

When the Infinite became an infant

December 23, 2012

Let's start with Bible quiz about Christmas.

- 1) How many angels spoke to the shepherds for the arrival of the Messiah?
- a. A multitude
 - b. Two – Gabriel and Michael
 - c. One
 - d. Not sure

The right response is C. Luke 2:10

- 2) What song did the angels sing after the announcement of the Baby Jesus?
- a. O Little Town of Bethlehem
 - b. Joy to the World
 - c. Glory to God in the Highest
 - d. None of the above

This is a trick question. The correct answer is D. According to Luke 2:13, they were praising God and saying. There is no mention of them singing anything.

Even though the Gospels of Matthew and Luke talk about the birth of Jesus, the Gospel of John goes way beyond about Jesus. So much that it goes beyond the beginning of the creation.

Actually John's Gospel begins with a prologue that will give us some clues about the identity of the Baby in the manger.

A. THE INFANT IS INFINITE

John 1:1-2 In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. 2 He was in the beginning with God.

Many people think that Jesus got His identity started when He was born. Not so. He has always existed according to these two verses. The word "Word" is the Greek "logos," which refers to Jesus Christ, the Second Person in the Trinity.

You find Jesus talks about Himself in Revelation 1:

Revelation 1:8 "I am the Alpha and the Omega, the Beginning and the End," says the Lord, "who is and who was and who is to come, the Almighty."

Back to John 1:1, please. Please note what it says in the end of v1:

John 1:1c and the Word was God.

This makes very clear about the deity of Jesus Christ. Jesus is not a creation of God, rather He is God Himself. So the Baby who was born from Mary is INFINITE.

B. CHRIST IS THE CREATOR

John 1:3 All things were made through Him, and without Him nothing was made that was made.

Which cross referencing verse does this v3 remind you of? Yes, Colossians 1:16-17:
Colossians 1:16-17 For by Him all things were created that are in heaven and that are on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or principalities or powers. All things were created through Him and for Him. 17 And He is before all things, and in Him all things consist.

In other words, God created the entire universe from the beginning, not something oozed out of a goo. If the evolution theory people are truly logical and honest with

themselves, they have to chuck their fantasy theory right out the window because what they insist doesn't add up scientifically and logically. Existence of anything in the universe requires the intelligent Creator, not accidents. If there was nothing at the beginning as they claimed, the accidents which they hold onto so much couldn't exist from the gecko, either.

Jesus is both the Creator and Sustainer of all things.

C. THE LORD IS LIFE AND LIGHT

John 1:4-5 In Him was life, and the life was the light of men. 5 And the light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not comprehend it.

As you know, Genesis 1:1 starts with physical darkness. To change this darkness God said, "let there be light." He did this not for Himself, rather His creatures.

Then, spiritual darkness spilled into our world when Adam and Even sinned against God in Genesis 3 and this darkness can only be removed by the Lord who is Life and Light. As the Light, Jesus shines into the darkness, and those who have not yet received Him are still in the dark and cannot understand Him.

Many people today choose not to comprehend the real meaning of Christmas. It's because the world, in general, has no room in their hearts for Christ.

Whether it is physical or spiritual, darkness and light cannot coexist. They are mutually exclusive.

John 3:19-20 And this is the condemnation, that the light has come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil. 20 For everyone practicing evil hates the light and does not come to the light, lest his deeds should be exposed.

Unfortunately, the majority of the human race would rather live in spiritual darkness because it hides their sins. I am not talking about criminals, crooks, corrupt politicians, and child molesters only, but good law abiding citizens, nice neighbors, fantastic and respected teachers, and loving family members as well. The entire human race was born with sins in their hearts, continue to live in sins whether they are big or small.

D. THE WORLD DOES NOT KNOW HIM

Let's see what kind of response Jesus gets from the people whom He created:

John 1:10 He was in the world, and the world was made through Him, and the world did not know Him.

When Jesus came to this earth as a Baby in a manger, king Herod hated Him enough to attempt to kill Him; the Jewish scribes ignored Him; and there was no room for Him in the inn.

Not much has changed today. With all the glitter and tinsel of Christmas, it's easy to blow right past the birth of Jesus Christ who was also known as 'Immanuel' – God with us.

In America, satan is doing his best to remove Christ from Christmas. To be politically correct, people say, "Happy Holidays" which I think that it is the most lame way to acknowledge the true reason for the season – Jesus Christ. Try to do that for Ramadan and see what happens. I guarantee you that someone's head is gonna roll, or lose one's job, or be condemned by media immediately.

