



No Ordinary Baby

John 1:1-14

For those who are new, I generally distribute a Bible study every week during the legislative session and when the legislature meets at other times during the year. The studies have focused on the Gospel of John and can be found at www.capitolcom.org/south-dakota.

Christmas is just around the corner. The Capitol is beautifully decorated with Christmas trees, and we are eagerly waiting for this special day to arrive. From a Biblical perspective the well-known Christmas story – the story of the birth of Christ – is found in the second chapter of the Gospel of Luke. It is here we find the familiar story of a forced journey to Bethlehem by Mary and Joseph, an inn with no room, and a birth in a stable. We learn of how angels appeared to shepherds and how they came to find the baby and worship Him.

This story tells us what happened, how Jesus came to be born. It is really from a human perspective as we are told what happened to different people that night. The gospel of John does not contain this story. John assumes that his readers already know this story and instead he focuses on a different perspective – a divine perspective of what was taking place that night.

John introduces his book in the first 14 verses:

In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. ² He was in the beginning with God. ³ All things came into being through Him, and apart from Him nothing came into being that has come into being. ⁴ In Him was life, and the life was the Light of men. ⁵ The Light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not comprehend it.

⁶ There came a man sent from God, whose name was John. ⁷ He came as a witness, to testify about the Light, so that all might believe through him. ⁸ He was not the Light, but he came to testify about the Light.

⁹ There was the true Light which, coming into the world, enlightens every man. ¹⁰ He was in the world, and the world was made through Him, and the world did not

know Him. ¹¹ He came to His own, and those who were His own did not receive Him. ¹² But as many as received Him, to them He gave the right to become children of God, even to those who believe in His name, ¹³ who were born, not of blood nor of the will of the flesh nor of the will of man, but of God.

¹⁴ And the Word became flesh, and dwelt among us, and we saw His glory, glory as of the only begotten from the Father, full of grace and truth.

John does not start with a baby in a manger. He takes us back to the beginning. The language here is that of Genesis 1. We are taken back to Creation, but we learn that the “Word” (Christ) was pre-existent. He WAS in the beginning. At the time of Creation He already was. This is the first evidence John gives of the deity of Jesus.

The second evidence of the deity of Jesus is that He was coexistent with God. “And the Word was with God.” There are two important ideas in this short phrase. The first is that it distinguishes between God and the Word. There are two distinct persons. This is a reference to the trinity. There is one God who exists as three distinct persons. God is one in essence and three in person. The Word (Jesus) is the second person of the trinity.

The second important idea in this phrase has to do with our understanding of the word “with.” Here it means more than merely existing together. It has the meaning of a face-to-face, intimate relationship. **The Word is coexistent with God, and therefore, must be God.**

“The Word was God” John wants to be clear – Jesus is God. Though distinct in person He is nevertheless God. Writing Him off as a great moral teacher is not an option. He is more than that.

Not only is Jesus pre-existent with God existing before creation, but verse three tells us that He is the agent of creation. He is the source of everything in existence.

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Not only is Jesus the creator, pre-existent, and coexistent with God, He is self-existent. "In Him was life." He is the source of life. He is not given life as we are, rather He gives it.

Moving to verse 14, we find that although He existed with God, and was God, He humbled Himself and came in the likeness of man.

¹⁴And the Word became flesh, and dwelt among us, and we saw His glory, glory as of the only begotten from the Father, full of grace and truth.

God became flesh. The source of life was born as a baby. He dwelt among us. He experienced every aspect of life that we do. When He came he did not come as a king upon a throne; He came as a baby in a manger in an obscure Jewish village.

He came into the world He had made. But there were no waiting crowds. Without the pronouncement by the angels to the shepherds no one would have even known of His birth. The long awaited Messiah of the Jews arrived with no human fanfare. His own people did not recognize Him for who He was. The world was full of sin and darkness and was not interested in the light. It rejected the light of the truth. He was crucified, not worshipped as God.

Christmas is a big deal. We celebrate it with parties, festivities, and gifts. It is the biggest holiday. We look forward to Christmas and count down the days. But like the first Christmas when God arrived on earth without anyone really noticing, most who celebrate Christmas miss the Baby.

On that first Christmas God was giving a gift. The gift of His Son. There was a reason that God came to earth as a baby. "For God so loved the world that He gave His only Son."

The baby in the manger was God in the flesh. He came to die. "So that whoever believes in Him shall not perish but have eternal life. For God did not send the Son into

the world to judge the world, but that the world might be saved through Him."

The world needs a Savior. You and I need a Savior. The penalty for our sin is death. We deserve to die for the sinful things we have done.

The only way out is for someone to take our place, to take our punishment for us. The only one who can do that is God. He came as a baby to live among us. He lived a sinless life and is the only qualified sacrifice for us.

He died taking the penalty for our sins. "All we like sheep have gone astray, each of us has turned to his own way; but the LORD has caused the iniquity of us all to fall on Him." (Isaiah 53:5-6)

Christmas is a great time of celebration and gift-giving, but more importantly it is a time to celebrate the birth of a baby. This is no ordinary baby; this is a special Child. This baby is God. This baby is the pre-existent one. This baby is the Creator of the universe. This baby was sent with a purpose. This baby was the Savior whom God had promised. This baby died for you and me.

And, this baby deserves our worship and honor. This baby demands that we come to grips with who He is. He is no ordinary baby. Do you believe that?



The Capitol Commission Bible study for Legislators will continue this coming session on Tuesday Evenings at 8:00 pm.

I look forward to serving you again this coming session.

