

CHRISTMAS CHRISTOLOGY, COL.1-2

Heaven Come Down #3 HC.12-19

◆**Intro:** I read a book in elementary school that I've never forgotten. I can't recall the title but I can tell you what fascinated me. There was a boy, in another world, hiking with his family when he fell into a dark hole and landed in our world. But because his world was so much more than ours in gravity, beauty, and knowledge, he possessed abilities that were super, or "more than" human in our world. For example, he could read people's thoughts. He could run like the wind. He could leap over a house if need be. He could learn language just by listening a short while. He had a knife from his world a thousand times sharper than any blade of ours. Because of these abilities he became suspect and targeted by people of our world. However, there were a few compassionate hearts; a judge, a kindly teacher, a family that took him in. It so happened that every now and again our hero could hear voices from his parents world calling to him. And he knew that he had to find his way back to that hole he fell through before it closed. You'll be happy to know that with some amazing feats of agility, and with the help of his sympathizers, he was able to evade scores of prejudice law enforcement and hunters and find the portal to his own world, just in the nick of time. I loved that story and I'll tell you why. I loved the idea of being able to leap, almost fly. I loved the idea of a really cool knife, and to this day I am a knife admirer. And I loved the idea of another better world. One where abilities are greater, and experiences are richer.

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◆ People have been telling stories forever. Our culture is celebrating one right now about an old man who is generous and also supernatural, traversing the entire world in a single night as if omnipotent, and omnipresent! In our myths, and stories we postulate a hope we all long for: that there is someone out there, someplace out there, some life, some kingdom that is better than what we've inherited. Well, as CS Lewis writes, in Christianity the myth became fact. "The dying god really appears –as a historical Person, living in a definite place and time. ...Perfect Myth and Perfect Fact: claiming not only our love and obedience, but also our wonder and delight, addressed to the savage, the child, and the poet in each one of us no less than to the moralist, the scholar, and the philosopher."

◆ I want to discuss today the theology of Christ (Christology) and why it's so earth-shattering.

◆ **1. Christ is fully human and that is important because...**

◆ A. Inside all of us is a hope, a longing for a better world, a higher existence, a life that does not end in death. That my friends is simply a longing for heaven, for the Kingdom of God. But we can never enter that world. And do you know why? Sin. And whenever and as long as we sin, we cannot experience that world in this one either. Sin has caused us to never be able to really live a good human life. Sin has put humanity at odds with God. Only one without sin has the right to life. Our sin has made it so that we can never live in the Garden of Eden, that is, exist

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in the full presence of a pure and holy God. Something must be done about human sin for there to be hope of a better human world, the Kingdom where God lives in the same environment as man. The problem is sinners cannot pay the debt themselves. What is demanded is perfection, full holiness of right and good, without blemish or stain. Like any western movie, the white cowboy hats must finish off the black cowboy hats for the West to be won. In the Star Wars saga, war will never be over until the dark side is totally vanquish by the light side of the Force. But we can't do that. None of us. Since God is perfectly fair and just, he must by nature destroy that which has any wrong, and evil whatsoever, and that includes everyone in the room. Is there a solution? There is and it is this solution that Christianity alone tells of. No other religion offers a solution to the problem of human sinfulness.

◆[read Colossians 1:15-21] Let consider a few verses closely.

◆"But now he has reconciled you by Christ's physical body through death to present you holy in his sight, without blemish and free from accusation--" Colossians 1:22, NIV.

◆"For in Christ all the fulness of the Deity lives in bodily form," Colossians 2:9, NIV.

◆"*The Word became flesh and made his dwelling among us.*" John 1:14, NIV.

◆B. The Bible asserts that the second person of the Trinity, the eternally begotten Son of God, took on human physical existence so that a real human person could receive the JUST punishment

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on humans for sin, namely death itself. All this because God is perfectly fair (holy and just). Jesus became human so that God the Father could be both fair, and forgiving at the same time. No moral wrong gets to survive in the end. God will not settle for anything less. Justice will be served. No stain gets into the new heavens and the new earth.

◆ But someone will say, "Who cares if ever there was a human Jesus in history. In fact Mahatma Gandhi said that. "I may say that I have never been interested in an historical Jesus. I should not care if it were proved by someone that the man Jesus never lived...the sermon on the mount would still be true for me." Gandhi sees Jesus as merely representing a profoundly good way to live the human life. And while there is some truth here, there is a deeper problem. Jesus is not just a laudable ideal. Jesus is not just a good habit or a good example. Jesus is not a merely hopeful way to live. Jesus is in fact the intersection of two worlds, God's perfect one, and our human one. He is a time warp or a black hole, if you will. A tare in the fabric of time through which one world steps into another.

◆ "For there is one God and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus," 1 Timothy 2:5, NIV.

◆ Jesus is everything our movies dream about, but also a fact in history. In the person of Christ, heaven has come down to earth in the most personal way possible. You don't

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need a saint to pray to. You don't need a horoscope. You don't need more self-esteem. Money won't save you. Nor will politics or sex. You don't need certain laws, or incantations. You need Jesus, your only access to heaven from earth. Your only shield from destruction by perfect holiness. Your only space suit keeping you alive in an environment you are alien to, but were meant to find.

