

# (Christ Formed) 02 - Christ as for Us

by Ed Miller

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*The sermon emphasizes the importance of Christ being formed in us, using the example of Mary's virginity and the stages of Christ's life to illustrate this principle.*

**Duration:** 1:03:57

**Scripture:** Luke 9:32, Luke 19:10, John 18:37, Ephesians 5:13-14, Hebrews 2:9-10

**Topics:** "Jesus Christ", "Holy Spirit"

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## Description

In this sermon, the speaker emphasizes the importance of relying on the Holy Spirit for a true understanding of the Bible. He highlights that the Bible is not a record of everything, but rather a record of Jesus and salvation. The speaker provides various verses that explain why Jesus came to earth, such as to seek and save the lost, testify to the truth, and put away sin through his sacrifice. He also emphasizes the progressive revelation of Jesus in the 30 years leading up to his ministry, showing his growth and maturation.

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## Transcript

Well, good evening again, brothers and sisters in the Lord. It's been a good day in fellowship with Him. As we come to the study of God's Word, there's a principle of Bible study that is absolutely indispensable, a principle that we cannot take for granted, and that is total reliance upon God's Holy Spirit.

He gave us the Bible. He inspired it in the first place. He breathed it.

And He's near enough to breathe on it again and to make it live. He desires to do that, and so we can end up with a revelation of the Revelation. This is the Word of God, but then God breathes on it and we see Him.

There's no process of academics on earth that can press through to the Revelation of Christ. We are not glorifying ignorance. I'm not saying don't study.

We need the human side, but oh, we need the divine side. I want to share two, actually three verses before we pray together. The first is in the book of Ephesians, chapter 5. Ephesians, chapter 5, verse 13 and 14.

All things become visible when they are exposed by the light. Everything that becomes visible is light, and for this reason, it says, Awake, sleeper, and rise from the dead, and Christ will dawn on you. Isn't that a

wonderful verse? Awake, sleeper, rise from the dead, and Christ will dawn on you.

And so if you're sleeping, the voice of the Son of God that raises the dead, He wants to dawn on you. Here's the other verse. It's from Luke, chapter 9, verse 32.

And this is just part of that verse. It says, this is the transfiguration, you know. And it says, And when they were fully awake, they saw His glory.

Awake, sleeper, and Christ will dawn on you. Rise from the dead. And when they're fully awake, they'll see His glory.

So let's not only ask the Lord to wake us up, but let's ask the Lord to make us fully awake to see His glory. Let's bow. Father, we know it's a great thing to ask, but Thou art a great God.

And so we come now and we ask it. Make us fully awake that we might see the glory of the Son of God this evening. We ask in Jesus' name.

Amen. I know some have joined us since we began, and so I don't know if there are any more of those sheets around. If you don't have one, they are in the back.

All right. Does everyone have one of those? OK. If you don't, lift your hand.

All right. Thank you. There's another one up here.

OK. Well, welcome to our second look at the 30 years, the years of preparation of our Lord Jesus Christ. We're looking at those 30 years and the events that took place in the first 30 years, not in an isolated way, but in order that we might see God's heart as our Lord Jesus matured from a seed all the way to a prepared person who could give redemption to the world and become the perfect Savior and the perfect priest.

We're looking at this section as a whole. We're not really concerned with all of the different things we can see in those 30 years. But this morning in our introduction, let me just lay that before you.

I suggested three things that are so crucial in my understanding to lay hold of God's heart in those first 30 years. The first is what I think is the chief revelation of our Lord Jesus during those 30 years. He came on earth to be the second man.

He came on earth to be the last Adam. He came on earth to represent us, to be our substitute, to live in our place, in our stead, on our behalf. He was our representative.

And I attempted to show you that great revelation of the Lord. The second thing I wanted us to see is that our great representative, the second man, the last Adam, lived in our behalf as our substitute, and he completely obeyed, maintained a simplicity and a loyalty to his Holy Father God so at the end of the preparation, heaven could open and God could say, this is my beloved son. In him, I'm well pleased.

He satisfied God. And the third thing we saw, and with that we'll begin this evening, we saw how God revealed our Lord Jesus in that 30 years. And as I suggested this morning, you'll not find another segment of scripture, I don't believe, that gives us Christ in the same way.

There is no other block of scripture, there is no other segment, no other unit of scripture that presents in a more graphic way the progressive revelation of the Lord Jesus Christ. That's beyond dispute. In this section we see Jesus maturing and Jesus growing.

