

The Miracles Of Christmas | God Came To Earth | GUIDE - John 1:1-3

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Christmas is a time of wonder, not just because of family gatherings, festive decorations, and familiar traditions. The wonder of Christmas lies in the miracles God performed. Among them was this: the child born in Bethlehem was the eternal God entering our world in human form. As unbelievable as it seems, you can believe the miracle that Jesus is actually God in the flesh.

Jesus' life did not begin at His birth.

Although we glamorize it, Jesus' birth was rough. He wasn't born in a hygienic hospital room, or in a comfortable king's palace, but in a smelly, dirty animal stall (Luke 2:7). This humble beginning masks the fact that this child was no ordinary baby. He existed as God from eternity past, a completely different kind of being from us, long before His human birth.

John 1:1-3 In the beginning the Word already existed. The Word was with God, and the Word was God. He existed in the beginning with God. God created everything through Him, and nothing was created except through Him.

This speaks of a being - "the Word" - who existed from the beginning of all things. Before there was time, this being was with God and, in fact, was God. A few verses later, John 1:14 reveals that "the Word became human." This was Jesus.

Think of the miracle! The God who spoke the universe into existence (Genesis 1:1) could not utter a single coherent word. The one who created everything became subject to His own creation. He was dwarfed by the beasts and made cold by the wind. The all-powerful became weak and helpless. It would be like pouring all the waters of the oceans into a teacup! Jesus was not just some great teacher or wise spiritual master. He existed - as God! - long before He was ever born into this world.

The New Testament writers repeatedly affirm that Jesus is uniquely God (Philippians 2:5-8; Romans 9:5; Hebrews 1:2-3; John 20:26-28). But these were faithful Jews, steeped in a tradition of complete monotheism. How did they come to understand - against their culture and all of their training - that this man was divine? They were convinced by the claims Jesus made - and how He backed up His claims with His actions.

Jesus claimed that He was one with God.

Jesus was explaining His relationship to God the Father when He said:

John 10:30 The Father and I are one.

He was talking about a unity with God that extends to the very essence of who He is. The crowds understood that He was claiming to be God, because they picked up stones to execute Him for blasphemy (verse 33). With His life in danger, Jesus could easily have clarified that He didn't mean that, But He stood by His claim.

Jesus claimed that He existed as God forever.

Another time, Jesus was talking about His relationship to the great patriarch Abraham, the father of the Israelite nation.

John 8:58 Jesus answered, "I tell you the truth, before Abraham was even born, I AM!"

Here, Jesus claimed to have existed before Abraham was ever born - 2000 years in the past. That's a bold claim! Even more boldly, He applied the sacred name of God to Himself. Jesus wasn't guilty of bad grammar when He said "I am" instead of "I was." God had introduced Himself to Moses as "I AM" (Exodus 3:14). Jesus was identifying Himself as the One who had appeared to Moses. Again, His listeners picked up stones to kill Him. They knew what Jesus meant, and He did not correct them.

Jesus claimed to have all the authority of God.

Only God has complete authority in the universe - because He created everything. But Jesus told His disciples:

Matthew 28:18 "I have been given all authority in heaven and on earth."

Jesus did not just claim authority; He demonstrated it. In His earthly life, He ordered the storm to be calm and it ceased. He commanded demons to depart and they fled. He told sick people to become well and they were healed. He died and rose to life again to show His authority even over sin and death.

This is the first miracle of Christmas: God himself entered our world in Jesus Christ. He cares for us so much that He was willing to leave His heavenly glory to live among us and to take our sins, so that we could have eternal life. He is truly worthy of our awe, obedience, loyalty and worship. What does Jesus' many sacrifices mean for your actions and choices today?

Talk About It...

- *What are your first thoughts regarding today's topic? Please share with the group.*
- *Read **John 1:1-3** and **John 1:14**. How do we know that "the Word" is Jesus? What can we conclude about Him?*
- *How does this view of Jesus compare to how people of other faiths - or no faith - view Him?*
- *Read **Philippians 2:5-8**. How does this describe Jesus' deity? His humanity?*
- *What is the ultimate purpose of His becoming human (verse 8)?*
- *Why do you think the New Testament writers, who were strictly monotheistic Jews, would affirm the unlikely conclusion that a man was actually God?*
- *Read **John 10:27-33**. What did Jesus say about Himself? How did the crowds understand His claims?*
- *Read **John 8:56-59**. Jesus makes several related claims here. What are they? Why were these claims offensive to the Jews?*
- *Read **Matthew 28:17-18**. What is Jesus' central claim in this verse? How did He demonstrate that this claim was true?*
- *How do we know, when Jesus made these bold claims, that He was not a liar or a madman?*
- *If Jesus really is God in the flesh, how might that change your experience of Christmas?*