

The Kingdom Driven Life #3 The Book of Matthew

The Immaculate Conception

The Virgin Birth is the 2nd most debated subject in the Bible next to the Resurrection!

This is how the birth of Jesus Christ came about: His mother Mary was pledged to be married to Joseph, but before they came together, she was found to be with child through the Holy Spirit. Because Joseph her husband was a righteous man and did not want to expose her to public disgrace, he had in mind to divorce her quietly.

But after he had considered this, an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream and said, "Joseph son of David, do not be afraid to take Mary home as your wife, because what is conceived in her is from the Holy Spirit. She will give birth to a son, and you are to give him the name Jesus, because he will save his people from their sins." All this took place to fulfill what the Lord had said through the prophet: "The virgin will be with child and will give birth to a son, and they will call him Immanuel" which means, "God with us." When Joseph woke up, he did what the angel of the Lord had commanded him and took Mary home as his wife. But he had no union with her until she gave birth to a son. And he gave him the name Jesus.

Matthew 1:18-25

And I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed; it shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel.

Gen 3:15

Therefore the Lord himself shall give you a sign; Behold, a virgin shall conceive, and bear a son, and shall call his name Immanuel.

Isaiah 7:14

SALVATION COMES!

I. Theme: The Virgin Birth is Critical to our Salvation, Because We Need a Savior

- Church Play
- Morgan 13

Larry King was asked, "If you could interview any human in history, who would it be?" He said, "Jesus Christ." When asked, "What would you ask him?" he said, "If I were to ask Him (Jesus) if he was indeed virgin-born, the answer to that question would define history for me!"

In a letter written to John Adams in 1823, Thomas Jefferson said, "The day will come when the mystical generation of Jesus by the supreme being as His Father in the womb of a virgin will be classified as a fable of the generation of Minerva in the brain of Jupiter."

(Jefferson Scissors: Fairy Tale-No Grounding in Reality: Virgin Birth!)

II. The Virgin Birth Elicits a Variety of Responses.

- A. Some argue that the virgin birth is absolutely impossible, because miracles don't happen. They contend Mary is neither the first nor the last person to find herself in trouble, and she made the whole thing up.
- B. Another group believes that though miracles do happen, this particular one never took place. The term "virgin" was applied because of how young she was. So things like the Red Sea, plagues of Egypt, the resurrection of Christ, I can accept, but not this? This group would be hard pressed to tell you why the virgin birth is important and a doctrine to defend.
- C. Another camp affirms the virgin birth and understands how absolutely critical it is to the whole superstructure of scripture. I hope by today we are all in this camp.
- D. A recent survey found that 79% of Americans believe in the virgin birth, and even more suprisingly, 27% of self-proclaimed non-Christians affirm the doctrine.

In his masterful work, *The Person of Christ*, Donald Macleod writes:

The Virgin birth is posted on guard at the door of the mystery of Christmas; and none of us must think of hurrying past it. It stands on the threshold of the New Testament, blatantly supernatural, defying our rationalism, informing us that all that follows belongs to the same order as itself and that if we find it offensive, there is no point in proceeding further.

III. Four Reasons Why the Virgin Birth is Significant and Necessary

A. The Virgin Birth was the Birth of God Himself.

1. John 1: "In the Beginning was the Word (logos), and the Word (logos) was with God, and the *Word was God* (logos). Verse 14 says, "The Word became flesh!" (incarnation) It mentions nothing about Jesus being created.

On a college campus, a couple of Jehovah's Witness we were speaking with asserted that Jesus was created and was really Michael the Archangel!

2. In Philippians 2, the apostle Paul tells us that Jesus was God Himself in heaven and enjoyed the glory of God.

3. When we talk about the virgin birth, we're not talking about a birth like yours or mine. Jesus Christ was present at creation. He is eternal. Jesus laid aside all

his glory and took on a human body. He humbled himself not simply to become a man, but a slave who was willing to go to the cross.

B. The Virgin Birth Fulfilled Old Testament Prophecy.

1. When we talk about the virgin birth, it's important to realize that the story doesn't begin with the angel Gabriel in Luke 1; it actually begins in Genesis 3 (a passage we call the *protoevangelion* [the first telling of the gospel]).

When I asked my wife why Jesus had to be born of a virgin, she replied, "Because the blood was bad!" Every human being descended from Adam was born with a sin nature.

Genesis 3:15 is the only time in history that someone talks about the seed of a woman. The seed normally comes from the male. But here is the indication that Jesus does not have a human father; he was conceived of the Holy Spirit.

2. Isaiah 7:14-Some say the word translated "virgin" from the Hebrew should be translated as "young woman." This is partially true, but it is also misleading. The word occurs nine times in the Old Testament. Of the other eight occurrences, seven clearly refer to a virgin, not simply a young woman. What is this sign the prophet promises? That the Messiah will be born of a *young woman*? No! That doesn't exactly narrow things down!

C. The New Testament Bears Witness to the Virgin Birth.

In Luke, when Mary is told that she going to give birth to the Messiah, she responds, "How is that possible, because I am a virgin?" When Mary tells Joseph, her fiancé, she is pregnant, Joseph knows he's not the father, and he begins making plans to quietly divorce her. The angel Gabriel is sent on a return visit to Nazareth to stop Joseph from ending the relationship, by helping him see the connection between present circumstances and ancient prophecies.

D. The Virgin Birth is Critical to God's Plan for Salvation.

1. It's included in the Apostle's Creed.
2. The writers of the Nicene Creed protected the doctrine of the Virgin Birth when they wrote, "We believe in one God the Father Almighty, Maker of all things visible and invisible, and in one Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of God, begotten of the Father." The word "begotten" means fathered by God.

**When you beget something, you beget it after your own kind.
C. S. Lewis**

IV. Conclusion: Why is it Important to Defend the Virgin Birth?

It is critical for our salvation that Jesus Christ is both fully God and fully man.

A. Only when God bypasses the sin of Adam can He provide a Savior Who is unstained by original sin.

B. The Second Adam—Jesus Christ—was sent to us through a virgin's womb and the agency of the Holy Spirit, in order to perform a union of God and man without sin.

The Virgin Birth isn't just some casual notion or quaint doctrine; it is absolutely critical to our salvation, because what we need is a Savior!

Mark Driscoll in *The Supremacy of Christ in a Postmodern World*:

If the virgin birth of Jesus is untrue, then the story of Jesus changes greatly; we would have a sexually promiscuous young woman lying about God's miraculous hand in the birth of her son, raising that son to declare he was God, and then joining his religion. But if Mary is nothing more than a sinful con artist, then neither she nor her Son Jesus should be trusted. Because both teachings of Scripture about the beginning of Jesus' earthly life and the character of his mother are at stake, we must contend for the virgin birth of Jesus Christ.