E. HE WAS REJECTED BY HIS OWN

John 1:11 He came to His own, and His own did not receive Him.

While some choose to ignore the Christ of Christmas, others flat out reject Him just like two thousand years ago. I am talking about the Jewish people. They should have known better because they knew He was coming. Every book in the Old Testament prophesied to this one great truth: "One day God would send His Son, the Messiah to deliver His people Israel." But when Jesus finally arrived, they didn't receive Him because He didn't come to do what they wanted. To not receive means, "to reject."

F. BELIEVE, RECEIVE, AND BECOME A CHILD OF GOD

John 1:12 But as many as received Him, to them He gave the right to become children of God, to those who believe in His name

1) Believe

Many people say that they believe in Jesus Christ. But as what? As some vague figure who has something to do with Christianity and God? The devil and his demons know and believe that Jesus Christ is God. Does it mean that they also are Christians and will go to heaven? Absolutely not.

James 2:19 You believe that there is one God. You do well. Even the demons believe--and tremble!

Believing Jesus involves more than simple intellectual acknowledgement or an emotional response. Biblical belief always requires entrusting what Christ has done for us in the Bible and obeying what the Bible tells us to do.

2) Receive

This is an active word with a deep meaning of "to take, or to seize." Those who receive Christ are those who welcome or accept Him into their lives. Jesus is God's perfect Gift to us at Christmas. We can choose to ignore Him, or reject Him, or we can take what has been freely offered to us.

3) The right to become children of God

This right is not something we can demand like so many criminals demand their constitutional rights while they trample and destroy victims' life and rights. Actually, it is a gift, honor, and privilege from God for a believer of Jesus Christ to be His child.

This v12 is a clear theological statement every single human makes when it comes to Jesus: Either a person receives Jesus as the Savior and Lord, or rejects Him. By saying, "Not now," or "I haven't decided it yet," they are rejecting Him and following Satan's way.

You see, salvation in Jesus Christ is NOT automatic, or can be passed from generation to generation, or can ride on someone's spiritual coattail. It strictly is depending on that individual life-changing and eternal destination-changing decision.

Salvation is from the Lord to mankind. It is a free gift that cannot be purchased with our good behavior or money. It is paid by the birth, death, burial, and resurrection of Jesus Christ. Our part is very simple: Believe and receive. Then our gracious God will give us the right to become children of God.

In her book "The Whisper Test," author Mary Ann Bird writes:
I grew up knowing I was different, and I hated it. I was born with a cleft palate, and

when I started school, my classmates made it clear to me how I looked to others: a little girl with a misshapen lip, crooked nose, lopsided teeth, and garbled speech.

When schoolmates asked, "What happened to your lip?" I'd tell them I'd fallen and cut it on a piece of glass. Somehow it seemed more acceptable to have suffered an accident than to have been born different. I was convinced that no one outside my family could love me.

There was, however, a teacher in the second grade whom we all adored -- Mrs. Leonard by name. She was short, round, happy -- a sparkling lady .

Annually we had a hearing test. Mrs. Leonard gave the test to everyone in the class, and finally it was my turn. I knew from past years that as we stood against the door and covered one ear, the teacher sitting at her desk would whisper something , and we would have to repeat it back--things like "The sky is blue" or "Do you have new shoes?"

I waited, and then came the words that God had surely put into her mouth, seven words that changed my life forever. Mrs. Leonard said, in her whisper, "I wish you were my little girl."

Jesus is whispering in your spiritual ear right now . Do you hear Him? "I wish you were my little girl. I wish you were my little boy. I want you to be my son or daughter. I wish you were in my family."

Ladies and gentlemen, the Infinite became an infant to die on the cross for your sins. He is the Creator of the universe and the Lord of life and light. Don't ignore or reject Him by not accepting Him into your heart today, right now. Your good works cannot take you to heaven, only Jesus can.

The real Christmas quiz is not focused on what you know , but on whom you know. The key is not information, but life transformation. Most of us have enough data; you just need to make a decision.

I want to conclude this morning by giving you an opportunity to be a receiver by accepting the greatest Christmas gift of all time. His name is Jesus. He's whispering your name and knocking at the door of your life. Will you let Him in? Will you receive Him as your Savior and Lord? The Bible says that if you don't receive Him, you've actually rejected Him. If you're ready to believe and receive Him, I invite you to pray this prayer with me:

Heavenly Father, I know I am a sinner and realize that my sins have separated me from you. But I turn away from my sins. I believe that Jesus died for my sins and rose from the dead. So I ask you to be my Savior and Lord. Please come into my heart. I pray this in Jesus' name, Amen.