He begins as a seed and he begins to mature and he comes and becomes an infant and then a child and then a young adult and so on, all the way to maturity. You can trace it. You can study your Bible and trace the events.

Not all the events, God doesn't tell us everything. This is one of the great illustrations of the principle of intentional selection. God does not tell us everything.

The Bible is not the record of everything. It's the record of Jesus. It's the record of salvation.

It's the story of redemption. And so God gives us those things that show us redemption and show us our Lord Jesus Christ. I tried to find verses that actually said, here's why I came.

Let me just quote a few, I'll give it machine gun style. Luke 19.10, the Son of Man has come to seek and to save that which is lost. John 18.37, for this cause I was born into this world to testify of the truth.

Hebrews 10.5, I come to do thy will, O God. Hebrews 2.9, he came to taste death for every man. 2.19, to render powerless him who had the power of death.

2.17, he came, he was manifest to become a merciful and faithful high priest. John 3.16, to give life to those who believe. Hebrews 9.26, he was manifest to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself.

1 John 4.14, to be the savior of the world. Ephesians 5.27, to purify unto himself a holy people. John 10.10, to give life and to give life more abundantly.

1 John 5.20, he came that we might know him who is true. Every one of those verses referred to three and a half years, not thirty years. Isn't that amazing? That's all ministry.

He came to set us free, to die for us, to be our redeemer. But before he could start his ministry, he had to be this, and then he had to grow into this, and then he had to grow into this, and he finally matured and became a perfect savior. And now he could bring redemption.

Now ministry can begin. As he came, he comes. As he matured then, he matures now.

See, we get so excited about being his servants and his ministers. I ministered for him a long time before he ever started ministering through me. Because until he matures this way, and this way, and this way, and this way, that prepares him for ministry then and now.

And I'm suggesting, and that's where we ended up this morning, that our Lord Jesus Christ came to be a representative then to show us he wants to be a representative now in our lives. He lived a life that pleased the Father then, and he lived a holy life to show us that he does it now. He wants to live in us now and please the Father, bring satisfaction to him, maintain our simplicity and devotion to Christ, and honor him.

And here it is. He was progressively revealed then, so that's how he is now. If you notice the sheets that I handed out, that's the simple little outline that we're going to follow.

As he came, he comes. As he worked then, he works now. And as he was progressively revealed then, in exactly the same way, illustrated by those marvelous, familiar Bible stories, he will be progressively manifest in our heart.

I told you the prayer I've been praying for myself and for all of you for this weekend comes from Galatians chapter 4, 19. It's that sigh of the Apostle Paul. He says, I'm in labor, like a woman is in labor, in travail.

He said, I travail over you. And he's relating to Christians. Until Christ be formed in you.

Over and over again, in our privilege to be together and to share the precious word of God and the revelation of Jesus, we have talked about the importance of growing in Christ Jesus. Not this weekend. This weekend is Paul's sigh.

Christ formed in you. Not you growing in Christ. Christ growing in you.

And I hadn't planned to say this, but let me say it by way of encouragement. You know how in Genesis chapter 1 and verse 11, when God laid down all the principles illustrated by nature, and he talked about the seed that produces seed after its kind. An apple tree will always give apples.

Pear tree will always give pears. Grapes will always bring forth grapes. And first John tells us that his seed abides in us.

What's my hope for being conformed to Christ one day? My hope is that the seed brings forth after its kind. And I have the seed. I have Christ in me.

And I'm telling you this by way of encouragement. Some of you may have loved ones. Your hearts are broken and you look at their lives and you say, I know they accepted Christ.

I know things were going right, but they got so messed up. They got off the path. They got off the trail.

You be encouraged. Christ will mature in that one. If that seed's there, it's going to come.

And we're going to look at some of the stages and we'll review how Christ was. We'll remember. Yes, it was that way when he was a fetus and when he was an infant and a young adult.

And we'll see the stages Christ has determined. This is not something you do or I do. And I speak this boldly but carefully.

It's not even something you let him do. He's going to do it. And he's going to do it after the pattern of the 30 years.

We need to watch that. We need to see that. Until Christ is formed in you.

Now, Lillian wanted me to warn you of a problem with this whole approach. And the problem is that maybe you will try to measure yourself and say, Is Christ a 12-year-old in my heart? Is Christ still an infant in my life? Don't go examining that because at every stage of life you have every stage. It doesn't go away.

