoredom over the greater scandal of a brother who is God incarnate. Read John 7:3-5.

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-Read Acts 1:12-14. Something changed.

-Read James 1:1. Why is this intro important? What changed for James?

-Read 1 Corinthians 15:7.

-Read 1 Corinthians 1:18-25. This verse leads us to **the main idea**:

People will choose to believe in a Jesus who was born in sin and shame. Or they will choose to believe in a Jesus who was born to a supernatural mother. Either of these choices is less scandalous than choosing to believe that a normal sinful human became pregnant with God. This is the real scandal of the incarnation.

This is accepting Jesus on His own terms. And Joseph is the first person to do that.

Here is the Implication:

*Man's maker was made man,
that He, Ruler of the stars, might nurse at His mother's breast;
that the Bread might hunger,
the Fountain thirst,
the Light sleep,
the Way be tired on its journey;
that the Truth might be accused of false witness,
the Teacher be beaten with whips,
the Foundation be suspended on wood;
that Strength might grow weak;
that the Healer might be wounded;
that Life might die.
Augustine of Hippo (Sermons 191.1))*

We must choose Jesus on His terms.

Do you believe that man's maker was made man?

That the ruler of the stars nursed at a teenaged girls breast?

That the Bread of life became hungry?

That the Fountain of life became thirsty?

That the Light of the world became sleepy?

That the only Way became tired on His journey?

That the only Truth became accused of lying?

That the Teacher became a whipping boy?

That the Foundation of the universe became suspended on a wooded cross?

That Strength itself became weak?

That the Healer of all became wounded?

That Life died?

These are the terms demanded by the incarnation...from the cradle to the cross We must choose Jesus on His terms.

How should this message impact your life? Your night? Your day tomorrow? Be specific and actionable.