

Being a Christian requires believing in strange things. We believe God speaks through burning bushes. We believe in the appearance of angels and the reality of demonic possession. We believe God can stop the planets from spinning and turn the sun back for a few hours. We believe a man can be swallowed by a fish and survive. We believe Egypt was struck with the 10 plagues and the Nile ran red with blood. We believe the sick and paralyzed can be miraculously healed. We believe the dead can come back to life. And one of the most unbelievable of these miracles is the virgin birth of Christ. We believe that Jesus Christ was conceived by the virgin Mary. A genuine miracle and natural impossibility.

Now, some Christians struggle with the miracles. And might wonder if they really have to take them all so literally. We are not going to talk about all those miracles this morning. This morning we will talk about the miracle of the virgin birth. Because this miracle is at the heart of the Christmas story. And it deserves our time to discuss why it is so significant. I love the theologian J Gresham (Gressem) Machen (making) who said, "Even if the belief in the virgin birth is not necessary to every Christian, it is certainly necessary to Christianity."

This morning we will talk about the necessity of the virgin birth. Why must Christians believe this. I want to show you why it is essential to our faith. And why it is worth talking about. Because often we might talk about believing it, but we might not understand the full weight of why it is significant.

Our Primary text is Luke 1:26-38. But we will be in other places as well.

I. The virgin birth was necessary because the Scripture teaches it.

This is not the only reason.

We are going to talk about two other ones.

But this is fairly essential.

The belief in the virgin birth was not invented later.

It is not something the early Christians did not believe and later people invented.

We believe it primarily, because the Bible clearly teaches it.

Verse 27, **"the angel Gabriel was sent from God ... to a virgin betrothed to a man whose name was Joseph, of the house of David. And the virgin's name was Mary."**

Mary was a virgin.

It is not ambiguous.

It is not up for debate.

Mary sure believed she was a virgin.

The angel tells her that she will give birth.

And she is confused.

Verse 34, **"And Mary said to the angel, "How will this be, since I am a virgin?"**

She thought it was impossible to have a child.

Joseph believed Mary was a virgin.

He married her even though she was pregnant.

And he believed the angel who appeared to him and said, **"Behold the virgin shall conceive and bear a son, and they shall call his name Immanuel."**

It is not only the gospel accounts that recount the virgin birth.

Because it is something that has been repeated in Scripture.

It is foreshadowed and prophesied.

It is actually given in the very beginning.

Genesis 3:15 speaking towards the serpent Satan God says, **"I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your offspring and her offspring; he shall bruise your head, and you shall bruise his heel."**

The focus here in the beginning was on the conflict between the woman and the serpent.

And God promises that the serpent will be defeated.

But this defeat comes from the offspring, or the seed of the woman.

It is her seed that will bring the final victory and salvation.

This is an unusual way to talk.

We almost always talk about the offspring of men.

Especially when we use the word seed.
Like the seed of Abraham.
Or the king who will be the seed of David.
But here it is the seed of the woman.
It is not obvious right away.
But from the very beginning of the story, God was planning and hinting
and foreshadowing at the coming virgin birth.

We see this later again in Scripture in Isaiah 7:14 **"Behold, the Lord himself will give you a sign. Behold, the virgin shall conceive and bear son, and shall call his name Immanuel."**

This is the prophecy that foretells of Christ's virgin birth.
Now there are those who try to explain this one away.
They try to explain that it is a mistranslation.
Because in Isaiah the word can either mean young woman or virgin.
It is a little ambiguous.
Because Isaiah is talking to King Ahaz.
And He is prophesying about the problem of Assyria and their empire.
This is about some other child born in Isaiah's day.

And it could be partially true.
But often times the prophecies are fulfilled twice.
They are fulfilled once in their day and then they are fulfilled later in a
greater way by Christ.
In Isaiah's day there was a young woman who gave birth.
But in Christ's day, a virgin miraculously gave birth.

After all, this is the passage an angel quotes when he talks to Mary.
And He tells her that this is the prophecy coming to be fulfilled in her day.
The angels believed it was the virgin Mary.

And the idea of the virgin birth is not just taught in the gospels, or in the
very beginning of the story or with the prophets.
The entire narrative of the Bible actually foreshadows it.

The virgin birth is not some weird later invention.
The entire story of the Bible has been building up to it intentionally.

We see this over and over with the stories of barren wombs giving birth.
Sarah miraculously gives birth even though she is far too old to have children.

Even when her biological clock has run out.

Even when her body should not and is not able to have children naturally.

She miraculously has a son named Isaac.

Isaac's wife Rebekah was barren.

Only after prayer does she miraculously give birth to twins.

Rachel has no children.

She has tried for over a decade.

But only after prayer and faith does God miraculously open her womb and Joseph is born.

Three straight patriarchs.

