

**WAS CHRIST CREATED AT CHRISTMAS?**

Perhaps you find Christmas a bit confusing. We talk, read, and sing about Christ born at Christmas. Yes, Christians insist that Jesus was truly born of the virgin Mary more than 2,000 years ago. Yet we also insist that Jesus Christ is God. Specifically the eternal divine second person of the holy Trinity. The angel Gabriel encountered questions when he delivered the good news about Jesus to Mary. The amazing proclamation resounds in Luke 1:37: *"Nothing will be impossible with God."* This was an echo from God's promise to Abraham in Genesis 18:14 (also declared by Jesus in Matthew 19:26).

**1- Was Jesus born of the virgin Mary?** A 2018 survey by Ligonier Ministries and Lifeway reveals a significant lack of clarity on who Jesus is. They polled American "evangelicals" who strongly agree with four statements: 1, the Bible is the highest authority for what I believe; 2, It is very important for me personally to encourage non-Christians to trust Jesus Christ as their Savior; 3, Jesus Christ's death on the cross is the only sacrifice that could remove the penalty of my sin; 4, only those who trust in Jesus Christ alone as their Savior receive God's free gift of eternal salvation.

Yet, 78 percent of these respondents agreed when asked if "Jesus is the first and greatest being created by God." Perhaps they weren't being careful thinkers. This ancient heresy, held by Arius in the fourth century, has been soundly refuted. "Virgin" in the Bible as applied to Mary refers to a young woman of marriageable age who has not intimately known a man. The male child she was to bear was conceived by the Holy Spirit, and born a truly and fully human being, named Jesus (which means *Jehovah is salvation*). Noted in Luke 1:26-38, Matthew 1:18-25, this also fulfills Isaiah 7:14 and 9:6. Throughout His life, Jesus was known to be human (Luke 2,11:27; Matthew 12:46-50,13:53-58 etc).

How do you respond? Only 18 percent gave the correct answer, disagreeing with the statement. The Bible teaches Jesus Christ is the Creator incarnate, not a created being. He is the eternal Son of God who took on human flesh (John 1), the one God-man fully human and fully divine. Many theologians regard the incarnation of Christ as the greatest miracle. All other miracles of Jesus extend from this.

**2- Has Jesus always existed as God?** Fully 97 percent of respondents agreed with this statement: "There is one true God in three persons: God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit." The Bible makes it clear that there is one God, and the Father is God, the Son is God, and the Holy Spirit is God. These three persons of the Trinity are separate and co-equal and co-eternal. Not three Gods, but One God in three persons. How do 97 percent of evangelicals agree with this, and yet 78 percent believe that Jesus was "created" by God, which the Bible does not teach? It does not compute!

That's why Christmas gives excellent opportunity to proclaim the Good News: God is our Creator and Savior (as the Bible declares over and over). Salvation is arranged by the Father, accomplished by the Son, applied by the Holy Spirit. One God in three persons working salvation, by grace, through faith in Jesus only. The perfect eternal Son of God took on human form, to live a perfect life, to be the perfect sacrifice for sin with His perfect death, and then rise in perfect resurrection to reign in new life, which He gives to all who believe in Him alone as Lord and Savior, author and perfecter of salvation. God became incarnate in Jesus Christ, who resurrected in the glorified human form He will forever be.

**3- How's your Christology?** Beliefs about Jesus Christ form a branch of theology called Christology. As a leading Bible teaching ministry, Ligonier has composed a concise Statement on Christology: "We confess the mystery and wonder of God made flesh, and rejoice in our great salvation through Jesus Christ our Lord. With the Father and the Holy Spirit, the Son created all things, sustains all things, and makes all things new. Truly God, He became truly man, two natures in one person. He was born of the Virgin Mary and lived among us. Crucified, dead, and buried, He rose on the third day, ascended to heaven, and will come again in glory and judgment. For us, He kept the Law, atoned for sin, and satisfied God's wrath. He took our filthy rags and gave us His righteous robe. He is our Prophet, Priest, and King, building His church, interceding for us, and reigning over all things. Jesus Christ is Lord; we praise His holy Name forever. Amen." Do you agree?

**4- Is Jesus Christ your Lord & Savior?** It's one thing to agree intellectually with the statement above, or with your church's doctrinal statement about Christ, likely very similar. But "saving faith" that leads to eternal salvation is not merely a matter of intellectual assent. Saving faith involves your whole person. Not just your mind, but also your heart and your will. All that you are believing in all that Christ is, as best you understand Him. It means "putting all your trust in Him." Your Savior: your Creator who came to the cradle to go to the cross to gain the crown of life. Because only Jesus saves! ☐