

****Vid bumper**

Welcome back to the 2nd week of our Before Christ Series! My name is Chris Fluitt and I serve as Lead Pastor here at Redemption Church.

Quick review

Everyone has a prequel that reveals the full story. We celebrate the birth of Christ but may not know the story before the story.

The Christmas story is all about the **Incarnation.**

The incarnation is God in a Bod.. Jesus is God clothed in flesh.

When did God decide to incarnate?

We know that Jesus rescues us from the law of sin and death but the decision to incarnate was not in response to mankind's fall into sin.

The Incarnation was God's plan from the beginning.

This week we are going to answer **Why did God incarnate?**

We received some great feedback from our anonymous **text** line this past week. 214 856 0550

One of the questions we received was about Revelation 13:8.

Revelation 13:8 And all that dwell upon the earth shall worship him, whose names are not written in the book of life of the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world.(KJV)

If Jesus was slain from the foundation of the earth doesn't that mean that Christ was predestined to die for our sin. That question was well timed! That is what we are talking about today.

Let's dive into that question! History tells us that Christ died around 30-33AD. This is the date he was physically slain on the cross. But does this contradict Revelation 13:8 where it says He was slain from the foundation of the earth?

I think we can agree that what Revelation 13:8 is referring to is the plan that we talked about last week. Remember John 1:1 – In the beginning was the WORD.. The word for WORD there is LOGOS which is means Logic or PLAN.

From the foundation of the Earth God had the LOGOS PLAN to incarnate and to have relationship with mankind. Included in that plan was the extent God would go to have relationship with mankind. Being slain on the cross repaired our relationship with God. Revelation 13:8 reveals the extent God would go in His plan to have a face to face incarnate relationship with man.

The Incarnation is not a whimsical plan that was not completely thought out.

COUNT THE COST

Jesus the creator of the universe offers a parable as a question.

Luke 14:28 "Suppose one of you wants to build a tower. Will he not first sit down and estimate the cost to see if he has enough money to complete it?(NIV)

Luke 14:29 For if he lays the foundation and is not able to finish it, everyone who sees it will ridicule him,(NIV)

Luke 14:30 saying, `This fellow began to build and was not able to finish.'(NIV)

Jesus makes the point that if we are to make a decision we must count the cost before we begin.

The creator stood before the foundation of the world and counted the cost. Part of that cost was the cross.. Before the foundation God weighed the cost of incarnating and being crucified.

God was able to see the need of the cross without predestinating the fall of man. This possible because God has **foreknowledge**.

The Bible in several passages speaks about God's foreknowledge. (Isaiah 42:9, Acts 2:23, 1 Peter 1:20...)

What is foreknowledge? Most people would say It is God's ability to see what will happen. But foreknowledge is bigger than that. God's foreknowledge doesn't just see what will happen but also sees everything that could happen.

There is a Nicolas Cage movie that called NEXT that I think illustrates foreknowledge fairly well. It is not a great movie and has a terrible ending.. but I think it does this one thing well.

Nic Cage plays this character that is able to tell the future by stepping out of time and living out future choices. In one scene he is trying to defeat terrorists and rescue hostages. He steps out of time and travels into the building and goes down the

first hall but is shot... so he starts over and skips that hall way the next time and through trial and error he attempts to defeat the terrorists and save the hostages. He creates all these alternate attempts and then chooses the most successful attempt. He then steps back into time and says "follow me. I know the best path to take."

This is like foreknowledge. God not only knows what will happen. God knows everything that could happen. He travels down all these different time streams of your life.

Through foreknowledge God is exposed to the best and worst about you. Just like Nic Cage traveled through different choices and outcomes, God has traveled down the different avenues of your life, heart, & mind.

There is an alternate reality of Chris Fluit where he didn't make as good of decisions and became a drug dealer.. or an abusive husband.. or denied God and cursed His name. God in His foreknowledge experienced the worst about me... you... and all of humanity. (His intellect is that big!)

Then God steps back to Genesis 1 and weighs all that He knows about us. He weighs the best & worst about us.. He counts the cost and still decides to incarnate... to live with us even though the worst could happen.

This is not different than a man & woman standing at a marriage altar and being asked "do you take this person for better or worse." In that moment you are to count the cost and decide if you will take this person even if the worst comes to pass.

God made this choice in the beginning. He had foreknowledge of just how far we could fall.. how cruel we could become.. how we could reject Him.. yet he still said yes.

This is great news. This means God has already seen you at your worst and said “Yes.” You have never surprised God. You have never God off God’s grid. You have never reached that place where you have gone too far that He stops loving you. You have never sinned so grossly that He no longer will receive you in repentance.

We make the mistake of think... “It’s too late. God will never take me back.” God has already counted the cost. He has already said YES! It was His incarnate plan from the beginning.

But why? **Why did God incarnate?**

The answer is Love.

Love is not just something God does. Your Bible tells us that Love is WHO HE IS.

1 John 4:16 And so we know and rely on the love God has for us. God is love. Whoever lives in love lives in God, and God in him.(NIV)

His love is so deep he was willing to suffer the most cruel death at our own hands. In His foreknowledge he hand selected the most cruel death – crucifixion – and decided that a relationship with you was worth the worst death imaginable.

It is an unconditional love. The love God had for Adam & Eve was the same before the fall as it is after the fall into sin. God counted the cost and loves you equally at your best and your worst.

It is a self-sacrificing love.

Galatians 2:20 I have been crucified with Christ and I no longer live, but Christ lives in me. The life I live in the body, I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me.(NIV)

Jesus did not come to reveal the holiness of God. Jesus did not come to reveal the law of God. Both of those are in Him, but they are not the reason He came. Jesus came to reveal the LOVE OF GOD.

John 14:20 On that day you will realize that I am in my Father, and you are in me, and I am in you.(NIV)