It's like that little stream that goes into the brook, that goes into the river, that goes into the sea. We leave the rudiments but we never leave them. When's the last time you recited your ABCs? But you use them every day in different combinations, in different ways.

We never leave our ABCs. We don't recite them anymore but we still have them. And so you'll see all of these principles in every stage but in a special way.

You'll see Jesus as he grows. And the way he grows in the gospel record, that's how he wants to grow in your life. The way he grows in the gospel record, that's how he wants to grow in my life.

The way he matured then in his body is the way he wants to mature again in his body. May God help us as we look at these things. We're going to follow that little outline first as a fetus, then as an infant, then as a young adult and finally as a mature, prepared adult.

Prepared for redemptive ministry and the pouring out of his life. From this evening then to really, if you don't count the introduction, the first lesson. The starting point.

Conception. Our whole lesson tonight is about the time when Jesus was in the womb. That's early.

That's young. And we want to spend the whole time just looking at that wonderful time, the nine months of Mary's pregnancy. Ever hear a message on the nine months of marriage? This will be fun.

As you would expect, the principles we share will be closely connected to God's instrument, Mary. Before we look at this more closely, let me mention this. It's not an accident, you know, that Mary is God's first picture of the church in the New Testament.

There are many pictures of the church. The bride and the groom. Picture of the church.

The head and the body. The foundation and the superstructure. The new Jerusalem.

Many pictures of the church in the New Testament. But the first picture is this virgin from Nazareth. What is Mary's great contribution to the history of redemption? And I'll tell you what it is in one sentence.

Mary's great contribution to the history of redemption is God used her to give Christ to the world. What's the great contribution of the church to the history of redemption? And the answer is to give Christ to the world. How did Mary do it? And the answer is the Holy Spirit formed Christ in her.

And in the fullness of time, she gave Christ to the world. How does the church do it? And the answer is the Holy Spirit forms Christ in her. And in the fullness of time, she gives Christ to the world.

When the Virgin Mary had Christ formed in her, she identified with the Lord Jesus in such a way that there was no human explanation. In fact, the opposite was true. And she identified with him outside the camp.

What was true of Mary, the picture of the church, is true of the church. Wonderful, wonderful picture. So in our discussion of Christ as a fetus, Christ in the womb, Christ that young, we can't leave Mary out.

She's so connected to that picture. And so we'll be looking at the principles in terms of that dear instrument of God. Now if you glance at that outline that I gave you, you'll notice under that first heading there are four stories.

And each of those stories contains a principle. When you cover that much scripture in one message, you've got to take big steps. We're not going to go into detail.

We're not looking at it in an isolated way. We're trying to see God's heart in the whole thing. And so I want to show you the big steps, the great principles.

Now before we begin our look at this first story, Gabriel sent by God to the Virgin Mary, I want to call attention to the difference between conception and birth. I'm sure you're all familiar with that difference. You know that there are many months between conception and birth, and we all probably are able to recite our birth day.

But if I asked you to name the day and the hour and the moment that you were conceived, you might in a general way say nine months before that, but you couldn't nail it down. You couldn't pinpoint the exact moment of the birth. We have a birth day, but we don't.

When we give our age, we don't, unless I'm giving Lillian's age. I always include nine months. She gets upset with that because I don't do it in my own calculation.

Usually when people give their testimony, when they say, I was saved on such and such a day, well for me I know the day, January 29, 1958. There was a crisis in my life. But usually you're describing the birth.

You're not describing the conception. The fact is God began working long before that crisis. When you raised your hand or signed the card or came forward or sat across from some counselor or something like that.

This is very precious in my heart because I think I shared with you before the struggle my dear wife had. She didn't have a date for her conversion. She grew up in a Lutheran home, and they were just so Bible-centered, and she just grew up knowing the truth of God.

And it bothered her. And she, every time there was an invitation, we went through it again and again and again. And she got saved again and again.

She went forward, signed cards, could get no assurance. And I did not tell you before how it was finally sealed. I think I did.

I didn't. Well, I hadn't planned it, but let me just tell you that. Finally, after several years of this, we knelt down together, and I started to pray.

And I just asked the Lord to give her assurance. And she just kept crying, and there was no assurance. And after a long season of prayer, I started singing.

And I began to sing, Thank you, Lord, for saving my soul. And I sang it once, and she just cried, and I sang it again, and she just cried, and I sang it again. And I don't know how many times I sang it.

