

Rev. Janet Doyle
Elmer Presbyterian Church
First Sunday of Lent 2022
March 6, 2022
Scripture: John 1:1-5,14 ; Luke 4: 1-13
Sermon: Being Human

At Advent and Christmas time we celebrate that Jesus has come to earth. Theologians call it the Incarnation –God in human flesh. The Bible calls him Immanuel—God with us. ***Immanu*** means “with us.” ***El*** refers to Elohim, or God. So Immanuel is not an “above-us God” or “somewhere God,” or “not interested God.” Jesus is the “***with-us-God.***” God came to be with us all. Not just the rich and famous. God came to be with the poor, the sad, the unloved and the loved. God came not just for a brief period of time 2000 years ago but to be with us always. He promised us “***I am with you always to the very end of the age.***” (Matthew 28:20) ***God is with us.***

God sent prophets, teachers, apostles, and showed the people miracles and still people wouldn't listen to God so God came himself; he sent his Son. “***The Word became flesh and***

dwelt among us.” (John 1: 14) God came as a baby and was human and also divine. God came into the world and Mary and Joseph were there that one starry night. Mary and Joseph had angels visit them informing them what was going to happen.

Mary’s angel said to her, “Do not be afraid, Mary; you have found favor with God. You will conceive and give birth to a son, and you are to call him Jesus. He will be great and will be called the Son of the Most High. The Lord God will give him the throne of his father David, and he will reign over Jacob’s descendants forever; his kingdom will never end.”

Mary understood that the child she held was set apart from any other that had ever been born. She knew what the angel had told her and what her heart confirmed: this was the Son of God. They had visitors from the fields that night Jesus was born. An angel said to the shepherds, “Do not be afraid. I bring you good news that will cause great joy for all the people.

Today in the town of David a Savior has been born to you; he is the Messiah, the Lord." The Son of God became the child of Mary and the child of Mary was also her Savior.

King Herod was searching for the newborn King. Even when Jesus was a baby his life was in danger and they had to flee to Egypt to be safe.

Jesus came to earth in obedience to the Father's will. Jesus came according to the plan of God. ***When the time had fully come, God sent forth his Son."*** (Galatians 4:4")

He came from the light into the darkness. He came from splendor into poverty. He came from purity into a world of sin. He came from his Heavenly Kingdom to a world in need of saving.

Jesus is also referred to as the Son of Man, which emphasizes Jesus' humanity. God himself entered the human

race in the form of a tiny baby and grew up to be a man who understood the life of humans; he was God who came to us.

It is important for us to remember this as we begin this Season of Lent. As we think about Jesus' life, the miracles he did and the healings of people along his path we are reminded that he was human and he was divine.

This is the central truth of our faith, and it is the point at which we part company with other religions that believe that Jesus was just a good man and not the Son of God; not the Savior and that he didn't die on the cross for our sins. To be a Christian you have to believe that Jesus is God and came to save us from our sins and eternal punishment.

Jesus came to this earth to do the Father's will. Jesus said, ***"For I have come down from heaven, not to do My own will, but the will of Him who sent Me." (John 6:38)***

When Jesus was praying to the Father in anticipation of His upcoming death and suffering on the cross, He said, ***“Not as I will, but as You will.” (Matthew 26:39)***

God’s will was for Jesus to die for our sins and Jesus fulfilled His Father’s will. (John 19:30)

Philippians 2:7-8 says, ***“Jesus made himself of no reputation, taking the form of a bondservant, and coming in the likeness of men. And being found in appearance as a man, He humbled himself and became obedient to the point of death, even the death of the cross.”***

The heart of our faith is this certain truth: God has come down to us in the person of Jesus. The manger was simply another step along the way to the cross. Jesus’ coming as a baby was for the purpose of dying on the cross. Jesus is the perfect sacrifice. Jesus died, in the flesh, in human form, taking

our place for our sins. Our faith is about what Jesus Christ did for us. He came for us.

Jesus came as a baby and grew into a man—taking on our humanity, yet remained faithful to the Father. In our reading from Luke 4 we see Jesus going into the wilderness for 40 days and was tempted by Satan and each time he stood strong and remained without sin. Jesus' time in the wilderness reinforces to us his humanity as he struggled with temptation as we do.

