

INCARNATIONAL THEOLOGY or simply “WHY DID GOD WANT TO BECOME HUMAN?”

As we prepare for Advent, and Christmas approaches, let us reflect on the reason for God wanting to become human and “dwell among us”.

In the early Church, Christ’s followers had to make sense of the terrible tragedy of Christ’s death. As if Christ’s resurrection was not enough reason for His crucifixion, they went back to the beginning. They viewed the “original sin” of Adam and Eve as the need for Jesus’ death, as payback to God. This view permeated the early Church and thus colored the whole story of Jesus’ life, death and resurrection.

But what if? What if we went further back, beyond Adam and Eve? What if we look at the Creation Story? What if we took sin out of the picture for a moment and just focused on God?

The disciple John writes in 3:16, “For God so loved the world that He gave His only son, so that everyone who believes in Him might not perish but might have eternal life.” LOVE. LOVE? Could it be that God’s “Plan A” was created out of love? That God in His wisdom sent His son Jesus to live among us in a unique and definitive way, as a human. God becoming human, in the person of Jesus Christ, was not an afterthought, or “plan B”, only an event to make up for Original Sin and our human sinfulness.

What difference does this make? For those of us whose faith has been shaped by the images of atonement and reparation, we can then see that the whole purpose of creation was for the event of the Incarnation, the birth of Jesus Christ, as a human being to live among us. This makes God’s first thought Jesus; Jesus is the culmination of God’s gift of love to the world! What love the Father has for us!

What a difference this makes for our relationship with God! We are called into this divine understanding of selfless love for all. Life and love become the basis of our spirituality and our life’s actions, not suffering and death. We are released from all worldly bonds to love freely and in the grace of God.

“In the beginning was the WORD...and the WORD became flesh.” Thank you God!

To learn more of the history of Incarnational Theology, check out the Franciscan philosopher and theologian Bl. John Duns Scotus (1266-1308).

Questions for discussion:

1. How do I view the birth of Christ, is it primarily one of love, or is it one for my salvation?
2. Looking through the “eyes of love”, will this impact my preparation and celebration of Christmas?

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