And then she joined in. And when she sang, Thank you, Lord, for saving my soul, a sweet peace came over her heart, and she got assurance, because she stopped saying please, and she started saying thank you. And she entered into that great assurance.

Well, I tell you that because usually when people give the date, they give the long date. When our Lord Jesus was talking to Nicodemus of heavenly things, remember, He gave the illustration of a heavenly thing, and He used the wind as an illustration. And He says, The wind blows where it wishes.

You hear the sound, but you don't know from whence it started and where it's going. Now, I used to think that's God's picture of the Holy Spirit. It's not.

Read the text. So is everyone who's born of the Spirit. It's not the Holy Spirit, it's those who are born of the Spirit.

It's God's illustration of the Christian. And according to that verse, nobody knows when it started and where it's going. And so if you don't have a date, don't worry about it.

It isn't when did you trust Christ. It's are you trusting Him at this moment. I'm going to ask you to turn please to Luke chapter 1. Let's read this text together.

Begin at verse 26. Now in the sixth month, the angel Gabriel was sent from God into a city of Galilee named Nazareth to a virgin betrothed to a man whose name was Joseph, the house of David. And the virgin's name was Mary.

And he came into her and said, Hail, thou art highly favored. The Lord is with thee. But she was greatly troubled at the same and cast in her mind what manner of salutation this might be.

And the angel said unto her, Fear not, Mary, for thou hast found favor with God. And behold, thou shalt conceive in thy womb and bring forth a son. And thou shalt call his name Jesus.

And he will be great, and he shall be called the Son of the Most High. And the Lord God shall give unto him the throne of his father David. He shall reign over the house of Jacob forever.

And of his kingdom there shall be no end. And Mary said unto the angel, How shall this be, seeing I know not a man? And the angel answered and said unto her, The Holy Spirit shall come upon thee and the power of the Most High shall overshadow thee. Wherefore also the holy thing which is begotten shall be called the Son of God.

Behold Elizabeth, thy kinswoman, she also has conceived a son in her old age. And this is the sixth month with her that was called barren. For no word from God shall be void of power.

And Mary said, Behold the handmaid of the Lord, be it unto me according to thy word. And the angel departed from her. Now let me come straight to the first principle illustrated by this text that sort of implants the life of Christ into the believer.

The very beginning of Christ's life in Mary, the very beginning of Christ's life in those pictured by Mary is connected with the word virgin. The first principle has to do with virgin. Luke chapter 1 verse 27 He was sent to a virgin.

The angel came to a virgin. There can be no life of Christ apart from the principle of virginity. And so we need to understand that principle.

Now I think you're quite familiar with the theologians' view of the virgin birth. You know, they insist upon it. They say that's a cardinal thing.

You've got to believe in the virgin birth. That's one of the essentials. That's fundamental.

You've got to believe that. You've got to believe in the deity of Christ. You've got to believe in salvation by grace.

You've got to believe in the bodily resurrection. You've got to believe in the return of the Lord Jesus Christ. And in that list they put, you've got to believe in the virgin birth.

So they have the whole list of essentials. You can't get away. Now do you believe in the eight points of the plenary verbal inspiration of Scripture? Ah, you know, you're a heretic.

See, they label you. They believe you've got to have that. And so they believe you've got to believe the virgin birth, or you're a modernist.

You're a liberal. You're a heretic. So on.

Now the theologians give us two reasons for the virgin birth. The first one is that they say it enabled Jesus to be born without a sin nature. They say that the sin nature comes through the man.

And by not having a father, then Jesus was free from the sin nature. I've never been able to make that my own. Well, I can't say I never.

I used to make that my own. But I'm very uneasy about that now. I know he was born without a sin nature.

I'm just not sure it's because Mary was a virgin. I think it might be because the Holy Spirit overshadowed her and did a mighty miracle. It might be that simple.

But anyway, that's one reason they like it. And the other reason is because it enabled Jesus to bypass the curse of Cornelia. Do you know what I'm talking about? Let me give it to you in a nutshell.

I don't want to waste time on this. Let me give it to you in a nutshell. Are you familiar with the fact that when you come to the genealogy of Jesus in the gospel record, there are two of them? Matthew gives one and Luke gives one.

And if you look at them, they're not the same. You say, how come they're not the same? And the answer is that Matthew chapter 1 verses 1 to 16 in his genealogy he traces the line through Joseph the stepfather of our Lord Jesus. And he goes all the way back and shows that Joseph is descendant from David.

