

Minister's Message – December 2014

Man Becomes God or God Becomes Man?

“The Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we have seen his glory, the glory of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth” (John 1:14). This is my favourite Bible verse for this time of the year when we especially remember the birth of Jesus Christ. ‘The Word’ in this verse refers to Jesus; he is the Word who was with God and was God (John 1:1). Jesus truly is Immanuel, God with us.

Jesus of Nazareth is God become man, not man become God because of his miracles, his love or his teaching. He was born of the Virgin Mary after the Holy Spirit overshadowed her and before she ‘knew’ her husband. This is what Luke the physician writes (Luke 1:35). Many followed Jesus because of his miracles, because of the loaves they ate (John 6:26); but this was not the sort of following Jesus wanted. His miracles were but a confirmation of who he is, namely God the Son. Jesus did not come to give material bread or material anything; he came to give spiritual bread. He is the bread of life sent down from heaven.

While Jesus is the only ‘God become man’, there are many who think they are ‘man become god’. This is the very nature of sin. This nature may be hidden as we sing carols, exchange gifts and enjoy a holiday, but it will re-emerge all too soon, and all too often. When Adam and Eve sinned it was because they wanted to be like God (Genesis 3:5). Sin is rebellion against God. Their son Cain rebelled when God accepted his brother’s offering and rejected his. He took control of his own life, and his world, and murdered his brother Abel. He was saying in effect, ‘I am god. My life is mine to do as I like and I will not be stopped by my little brother or anyone else’.

‘Your destiny is in your own hands’ is what many believe and teach. ‘No one is going to tell me what to do, least of all God. I do not have to listen to the words of some old book’ they say, even as they mouth the words of a Christmas carol or greeting.

“Why do the nations rage and the people plot vain or worthless things” (Psalm 2)? Why do kings and rulers set themselves against the anointed of God, the Word who became flesh and dwelt among us? What rage the rulers and people of Jerusalem got into as they shouted against Jesus until they got him crucified? Even at his birth there was rage as Herod sent men to kill baby Jesus, and slaughtered hundreds of babies in this effort (Matthew 2:16).

When God came into this world, men like Herod saw the threat this posed to their position and their way of life. Those who truly understand the birth of Jesus will see this also. Those who want to rule their own lives; those who want to be like God; those whose focus is on man becoming god rather than God who became man, will not be celebrating the birth of Jesus Christ, the son of God. Is Jesus a threat to you and your way of life? Jesus said, ‘I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me’ (John 14:6).

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