Jesus came to seek and to save the lost and give us eternal life. We are all lost without knowing Jesus. We need to have a heart for God. Isaiah 53:6 reminds us that ***“we have all strayed like sheep. Each one of us has turned to go his own way.”***

We all want to go our own way and that is usually not in the direction of God. We didn't even know we were lost until Jesus came down from heaven seeking us out.

Jesus came as a Savior, on a mission, to seek and save the lost. It was like a military mission to save us and he saves us by dying for us. Jesus came to forgive us. If we believe, confess our sins, and ask for forgiveness and obey Christ in our life we will be forgiven and freed from the bondage of sin and live with him forever in eternity.

Author David Jeremiah from his book, *Why the Nativity?*

Writes:

“Now, as ever, the world lies in its own rubble, its own self-inflicted darkness and pain. The greatest enemy of all is the irresistible force within us, the thing known in the Bible as sin. We are all too aware of its grip upon us. We know that its only work is that of our destruction. And yet we enslave ourselves to it in every way. No one has the power to rise above the tendrils of sin. Therefore the ruin of our fallen state is all around us. The debris is all-pervasive. Our world’s inhabitants, billions of them, long for their rescue, often without even realizing what that longing is for.

Then a light shines in the darkness. A beacon slashes through our despair.

It is Jesus. He stands among us and says, “I have come to seek and to save the lost—to find you and to restore you.”

The primary reason he came to earth was to perform a rescue mission. Jesus also mentioned a secondary goal. He said, “My purpose is

to give them a rich and satisfying life” ([John 10:10](#)). When he said those words, he was talking about sheep again. He said that a false shepherd simply uses the sheep; a true shepherd loves them enough to give his life for them. “I have come not only to rescue you,” he was saying, “but to help you see all the wonderful possibilities that life can hold for you. I want you to squeeze every single drop of joy out of this life. And if I - didn’t come to show you, you would never know how.”

Max Lucado in his book *JESUS: The God Who Knows Your Name*, that we are studying for our Lenten Series this year writes, “Mary looks into the face of the baby. Her son. Her Lord. His Majesty. She can’t take her eyes off him. Somehow Mary knows she is holding God. So this is he. He looks like anything but a king. His face is prunish and red. His cry, though strong and healthy, is still the helpless and piercing cry of a baby. And he is absolutely dependent on Mary for his well-being.

Majesty in the midst of the mundane. Holiness in the filth of sheep manure and sweat. Divinity entering the world on the floor of a stable..She touches the face of the infant God. ..God also becomes; he not only looks down, but he also lives among; he not

only talks to us, but he also lives with us as one of us. God with us.” (p. 16-17)

I love the hymn written by Mark Lowry and Buddy Greene, called “**Mary Did You Know.**” We have it in our hymnbook and we are going to sing it in a minute to remind us of Jesus’ humanity and divinity and the reason Jesus came to earth.

Listen to the words:

Mary did you know that your baby boy will some day walk on water?

Mary did you know that your baby boy will save our sons and daughters?

Did you know that your baby boy has come to make you new?

This child that you’ve delivered, will soon deliver you.

Mary did you know that your baby boy will give sight to a blind man?

Mary did you know that your baby boy will calm a storm with his hand?

Did you know that your baby boy has walked where angels trod?

And when you kiss your little baby, you have kissed the face of God.

Oh, Mary did you know

The blind will see, the deaf will hear, the dead will live again.

The lame will leap, the dumb will speak, the praises of the lamb.

Mary did you know that your baby boy is Lord of all creation?
Mary did you know that your baby boy would one day rule the nations?

Did you know that your boy is heaven's perfect lamb?
This sleeping child you're holding is the great I AM.

As you prepare your hearts for communion today, this First Sunday in Lent, think about how much God loves you and that he knows your name. He created us and wants us to understand the reason he came to earth—the reason was you; to save you and give you new life.

“The Word Became Flesh and made his dwelling among us.”

(John 1: 14)

Come to the Lord's Table and begin your journey to Jerusalem this Lent with your Savior.