And Luke traces Mary's genealogy and goes all the way back and shows that she's descendant to David. You say, well why do we need to trace the line through Joseph and Mary? We've just got to prove Messiah is the son of David. We could have done that with one of them.

Why do we need two? David had two lines. One of his descendants went this way and one went this way through Nathan. And it's this line that was the royal line.

Kings couldn't come through Nathan. They had to come through Rehoboam and through Solomon. They had to come through this line.

And so you trace this line, the royal line the kingly line and you end up with Joseph. The problem is just before you get to Joseph you get to a guy named Koinonia and sometime he's called Jehoiachin and sometime he's got a couple other names. But the point is, Matthew 1-11 he messed up.

And Jeremiah, in Jeremiah chapter 22 writes this curse. Verse 30 Write this man down childless a man who will not prosper in his day no descendant of his will ever sit upon the throne of David. So now you've got a problem.

If you want a king it's got to come through this line. But here's a man that's cursed and said after him no king ever. I'll bet Satan was rejoicing when Koinonia got cursed.

He's saying, I did it! I stopped the messianic line. See the problem? Could Joseph, the stepfather of Jesus inherit David's throne? The answer is no and he's in the right line but he's cursed. God said nobody after the curse can become a king.

He had the legal right but that's all he had. Could the natural sons of Joseph the brothers of Jesus have become king? No. Why? Because of the curse.

The curse of Koinonia. They couldn't get past the curse. And so you've got the problem.

The king's got to come through this line. He can't come through this line. And one answer to that the theologians point out and that is that God virgin birthed the devil.

He got around the curse by the virgin birth. So that Christ coming through that line had a legal right to the throne but because he was not naturally through that line he bypassed the curse. So he has a legal right to the throne and through Mary he has a natural right to the throne because she also came from David.

There's no other answer in the universe for Messiah except the virgin birth. But that misses God's heart. That's not why God told us about the virgin birth.

Technically that's true but there is a principle and that's what I'm after. So let's look at the principle of the virgin birth. I think if you ask the average Christian what's the principle of virginity? Of the virgin birth? I think nine times out of ten they would say purity holiness virtue cleanness morality virgin birth piety but I really don't think that's the principle here.

Was Mary chosen because she was holy? She was a virgin. I know that in some places they have a teaching that's called the immaculate conception and what they mean by that is not that Jesus was immaculately conceived but his mother was. Mary was.

We're not talking about holiness here. I think that misses God's point. I think the principle of the virgin birth is grace.

Let me show you where I get that. Luke 1.34 Mary's answer to Gabriel was this How can this be since I know no man? That's a point. God's going to do something and man's left out.

That's a point. This has to be done without flesh. That's a point of the virgin birth.

This has to be done and man can't have a part in it. How's it going to happen, she said, if you don't leave man out of this? And you know his answer, verse 35 The Holy Spirit will come upon you The power of the Most High will overshadow you and for that reason the Holy Child shall be called the Son of God. The Holy Spirit will do it.

He'll form Christ in you. That, as I understand it is the first principle of conception. You go back in your mind when Christ was first formed in you and somewhere along the way somebody told you or God dawned it on you or you read it Man has no part in this.

It's only God's work. That's how it begins, with the virgin birth. The discovery that it's not by man but it's by the Lord.

When Isaiah said in his prophecy a child born and a son given in Isaiah 9-7 he adds the zeal of the Lord will perform this. The zeal of the Lord will perform this. See, it's got to be a miracle.

With Elizabeth it was too late for man because she was old. With Mary it's too early for man because she's young. Luke chapter 1-38 Mary responds Behold the bond slave of the Lord may it be done to me according to your word.

Notice what she didn't say. She didn't say, Lord I've understood what the angel said and now I'm ready to do something. She didn't say, what shall I do? She said, be it done unto me.

All our doing is done. That's why Isaiah when he saw the Lord he said, I'm undone. As you're doing it's undone.

And so this is the very beginning of the life of Christ in us. Somewhere along the way we hear that it's not by flesh, it's by spirit. It's not by works lest any man should boast.

It's by the Lord. It's the principle of the virgin birth. And in that precious hour the Holy Spirit forms Christ in us.

