

Eleutheros Newsletter

January 2019

News of Interest

God willing, Eleutheros Books will be ministering to pastors and Christian leaders in Ghana sometime soon. The subject will be Soteriology (salvation), and all who attend will read and be tested from *The Ramifications of Our Salvation*.

A resource for Christians! <http://www.eleutherosbooks.com>

Free newsletter

Global Book Fund

Soulwinning seminar

Books by Dr. John Rataczak

Coming soon: Eleutheros School of Theology

View these videos:

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Another Look at Our Savior's Birth

And so it was, that while they were there, the days were accomplished that she should be delivered. And she brought forth her firstborn Son, and wrapped Him in swaddling clothes, and laid Him in a manger because there was no room for them in the inn ([Luke 2:6-7](#)).

Today's world tends to consider the birth of Christ in ways that either ignore or pervert much of the truth that God's Word has revealed to us about it.

Unfortunately, entire industries market their products and depend upon "holiday sales" during the Christmas season with disregard to the truth that Jesus was born of the Virgin Mary over two thousand years ago.

This is made obvious by constant references to "Santa Claus," "Rudolph, the Red Nosed Reindeer," "Frosty the Snow Man," among many others.

Secular Christmas music emphasizes "peace on earth" while hardly mentioning the Prince of Peace ([Isaiah 9:6](#)); shops, both large and small, sell toys, electronic equipment, clothes, etc. while giving no credit to God who has supplied so much for us; and families generally would rather spend far more time watching sports or catching up on "the latest" than pondering the glories of Jesus' birth.

In this newsletter we will look at what the Apostle John dealt with at the end of the first century A.D.

The world of those days certainly wasn't singing similar songs, selling electronic equipment, or gathering families together to discuss everything except the virgin birth.

Instead, there were false teachers (deceivers) *who confess not that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh. This is a deceiver and an antichrist* ([2 John 7](#)).

These deceivers were known as *Gnostics*. They had become a secret society in John's day, emphasizing their "great knowledge" (the Greek noun *gnosis* means "knowledge").

Among the "truths" these Gnostics taught was a philosophical idea that spirit (God) is good and matter is evil. This being the case, they did not believe that God created the universe. Rather, according to their thinking, God created something a little less good (but still powerful and a spirit); that "emanation" created another being that was a spirit but is a little less like GOD; and after several processes one of the "emanations" (apparently half good and half evil and quite powerful) created the world and all the solar systems.

This, of course, was human thinking. *There is a way, which seemeth right unto a man, but the end thereof are the ways of death.* ([Proverbs 14:12](#)).

No doubt John was aware that Biblical truth had been twisted from the earliest days of mankind: Cain's unacceptable sacrifice and killing of his brother Abel ([Genesis 4:3-16](#)), false religions throughout Old Testament times, the man made rules of the Pharisees and Sadducees in Jesus' day, and the Judaizers that Paul dealt with earlier in the first century who mangled the Gospel with works preceded the Gnostics.

His reaction was strong: *Look to yourselves, that we lose not those things, which we have wrought, but that we receive a full reward. Whosoever transgresseth, and abideth not in the doctrine of Christ, hath not God. He that abideth in the doctrine of Christ, he hath both the Father and the Son. If there come any unto you, and bring not this doctrine, receive him not into your house, neither bid him God speed. For he that biddeth him God speed is partaker of his evil deeds* ([2 John 8-11](#)).

John made it very clear that Jesus is God: *In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God* ([John 1:1](#)).

He also made it clear that Jesus is the Creator of all things, thus opposing the gnostic attitude: *All things were made by Him: and without Him was not anything made that was made* ([John 1:3](#)).

Further, John declared that Jesus is both God and man: *And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, (and we beheld His glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father,) full of grace and truth* ([John 1:14](#); see also [1 John 1:1-3](#)).

One might ask a simple question at this point: why is it important that Jesus is both God and man?

In order to meet the demand of the Father, who is absolutely holy ([1 John 1:5](#)), the ultimate sacrifice to pay for mankind's sin had to be perfectly holy. Obviously, mankind is sinful by nature ([Romans 3:23](#) among many other verses), so any man born the normal way could not successfully meet the demands of God the Father. The sacrifice, therefore, had to be God! Jesus is, and always will be, God!

On the other hand, the sacrifice had to be human. Jesus did not die for animals or angels. He died for sinful mankind. The blood of bulls and goats certainly could not save (see [Hebrews 9:11-15](#))!

Jesus is the God-man! He is holy and can meet the requirements of the Father; He is man and died for us! He is the ONLY One who can rightly claim to be both God and man! This is why John wrote *But as many as received him, to them gave He the power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on His name* ([John 1:12](#)). This is also why Jesus said *I am the way, the truth, and the life, no man cometh unto the Father, but by Me* ([John 14:6](#); see also [Acts 4:12](#))!

John had seen Jesus and knew that He is God and man! That is why he stood so strongly opposed to gnostic teaching, which was a major factor in his day. If Jesus is not God, then the Bible is not true! If Jesus is not man, then He is not what we need for salvation!

This issue is important, and we as believers do well to ponder its meaning often. Early leaders after John dealt with the Person and work of Christ, concluding Biblically that He is the virgin born God-man; and we must be dogmatic about this point!

How can we apply this doctrine in our lives?

1. Take time to ponder all the details the Scriptures teach about His birth! Study the prophecies; consider how the Father planned it; be humbled by the fact that Jesus came into this world and lived among us without many conveniences even while so many rejected Him!
2. Take the message of the Gospel to all who will hear it! Explain to people, young and old, that Jesus is the message of Christmas and that His birth gave Him the right to be our Savior!
3. Give thanks to God for His Son! We should offer prayers for this glorious fact every day, not just in the Christmas season! Learn more about Jesus' birth, life, death, resurrection, and coming again for His own!

The Birthday of a King

William H. Neidlinger

What a plan the Father has made, and what a Savior Jesus is!

*In the little village of Bethlehem
There lay a child one day;
And the sky was bright with a holy light*

O'er the place where Jesus lay.

*'Twas a humble birthplace, but O how much
God gave to us that day!
From the manger bed, what a path He led;
What a perfect holy way!*

*Alleluia! How the angels sang!
Alleluia! How it rang!
And the sky was bright with a holy light,
'Twas the birthday of a King!*