

"Incarnational Truth"

John 1:1-18

"The Word became flesh, and dwelt among us." With this stroke of the brush, John paints a very anti-gnostic, anti-dualistic picture of creation. Uncreated and created, Spirit and matter, Eternal and temporal are not such stark opposites that the two cannot be seen together in a single landscape.

In the Word, Jesus Christ, we have Divinity and humanity in one place, in one person. The Word is 100% God (II Cor 5:19) and 100% man (Jo 8:40; I Cor 15:21) - God and man as one so man can be put right with God by one! He came and took on humanity without losing any of His Divinity. To say that He dwelt among us is to say that the world becomes the very theater of His glory.

This is the ground of our gospel. (This is also why the devil keeps trying to dis-incarnate the Christian gospel - see I Jo 4:1-4.) If Jesus is not fully man, then He cannot atone for man. If He (God) did not come in human flesh, He cannot come into your flesh. Every "story" of Christianity without this as the center is a counterfeit story. Every Christian "meal" served without this as the main course is junk food. Spirit and matter together. Perfect in Godhood and manhood. God's embrace of the human race. All in the person of Jesus Christ.

Incarnational theology, then, is critical to every aspect of Christian spirituality. It is the "route" to every notion of Christian maturity. It opens the door to every personal, relational idea of what it means to be Christian. For example, the Word becoming flesh reveals that humanity is no hindrance to the expression of divinity. A human self, in other words, can be a great conductor of Divine "electricity." If so, Christians do not have "self" problems - and therefore the need to repair and improve ourselves. Self-focus, in other words, is no route to spiritual maturity. If anything, we experience "source" problems. We forget or ignore our True Source (Ga 2:20; Col 3:4). Incarnational theology reminds us to focus on Christ, embrace the truth of our inner replacement (Ro 6:5-10), and reference Him as our Source and Supply for every need.

Secondly, the incarnation blatantly points out that Christianity is no escape from the world or human flesh. God comes to the world... in human flesh! An anti-incarnational view, perhaps, would emphasize "context" over "contents". Hide from the world, demean and debase your flesh, change your "circum"-stance and you can be more spiritual. Incarnational Christianity emphasizes our "inner"-stance - "greater is He who is in you...". There is no time or place where we cannot abide in the One Who is our life. We may even see the "outer" events as God calling us to such an "inner"-stance.

Finally, incarnational Christianity celebrates our fullness, our completion in Christ, whereas, an anti-incarnational view is all about our deficits, our "gaps". We seek to gill in these "gaps" through addition. By various human works we try hard to add to, and therefore, complete the unfinished work of Christ! In the incarnational view, we celebrate our oneness with God in Christ, reject the unhealthy (and false!) gaps between God and us (Jo 14:3), and trust the One Who is pleased to live within us to express His Life through us.

Thus, we become a unique expression of Him in the world, the theater of His glory.



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GREETINGS

Daily life is a constant reminder to me of the ever present need to draw life from our True Source. To drink "water" from man made "wells" simply does not satisfy the inner thirst for meaningful life. To think I can "drink enough at one setting and have that last me for the rest of my life is to be deceived.

Day by dayness, moment by momentness is one essential part of any real love affair. We receive and give, we listen and respond, we affirm and declare our love over and over again- not because there is some deficiency, but because eternal love must have its ongoing expression.

The New Testament makes frequent use of a verb form that calls for present and continuous action. We come and keep on coming, we receive and keep on receiving, we believe and keep on believing, we obey and keep on obeying. Meaning what? This drinking from the well of our salvation is no one time gulp. This love affair with God is no static, one time declaration. We drink and keep on drinking, we love and keep on loving for at least two reasons: 1) the infinite nature of God is too much for us to comprehend by one choice - we must choose and keep on choosing to know Him. 2) the timeless nature of God can never fully be apprehended at one single point in time - an ever-present-now God must be trusted at each new point in time.

This month, don't forget to choose and keep on choosing, to trust and keep on trusting, so that we may know God anew, and be ever fresh expressions of His Life.

One In Christ, Inc.
13820 NW 172nd Avenue
Alachua, Florida 32615

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