Now at this stage when we understand that it's God that man has no part in it that it's not by works If you read the record you see that Mary when we begin to look at her life and what change takes place and the only thing I can see as I read this now don't forget it's so small you can hardly perceive it but she is filled with the exuberance of emotional joy. She has a new song in her heart that's the Magnificat and she begins to sing this song praise to the Lord because God has written a new song in her heart. And it's at this point she begins to say my soul was magnified in the Lord my spirit rejoices in God my Savior.

At that point when Christ is first formed in you you don't know a lot but you know this much it's not by works that's all you know you don't know anything else it's not by works it's by the Holy Spirit and all you say is be it done and all of a sudden your heart is filled with joy and you have a song in your heart a Magnificat a praise that comes out of your heart that's how it is at the beginning when Elizabeth said to Mary in her greeting can be said to every virgin who's ever come to God apart from flesh Luke 1 45 Blessed is the one that believed that there would be a fulfillment of what had been spoken by the Lord.

Now hold on a moment please that principle is illustrated by the mutual exchange of greetings between Mary and Elizabeth I'll leave the portion to you to read in your own leisure but I'll sort of tell the story I'll try to tell the story in terms of this wonderful principle at this point Christ has been conceived in Mary I don't know if she knows it yet or not there's no manifestation of it outwardly at this point Christ is in her so small and so imperceptible she's just a seed there's no outward manifestation except if you look at her emotional joy and her excitement but we see from reading the record that she does have this wonderful song and now all of a sudden the next thing we see is that it's almost immediate she has this gravitational pull this desire to go be with someone who's

been prepared by the Lord and who has had a similar experience and she's inclined now to go immediately to Elizabeth you know how God tells us that John the baptizer is the forerunner of Christ and how he was the voice in advance and how he got people ready prepared to meet the Lord well here's the first record of it you see God used John the baptist to prepare Elizabeth and Zacharias and even though at that time it was only a little bit of a work and his mouth and his ears were shut because of unbelief yet God had begun to do a work and Mary sensed it and Mary begins to gravitate now to her relative's house born

on you it's not by works it's by the Holy Spirit you bow before the Lord you didn't even know what to pray maybe not these words but if it came out this way be it done, be it

done you do it you remember he did it he came as a virgin and he met you and then that holy moment you were filled with excitement and joy and your heart was bubbling over on all sides and you found yourself strangely attracted to others who had been prepared by God in a similar way and you began to run to them it must have been a wonderful time of fellowship that Mary had with Elizabeth and Zacharias I would have loved to have been there we've been prepared by God Christ is just a fetus in Mary's heart at this time in her womb we've been prepared and someone is about to bring Christ to their door interesting story as Mary brings Christ to Zacharias and Elizabeth a Christ so small you can't even begin to see him but he's there he's there indeed, he's there Mary comes to the door and I'm

not even sure if she knew if she was pregnant till she got to the door and Elizabeth addressed her as mother not mother to be how can the mother of my Lord come here she already has Christ in her the fellowship they must have had those three months you know how they're uncomfortable reading verse 42 and 43 Luke chapter 1 she lifted up her voice with a loud cry and said blessed art thou among women and blessed is the fruit of thy womb whence is this to me that the mother of the Lord shall come to me I'll be honest with you that passage has bothered me it's too Mary centered I speak as a fool, you know that it's too instrument centered Mary seems to be bigger than Christ you know why because Mary is bigger than Christ at this stage she is bigger than Christ and the one who brings Christ to

your door is sometimes bigger than the Christ they carry as they bring Christ to your door try to follow me I read this and I understand how some people can venerate Mary when they read a passage like this Elizabeth did not say how is it that the Lord should come to me she said how is it that the mother of my Lord should come to me now brothers and sisters in Christ this is describing a very early stage of the development of Christ and when he is that young in those early stages when Christ is so small you can hardly see him there is a tendency to look to the instrument that brings Christ to your door rather than to the Christ that they bring my first born son sits back there David David was named after the man who brought me to the Lord he's not named after the David of the Bible I have

nothing against the David of the Bible but I tell you the man who brought me to the Lord David Craft I was in high school at the time he was the captain of the football team I was a nerd laugh there he was the valedictorian of our class the most popular kid in the school tutored me in chemistry he took me to church every week took me to youth for Christ rally in 1958 where I first met the Lord you better believe I named my son after him was I instrument centered? sure I was how could it be that the captain of the football team would come to my door that's how it was how could it be that the valedictorian would come to my door he picked me up in his car I was somebody in his eyes as he brought me to Christ you see at that time I had a very unhealthy attachment you gotta read our high

school yearbook it's funny because Dave Craft was now he was the man and everybody knew Dave and under his thing it says that he's going to be a medical missionary in Africa you wanna read mine? listen to this medical missionary in Korea right in my high school yearbook why would I write something like that?