Three times in a row the women have barren wombs capable of no life.

Three times in a row God miraculously helps them give birth.

We then have the story of Hannah in 1 Samuel.

She is barren, but God hears her desperate prayer.

The barren womb gives life to the prophet Samuel.

In the days of the Judges, when sin is rampant and the whole world is filled with evil.

An angel appears to a barren woman to promise she will give birth to a son.

And her son will be Samson, who saves his people.

in 2 Kings 4 there is a woman in Shunem.

Her husband is old and she is barren.

But she because of her faith and kind treatment of the prophet Elisha, she miraculously gives birth to son.

And later, when he son dies, he is brought back to life

The reason all of these miraculous births are sons as well.

It is not because the ancient world was patriarchal, although that is true.
It is because each of these miraculous births is meant to prime the pump
and prepare us for the virgin birth.
It is meant to make us ready.

Each of these is pointing towards Christ.
Each of these is a foreshadowing of the virgin birth.
Of the God who works miracles even in barren wombs.

Because after God has done all of these things.
After all of these children are born, we should not be surprised that God
could bring a child through a virgin.
Because God has been filling empty wombs for millennia.
Now He brings the crown jewel and the most amazing miracle of all.
Now it is the Son of God, born of a virgin.

And it is not just the narrative of the miraculous births.
There are stories after story of the women and how they resist the serpent.
How Jael crushes the skull of a serpent king.
How the judge Deborah delivers the people of Israel.
How the midwives in Exodus spare the baby sons who should die.

All of the Scriptures point towards this.
It is not just in one place.
It is not just in Isaiah or the gospels.
It is throughout the entire story.
The entire Bible teaches and points towards the virgin birth of Christ.
For Christ to not be born miraculously of a virgin would change the entire
way the story has been set up from the beginning.

Here is the reality.
To deny the virgin birth.
Because there are some who do this.
There are those who like Jesus.

Maybe they even call themselves Christians or they like much of the Bible. They will try to pick and choose what they believe. And they will say the virgin birth is too miraculous and impossible. It cannot be true.

So they want to follow Jesus, but they believe He was born through regular human intercourse.

That is a problem.

And to believe that calls Mary a liar, Joseph a liar, the angels a liar, Christ Himself a liar, the apostles liars, the Bible a lie.

You stand against the great cloud of witnesses and the unbroken chain of faith since Pentecost.

The church has always firmly believed in the virgin birth of Jesus.

It was basically unquestioned by believers for 1500 years.

To deny it is to look at all of those believers in whose footsteps we walk.

And you are telling them all they are wrong.

The Bible teaches it.

Not just in Isaiah 7 or the gospels, but in the entire story.

You can reject it, but you have to look at that great cloud and say they are wrong.

And it will actually lead you into greater danger.

Because look at our next point.

II. The virgin birth was necessary for Christ to be a new Adam.

I noticed I'm saying the virgin birth was necessary to be a new Adam.

It may have not necessarily been necessary for him to be truly human.

But the scriptures repeatedly have this idea of Jesus being a second Adam.

Romans 5 is probably the key passage that tackles this idea and explains it.

Romans 5:12, **"Therefore, just a sin came into the world through one man and death through sin, and so sin spread to all men because all sinned."**

Adam was the first human being in our world.
Adam and Eve rebelled against God.
And so now all of us are sinners by birth and by choice.
We follow in our ancestors footsteps.

We see this with children when they're born.
Children are born beautiful.
They were born wonderful and they are delight.
There are many ways in which they are innocent and naïve.
But they are also born with the taint and stain of sin.
Sin and rebelling against God is in their nature.

But in history, there have been some theologians who tried to argue this.
One of them was named Pelagius.
He was later condemned as a heretic, and he repeatedly declared and
believed that human beings are born good.
He thought children were born good and the idea that we all follow the
first Adam was unbiblical.

And he debated with Augustine, who was one of the great Saints and the
greatest minds the church has ever known.
And Augustine taught what the Bible says.
We are all born like Adam and even as babies, we are sinners.
It's also funny in a note, Pelagius who believed that children were good
didn't have any children.
Augustine did have children and knew the truth.

We are all children of Adam and sin and death has spread all men.
And this has been the problem.
All of us are born with the guilt of Adam.
None of us can be the sacrifice or the redeemer to save the rest of us from
sin and death, because as soon as we were born, we've already even
touched by it and we can't make ourselves clean.

So what we need is a second Adam.

Needs someone who is truly human who can be born without the tank from sin, who, in whose footsteps we can follow instead.

Romans 5:14, **"Yet death reigned from Adam to Moses, even over those who sinning was not like the transmission of Adam, who was a type of the one who was to come."**

Paul is saying, Adam was just the first step.

He was foreshadowing the next Adam that we need.