◆C. Bear in mind that this coming of God to man is the original design of creation. That's why we began this series in Genesis, with the "mother promise" that the Messiah would someday come to destroy the snake of sin and put all things back. As Chuck Colson put it, "God's redemption, then, does not change us into something different so much as it restores us to the way we were originally created. Virtually all the words the Bible uses to describe salvation imply a return to something that originally existed." To *redeem* is a kidnapping term for buying back, paying a ransom to bring a person back to home. *Reconciliation* is the restoring of an original relationship. *Regeneration* implies something has returned to life after having died or quit.

◆*"For God was pleased to have all his fulness dwell in him, and through him to reconcile to himself all things, whether things on earth or things in heaven, by making peace through his blood, shed on the cross." Colossians 1:19, 20, NIV.*

◆Christmas was one of the steps on the way back to Eden, you see? Of course Christmas is nothing without the Cross of Good

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Friday and the resurrection of Easter. *Jesus couldn't connect our worlds if he wasn't of our world. That's why its so important to know he is fully a human.* Now then, if that's all he is, he still can't connect Heaven and Earth.

◆2. Christ is fully God and that is important because...

◆A. First lets reestablish that the Christ of Christmas was not merely human. Paul's letter to the Colossians reminds us that he is the image of the invisible God and that all of God-ness lives in physical humanness in this one person (1:15, 2:9). Which is to say, that Jesus was no ordinary person. This is what the virgin birth points to. Jesus is right now, a God-Man. Not 50% of each, but 100% of each. He is presently in a dimension we cannot see, but he is still totally God over our and present in his Holy Spirit. He is "supreme ruler" of all. Lord over America, Lord over Hindus, Lord over Africa, Lord over atheists. Lord over democrats and lord over republicans. Lord of Heaven, and Ruler of Earth. There is no other being anywhere in the universe like this person we worship in this building. Mohamad is not runner up. Buddha neither.

◆B. Be thankful this is the case, for no human being can pay for his own sin and live through death, much less for someone elses! Jesus in the power of his eternal God-hood, sustains eternally the wrath of God against our sin, so that the love of God is what we end up with forever.

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◆ *"but because Jesus lives for ever, he has a permanent priesthood. Therefore he is able to save completely those who come to God through him, because he always lives to intercede for them. Such a high priest meets our need--one who is holy, blameless, pure, set apart from sinners, exalted above the heavens." Hebrews 7:24-26, NIV.*

◆ If Jesus isn't God, he would by definition be sizzled like an ant on the surface of the sun the minute my sins, or your sins, were laid on him! If Jesus were not literally the Son of God, the Christian faith would not be worth your time, and you should not bother with prayer, or worship, or scripture application. What does it mean that Jesus is fully God and fully Man? Just this. As I stated earlier, the two natures of Christ make him the portal, the being through which Heaven and Earth collide. Heaven and Earth are eternally linked because of a person. We have access to God because of the God-Man.

◆ *"Consequently, just as the result of one trespass was condemnation for all men, so also the result of one act of righteousness was justification that brings life for all men. For just as through the disobedience of the one man the many were made sinners, so also through the obedience of the one man the many will be made righteous." Romans 5:18, 19, NIV.*

◆ Because Jesus is full God and full man, we through faith in Him are fully set free from the kingdom of darkness, and set free to access the Kingdom of Heaven.

◆ "Once you were alienated from God and were enemies in your minds because of your evil behaviour. But now he has reconciled you by

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Christ's physical body through death to present you holy in his sight, without blemish and free from accusation--" Colossians 1:21, 22, NIV.

◆ Here's the reality friends: without faith in Christ and payment for your sinfulness, the nicest thing you've ever done gains you no credit in heaven, and no power over the devil. But.

◆ "the Father...has qualified you to share in the inheritance of the saints in the kingdom of light. For he has rescued us from the dominion of darkness and brought us into the kingdom of the Son he loves, in whom we have redemption, the forgiveness of sins." Colossians 1:12-14, NIV.

◆ "and you have been given fulness in Christ, who is the Head over every power and authority." Colossians 2:10, NIV.

◆ With Christ you are able to "not sin". With Christ you are able to produce actual heavenly good with eternal results. With Christ every time you obey his will in this world you are releasing Kingdom atmosphere into the earth's atmosphere. Every time you chose to keep Jesus commands, the dark side takes a hit. With every act of love from a God-follower, we bring the Kingdom to earth, which was God's purpose for us in the beginning.

◆ **Conclusion:** Today you'll be given a crismon similar to the one up front. It has on it a manger with the Christ Child, a real human like you, but oh so much more; a crown symbolizing the ruling God himself. Supreme over all things. If this Jesus was only an angel from heaven he couldn't take your place when judged by Heaven. If this Jesus was only a fallen man like any other (as other world religions take him to be) he could not have

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survived the judgment of heaven. But Christmas proclaims a being apart from all others.

◆“Therefore, since we have a great high priest who has gone through the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold firmly to the faith we profess. For we do not have a high priest who is unable to sympathise with our weaknesses, but we have one who has been tempted in every way, just as we are--yet was without sin. Let us then approach the throne of grace with confidence, so that we may receive mercy and find grace to help us in our time of need.” Hebrews 4:14-16, NIV.

◆He is the only one worthy of your prayers or your songs. He is the only one who can really change your life. He alone has power over the evil spirits that attack your family. He alone can bring you a message from heaven. He alone can change your heart or break your addiction. Approach his throne of grace. Make it your business to seek him like the Wisemen of old. Make time in every day of your life to talk with him in prayer and reading of his word. Seek Christ in every question. Approach Christ with every pain or crisis without ceasing. If Superman were your brother, would you not call him every day for help? How much more so the Christ.