I'll tell you because a very precious instrument brought Christ to my door and at that time I couldn't see Christ I only saw the instrument it's not bad I'm not condemning it I'm saying that's how it is in those holy states that's how it is and you become man centered you become instrument centered and from there I began to look to many instruments and I began to follow instruments in books I began to follow Spurgeon

and I began to follow Watchman Dee and I began to follow George Muller and some of these people I was reading about and the real mentor who God used to turn me around Frank Sells at Columbia Bible College I was married when I asked that man if I could move in with him and I was serious I just wanna follow him around I wanna see what he's made of I was ready to move into his

house say that's unhealthy yeah it is unhealthy but that's how it is when Christ is a Phoenix in real life you don't know a lot you know it's not by works you know it's by the spirit of God you know you're happy you know you like to be around people that have had a similar experience and you look in an unhealthy way to that precious instrument that God uses to bring Christ to your door that's how it is at the beginning turn if you would please Matthew chapter 1 now the birth of Jesus verse 18 was on this wise when his mother Mary had been betrothed to Joseph before they came together she was found with child with the Holy Spirit and Joseph her husband being a righteous man not willing to make her a public example was minded to put her away privately when he thought on these things behold

an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream saying Joseph now son of David fear not to take unto thee Mary my wife that which is conceived in her is of the Holy Spirit then verse 24 Joseph rose from his sleep and did as the angel of the Lord commanded him took him unto him his wife and knew her not until she had brought forth a son called his name Jesus we saw Mary in relation to God and she's undone we saw Mary in relation to those who are prepared by the Lord and she's gravitating to them she wants to talk to them she wants to be with them she wants to spend time with those that have had a similar experience and now we see her illustrated by Joseph in terms of her loved ones her family her fiance that's her husband to be that's her future that's what girls dream about that's

everything he represents the closest of all relationships when Christ was conceived in Mary she was put in a real spot on the level of earth there is no human explanation for this you're not going to go home to your fiance and say I'm pregnant now let me explain that's not going to work it's not going to work and now by her identification with the Lord Jesus Christ and by her union with him there was a tremendous possibility that she would have to go in another direction from her loved ones from her family and that marriage may never have taken place I call attention to this to illustrate another wonderful principle when Christ is a fetus when Christ is a fetus you don't know a lot but you know it's not by works you've seen the virgin birth it's by the spirit of God you don't know a lot

but you know you're happy and you know you have a magnificat to sing you don't know a lot but you find yourself gravitating toward those who've been prepared by God who understand you who you can talk to you don't know a lot but you're thankful for the instrument that brings Christ to your door you don't know a lot but you know you've got a problem and you've got to try to explain I remember so well after I got saved trying to explain it to my Lutheran mother and my German grandmother also a Lutheran and my older sister did a lot of damage really as I was trying to ramrod the gospel down their throats they didn't understand my mother was angry at me because she said I'm just leaving the Lutheran church that's all to her I was just forsaken the Lutheran church she didn't have a clue a lot

of tears were shed at that time you know the Bible doesn't tell us about Mary I'm sort of glad we don't have those conversations I know they talked her and Joseph say how do you know that because the Bible says she was found to be with child and he was ready to put her away can you hear her trying to explain I bet she shed a lot of tears I bet she tried again and again I bet she tried to convince him over and over and over again Matthew 1 18-25 what do we learn and the answer is this that God himself will deal with our loved ones to show them what has happened in our lives what a precious thing that happens when Christ

is a fetus in our lives we ramrodded the gospel by my mother she used to have her little bottle you know under the sink and tried to hide that I'd take it out I'd put it

out in public I'd try to embarrass her tell her she need to get saved my sister and I we'd try to tell my sister was the first one after me to come to the Lord and I was going crazy because she was engaged to be married to someone she should not be married to and I was beating my head against the wall I prayed and I cried and I fasted come on Lord you've got to do something and she didn't want to hear it and as her marriage got closer and closer she got upset one day and she said I'm going to do something I've never done and she didn't know what that was and so we discussed what are you going to do we were worried about her and she said I think I'll go horseback riding so she looked up this person and did horseback riding lessons and on her first horseback riding lesson her teacher was a

