

Journey CHURCH

Pastor James Greer
James@jcpineville.com
www.jcpineville.com



Leader Guide

The Case for Christmas Session 3: A Mind-Boggling Proposition

Before you watch:

Team up with another group member and answer the following questions:

- Are you into decorating your home for Christmas? If so, how elaborate are your decorations?
- What's your favorite part about Christmas dinner? Why?
- Where's the most unusual place you've ever spent Christmas? How did it happen that you were there?

Video Teaching

Play the video segment for session three. As you watch, use the following outline to record any thoughts or concepts that stand out to you.

Notes

God becoming man, spirit taking on flesh, the infinite becoming finite, the eternal becoming time-bound- it's a mind-boggling proposition. And the virgin birth is at the center of it all.

The virgin conception of Jesus is clearly taught in Scripture (see Matthew 1:18, Luke 1:34-35).

Why is the virgin birth important theologically? Two reasons:

-First, it makes it possible for Jesus to be both fully God and fully man, which is foundational biblical claim about him.

-Second, it makes it possible for Christ to be born without original sin. All other people have inherited a corrupt moral nature, thanks to our first father, Adam.

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Some critics maintain the virgin birth is a story invented by Christians many years after Jesus' death as a way to elevate his status. But the reports of the virgin birth were quite early- in fact, within the first generation of Christians.

“In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth” (Genesis 1:1). If we believe in a God who created the universe, then for him to create a Y chromosome would be child's play.

This dual nature of Jesus- his humanity and his divinity- is important:

Because of his humanity, he can relate to our situation.

Because of his divinity, he can give us supernatural wisdom, offer the power of God to help us, perform powerful miracles and wonders, and open up the gates of heaven.

Group Discussion

Once the video has concluded, break up into small groups for a time of discussion. Ideally, this should be the group with whom you've spent the previous two sessions. And by now you should be more comfortable with one another. Circle up and get right down to it!

1. What are some reasons why the virgin birth is important to Christian theology?
2. Why is it important that Jesus was born fully *divine*? Why is it important that Jesus was born fully *human*?
3. Why would critics say the disciples made up the story of the virgin? Is there any advantage to the first-century believers in propagating a lie? For them, would creating a fiction instead of relating the truth really elevate who Jesus was?

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4. Read aloud John 1:1. What does that verse say to you? Can you think of other verses from John's Gospel that refer to Jesus as God in one way or another? What other questions do you have about Jesus' divinity that you want to discuss with the group?

Closing Prayer

Take some time to pair up with your partner. How is he or she doing with this study? Does your partner have more questions than when you began? What are some ways you could help? Keeping this season of gift-giving in mind, what are two or three things you can tell the person you respect about him or her- things in which the person is gifted? Close by praying together as a group. Be sure to inquire about any new requests that might have surfaced since last session and continue to pray for the needs already before you.