Romans 5:17, **"For if because of one man's trespass, death reigned through that one man much more will those who receive the abundance of grace and the free gift of righteousness rain in life through one man Jesus. Therefore, as one trespass led to the combination for all man, so one active righteousness leads to justification in life for all men. For as by one man, sin entered the world and by the sin of one man many were made sinners, so also by the obedience of one man many will be made righteous."**

All of these verses are repeatedly saying one Adam led us to condemnation, but another Adam can lead to exultation.

One Adam led us to sin, but a second Adam can lead us to righteousness.

So the only way that we can have, this is through the Virgin birth.

Jesus needs to be born in a way that is human and that gives humanity a second chance.

Jesus needs to be born in a way that is untouched for the stain of Adam's sin.

And Jesus needs to be born in a way that points out and revealed to us that this is the second Adam.

The Jesus is humanity's second chance.

Is through the virgin birth.

The Virgin conceiving in her womb is a sign of this is humanity's second chance.

This part might seem a little technical it's OK if it's kind of going over your head a little bit, but it is vital important and our faith rests on this being true whether we fully understand or not.

In order for Jesus to be our savior, He must be Adam.

In order for Jesus to be a second Adam, He has to be born of a virgin.

That's the most important part we need to get.

Now there are some who will debate and talk about the exact mechanics of this.

Like we might wonder how exactly is the guilt of Adam's sin passed on to us.

Does the original guilt of sin come to us through the seed of man?

Is it the genetics of the father who passes on the sin as if it's something in our in our bones and genetically?

I mean, that could be true, but we also know when we get our DNA as well from my mother's.

And so there might be some problems there if you think that's how this comes because then maybe it comes through Mary as well.

And I actually this very concern and wrestling with this question is where part of Catholic doctrine has gotten off track.

For those of you who have grown up catholic or familiar with Catholic theology, there's probably two things you know about in regards to Mary.

They believe in affirm that Mary was not just a virgin when Jesus was conceived, but then they believed in the perpetual virginity of Mary.

They believe she spent the rest of her life remaining a virgin.

Part of the reason that they believe this and they affirm this, even though it's a later development that really didn't start coming until the fourth century was because they wanted to keep the stain of sin from getting to Jesus.

They didn't want anyone to be able to say well maybe Jesus wasn't sinless look at his mother.

So it's out of their desire to protect Jesus that they argue this .

And then they try to explain why the passages that talk about Jesus's siblings.

The other place that they go too far in this direction is the idea of the immaculate conception.

Which you would think this doctrine be about the conception of Jesus, miraculously is truly human and truly God without sin.

But it's not it's actually about the conception of Mary when she was first born.

They believe and teach that Mary was conceived herself completely without sin.

That she was born, and she was conceived without being touched from the sin of Adam and the stain of original sin.

No, why would they believe this? Where would this come from?

Well, it's coming from a good place if we're believing charitable and assuming the best things and their best as we should as believers with Love, even though we disagree.

It comes from the belief in the desire to protect the sinlessness of Jesus.

In order for Jesus to be born as a second Adam, they say Mary had to be without sin so that there couldn't be any part of sin that comes through Mary or humanity to Jesus.

So it's an answer to a very complicated question.

And I think it's an unnecessary answer.

I don't think that this is what the Bible teaches with the Bible requires.

But when you begin to understand and think through the necessity of the version of birth that you can understand why some might go overboard or white with lead in this direction.

This is something you should remember when you're wrestling with Dr. hear some doctoral idea that sounds crazy and maybe it is something that we would fundamentally disagree with.

Who we need to understand and recognize that a lot of time it's coming from someone who's trying to wrestle with a real theological problem. There's a theological issue and they're trying to solve it, and sometimes when people are trying to solve these, they can come up with weird answers.

And so you know, we Protestants would reject the idea of the immaculate conception of Mary.

We do not believe need to believe that she was always a virgin.

But we do need to believe that Jesus was conceived of a virgin.

That he was born in order to be a second Adam

The name Adam actually means man.

It's fitting that the first man was named man.

And Jesus needs to be a man too.

Not just one of us, but that He needs to be one that we can follow instead.

One who offers humanity away to escape the path of death and instead can lead us into everlasting life.

But He couldn't be there unless He was born without the taint of Adam's sin and as a new Adam.

So what does he have to to be part of a virgin to do this?

I think it's to be removed from Adams line and they give us a new one.

I think it's also so He can be born sinless.

The first Adam was created out of dust.

He was miraculously created and brought into life.

In a similar way, Jesus must be miraculously brought into life.

And so God chose for Him to be born as a virgin.

We are sinners by birth and by choice.

We are from the very beginning stained by sin.

We are born into the guilt of Adam.
And then as soon as we can, we follow in His footsteps.
This is part of why Christ must be born as a virgin.
He is not born with the stain and corruption of sin.
The cancer and bad genes does not enter into His body.
The virgin birth is necessary for Christ to be a second Adam.
And it is necessary for our salvation.