Christian and led her to Christ she came home she ran into my arms and now both of us worked together to get Mom and we went after her and then one day at a meeting at church the pastor stood up took his Bible said we don't need this put it down he said we need more money we've got to build a bigger church people are not going to come unless and my mother shy mother stood up in that little church and she said you need to be born again she came home and realized she had never done herself what she had and she got saved she got by herself she just received it we came home and she told us how she had accepted the Lord see that's what happened to Joseph that's what happens when Christ is just a fetus in your life and my grandmother I don't know if I've told some stories I grew up I hated my

grandmother I wanted her to die one time she had a stroke and I went deliberately I went up into the woods I wouldn't even tell anybody I let her lay on the kitchen floor I wanted her to die I come back she's still alive I was upset after God began to work in my heart I wanted to tell her about Christ how could I then she had another stroke she was in a coma and I prayed Lord give me one more chance I went to see my grandmother she was on her dying bed she was at those days they had a tent you know it was oxygen tent over her and I said Manny can you hear me? she just laid there Manny can you hear me?

I saw a tear come down her face I saw her blink and I said if you hear me blink twice and she blinked twice and I went through the gospel and she accepted Christ with her eyes she blinked herself into the kingdom closed her eyes that's how it is when Christ is Venus when Christ is your you don't know a lot but you know it's not by whips you don't know a lot but you know you're happy in Christ you don't know a lot but you know you want to be with other Christians you know that much you don't know a lot you're looking to every person you're in a very unhealthy relationship with the instruments God uses that's how it is and you can't explain anything but God begins to work in your loved ones that's how it is when he's a Venus one more story and we'll close chapter 2 came to pass in those

days they went out a decree from Caesar Augustus that all the world should be enrolled this was the first enrollment made when Quirinius was governor of Syria and all went to enroll themselves everyone to his own city Joseph also went up from Galilee out of the city of Nazareth into Judea to the city of David which is called Bethlehem because he was of the house and family of David to enroll himself with Mary who was betrothed to him being grave with child came to pass while they were there the days were fulfilled that she should be delivered as soon as Christ is conceived in a person that person automatically winds up with the will of God and the purposes of God and the word of God but remember they don't even know what the word is at that stage they don't know anything when I came to

Christ I didn't know there were two testaments in the Bible I didn't know anything do you think Mary knew she had to go to Bethlehem Joseph we better hurry Messiah is supposed to be born in Bethlehem I doubt if she knew that when you don't know the word of God God uses circumstances I don't know why he made that law to tax them at that time but they're just living they're just doing their thing and God is guiding them in his word that's how it is when you're a fetus I don't worry about new Christians some people get all upset you're this person, you're a new Christian and we gotta ground them thoroughly so that they don't go astray you don't have to worry about the young Christians being grounded they're not going astray because when Christ is a fetus at that time he is guiding them in

his word it's amazing you look back in your life how the Lord has guided you you don't know anything and yet you look back now and you say wow look what God did to fulfill his word as soon as I got saved they enrolled me now I'm a servant of the Lord I got saved and the next week at Youth for Christ rally a thousand people they called on me to pray that was stupid I don't know anything I asked God at that rally to save Satan I did what's wrong with that I figured that's a grip that we could save a lot of times you don't know anything when Christ comes as a fetus you don't know anything but you know this it's not by works you don't know much but you know this there's a song in my heart now you don't know much but you know somebody else had a similar experience I gotta go talk to them you

don't know much but you begin to look to people you don't know much but you begin to see God working in your loved ones and changing them and explain you can't explain you don't even know the word God and the Lord's controlling things and you're walking in the path of God I was a walking track rack in a week I was the servant of the Lord and he was a fetus in my heart prepared for ministry? not yet he's not even born yet I was doing well I thought was some great thing but he still he needs to grow and now the fetus needs to become an infant and we look at Christ as an infant what does it look like when he's an infant we look at that together and then he matures and he becomes a young adult what does it look like we'll see the exact same principle that's how it is and finally he becomes a

mature adult and now he can begin to minister oh that's what he wants to do in our hearts you've experienced it what I've said is true and you know it that's how it is when he's a fetus in your heart and you'll see that every step along the way may God help us let's pray Father how we praise you that you are going to be formed in us and that you are going to conform us to Christ you are going to come to maturity you are going to minister through your people where we don't want to resist we don't want this nine months to take nine years help us Lord as we see how you develop how you mature and we pray again Lord form Christ in us we ask in Jesus name Amen

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