Sermon- Advent 1 Dec. 1, 2021

Title: The Birth of God: How…and Why?

Text: Luke 1:26-38

**Man’s limited understanding**

 **This midweek Advent series originally came from a question asked by a student in a confirmation class when they were briefly studying the life of Jesus. She asked, “When Jesus was our age, did He know that He was God?”**

 **The response of the pastor was, “That’s a hard question. I don’t know if I’ve ever been asked that.”**

 **That question got the pastor to thinking and me, too, as I thought about it. You know, there are a lot of hard questions like this that nobody is asking these days, and for some of those questions there are what I call, “Advent Answers”. For, after all, isn’t that precisely what Advent is all about? – that is: preparing to celebrate that time “When heaven met Earth,” when God first took on human flesh in the person of Jesus and preparing for that ultimate Advent when that same Jesus Christ shall come in the fullness of the Godhead!**

 **So that young lady’s question gives us an idea for our Advent series this year- hard questions that hardly anybody is asking, but have answers here in Advent, Christ coming to earth, heaven meeting earth. And the first hard question that hardly anybody is asking but that we will address is this one tonight:**

**HOW can God take on Human flesh…And WHY?**

**I)**

 **Imagine yourself a missionary in a remote part of New Guinea trying to share your faith with people who have never heard of this God of ours. For that matter, imagine yourself talking over the fence with your neighbor who knows nothing about the Christian faith. How would *you* describe God? Remember the Thanksgiving Eve service? The Creedal Thanksgiving message about God? You know, the one true and only God we trust for everything, our lives and eternal destinies, the God whom we believe, teach and confess, whom we worship and serve, and with whom we have daily conversations and prayer? That one true and only God?**

 **Awesome. Glorious. Eternal. How in this world do you describe something that has no beginning and no ending? So, try again, and then give up trying, to describe or explain God. The might and majesty of almighty God are infinitely beyond out ability to comprehend, which is a good thing. I can’t fit my God into some little box of my own understanding, to carry around with me like some others do their idols, because there’s a whole great deal of things I’d like to know about God I’m just not going to get the answers for in this lifetime!**

 **While we have many words to describe God, we can never explain Him, just marvel at Him, this God and creator of the universe, that is and brought Light out of darkness, the seas and stars and mountain and plains, the animals and plants and birds and fish, Man and Woman, those that He loves.**

**And no less, out of nothing! All that we see, touch, smell and hear that is good- God made it. He is our amazing God!**

**II)**

 **That is the context of today’s hard question that hardly anybody is asking: How can God-this God who is infinitely beyond all description or explanation or comprehension- how can God take on human flesh…and why would He do it?**

 **How? John, using the same words to begin hiss Gospel as did the writer of Genesis, penned, “In the Beginning was the Word and the Word was with God, and the Word was God”… and the Word created life and light and the totality of creation: “And the Word became flesh and dwelt amongst us,… full of grace and truth.” (Jn 1:1, 14)**

 **How? You know the story as well as I. and it is just as much a mystery and miracle as all that has just been said. It’s the story we just read, the story of a young girl named Mary, chosen to be the human mother of this Holy God, conceived in her by the Holy Spirit. And in a stable in Bethlehem, quietly and with a faithful man named Joseph looking on, God did take on human flesh, and His name was- Jesus. How? Mystery and Miracle.**

**III)**

 **For me, the next question is always- Why? The baby’s name gives response to WHY God took on human flesh. Jesus is a form of the same name as Joshua, both which mean “Savior”. The first man and woman, made in the image and likeness of God, fell from holiness but not from grace. Likewise, for every created human being since that first free fall into sin. The world would never be the same as when first created; sin is powerful, and sin is deadly, and sin wreaks havoc upon all people. The world needed a Savior. But the qualifications were steep: the Savior had to be someone who was still holy, without sin. But the Savior also had to be someone who would be able to endure the consequences of sin- pain and suffering and death- and then, snuff out its evil power through the new life of resurrection.**

 **Why did God take on human flesh? Because He loves us enough to say, “I’ll never give up on them. I’ll never leave them. I, the Father, will send them my only Son, to be born among them and to live among them and to save them from the curse of their sins.” So it was, on that night we call Christmas, “When heaven met Earth.” Amen.**

**Prayer**