III. The virgin birth is necessary for Christ to be God.

The virgin birth is necessary in order for Jesus to be God.
In order for Jesus to be both truly God and truly man, he does have to actually be conceived by a virgin .

Because if Jesus is God.
If Jesus is going to be fully and truly God, He has to be God from the beginning.
There are some who wrongly said well Jesus was just born normally not from a virgin.
He was just a regular human being and then at some point the Holy Spirit descended, and God filled Him and then he became God.
That a heresy with a big name.
We call that adoptionism.
Jesus cannot be adopted as God.
He cannot start as a human being and then turn into God.
Because then there is a point in time when He is not God.
And that is a significant problem .
Because then Jesus isn't truly God.
He is just a kind of god.

There will be those who believe this.
Even if they won't call it adoption, there are many who have profess faith like this.
It's like the idea that there was a man who went around and maybe he was so good and so holy and so awesome that God chose him is that OK? This

will be the Messiah and now the spirit of God will come upon him and he can become God.

That's a real problem for us theologically.

Because that isn't the Christian faith.

Now you have an idea of a man who really is becoming God.

Because if Man becomes God.

If Jesus has a moment where He isn't God and then there's a moment where He turns into God now Jesus has been created.

Now Jesus hasn't always existed.

Now Jesus is a creation.

Now there is a time in which Jesus was not God.

And that means that Jesus is not equal to God, the father and God, the Holy Spirit.

Now Jesus would be a lesser God and a lesser divine being.

It would make Jesus a liar, and it would mean that his sacrificial death on the cross in our place was not enough to deliver us from our sins .

OK, so that's kind of obvious that you know they couldn't be a grown man who was a man and then turned into Jesus and became God.

But what we need to understand is that this is a problem, unless Jesus is born of a virgin.

Because that problem, we have where Jesus isn't fully God, where He isn't equal to God is a problem whether Jesus became God at 30.

Or whether He became God at some point in the womb.

Jesus has to be born of a virgin.

Because God cannot take a group of cells or a fetus and turn it into God.

From the exact moment of conception, Jesus must be truly God and truly man.

So then, for that to happen, the DNA and the make up of the physical body of Jesus can't just come from a man and a woman it has to come from God.

So the virgin birth is a necessity for the divinity of Jesus. And so this is why Christ has to be born of a virgin. From the very moment of conception, Jesus must be already at that moment truly God and truly man.

If Jesus is born through the seed of a man through the natural biological process and conceived through the natural normal biological process, then there is a moment in time when He is not God. And so from the moment of conception, He is conceived by a virgin. So from the very beginning, He is God.

So you see this is why the virgin birth is essential. Because it is tied into the very nature of who Jesus is. If Jesus was not born of a virgin, that Jesus is not God. And if Jesus is not God and he could not have really come back from the grave. And if Jesus didn't come back from the grave, and if Jesus wasn't truly, God did, we are all dead in our sins and there is no hope. That's why we believe, and we must believe in the virgin birth.

Also, a point out that this is why Christians have from the very beginning and earliest days believe that life begins at conception. And this was kind of a radical belief. The Romans and the Greeks did not believe that the soul entered the body until much later. They believe the soul entered the body after birth. That's why babies were crying. It's also why they didn't have a problem killing children, and they did not have a problem with aborting them.

But from the very beginning Christians have believed life begins at conception.

This is part of why it is essential for our faith to believe life begins at conception.

If you deny that life begins at conception, then you end up denying a fundamental truth about Christ.

And because life begins at conception, Jesus's life began at a conception. Because Jesus is God, Jesus was conceived by the power of the Holy Spirit.

Jesus also had to be born of a virgin in order to show that he was God.

It is part of the miraculous proof of his divinity.

It is one of the miracles to show this is not an ordinary child.

This is not a child who is going to grow up and become God from the very beginning.

This is the Messiah and this is God.

And it would be undeniable.

Although they doubt it and they wondered, and they tried to say it wasn't.

It is a sign and a symbol that heaven is invading earth.

That He was coming to save us.

CONCLUSION:

1. The virgin birth is necessary because the Bible teaches it. The virgin birth is necessary for Christ to be a second Adam. The virgin birth is necessary for Christ to be God
2. This Christmas, in a few short days, we will celebrate and remember that Christ was born of a virgin. And that birth is the hope and reality of our salvation. Remember that it is not just a cute optional story. It is the foundation of our faith and our hope. We believe in God the father almighty, the maker of heaven and earth. And in Jesus Christ His only son, who was conceived by the Holy Spirit, born of the virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died and was buried, he descended into hell, and on the third day he rose again from the dead, he ascended into heaven, and is seated at the right hand of God..."