**BITH 565: Christian Theology**

**The Life of Jesus**

**The life of Jesus (who Jesus is and what Jesus has done) is the engine that drives Christian theology.**

**It makes sense, then, that the longest article in the Creed is about Jesus.**

**The Nicene Creed: Second Article**

We believe in one Lord, Jesus Christ,

the only Son of God,

eternally begotten of the Father,

God from God, Light from Light,

true God from true God,

begotten, not made,

of one Being with the Father.

Through him all things were made.

For us and for our salvation

he came down from heaven:

by the power of the Holy Spirit

he became incarnate from the Virgin Mary,

and was made man.

For our sake he was crucified under Pontius Pilate;

he suffered death and was buried.

On the third day he rose again

in accordance with the Scriptures;

he ascended into heaven

and is seated at the right hand of the Father.

He will come again in glory to judge the living and the dead,

and his kingdom will have no end.

**Anyone notice a gap? What's missing?**

**Do the events of Jesus' life (between his birth and his death) have saving significance?**

* What are some arguments AGAINST? (“No, the events between Jesus' birth and death do NOT have saving significance.”)
* What are some arguments FOR? (“Yes, the events between Jesus' birth and death DO have saving significance.”)

**So, should we revise the Creed(s)? Take 10 seconds to write down your gut reaction.**

**The events in Jesus' life seem to have some kind of theological significance.**

**KEY QUESTION: What's the theological significance of the events in Jesus' life?**

**Why should the Incarnation keep us confident, curious, and humble when it comes to historical research into Jesus' life?**

**MAIN POINTS:**

**1. You can't understand the story of Jesus without understanding the story of ISRAEL.**

**2. Understanding Jesus in his context should enrich, not negate, our Christological doctrines.**

**Avoiding "Supersessionism"**

"The belief that on the basis of the coming of Jesus as the Messiah (Christ), the Christian church has superseded Israel as the chosen, covenant people of God." (Donald McKim, *The Westminster Dictionary of Theological Terms*.)

**(Why) is supersessionism bad?**

**OK, Let's walk through some events in Jesus' life!**

**The Virgin Birth: Matt. 1:18-25; Luke 2:1-7**

**Jesus' Early Life**

* Circumcision and Presentation in the Temple (Luke 2:21-38)
* Flight into Egypt and Return (Matt. 2:13-21)
* Childhood at Nazareth (Matt. 2:22-23; Luke 2:39-40)
* Boy Jesus in the Temple (Luke 2:41-52)

**What should we make of the fact that we're not told much at all about Jesus' early life?**

**What's the theological significance of the events we ARE told about?**

**Jesus' Context: A "Perfect Storm"**

(N.T. Wright: "The Making of a First-Century Storm" and "The Hurricane," *Simply Jesus*, chapters 4-5)

1.

2.

3.

This "Perfect Storm" is the source of much of the tension/trouble in Jesus' life.

**Jesus' Baptism: Matt. 3:13-7; Mark 1:9-11; Luke 3:21-22; John 1:29-34**

**What's Jesus doing getting baptized? What's going on?**

And a voice came from heaven,

“You are my beloved Son;

with you I am well pleased.”

(Mark 1:11)

I will tell of the decree: The Lord said to me, “You are my Son; today I have begotten you. (Psalm 2:7)

Behold my servant, whom I uphold, my chosen, in whom my soul delights; I have put my Spirit upon him; he will bring forth justice to the nations. (Isa. 42:1)

**Jesus' Temptation: Matt. 4:1-11; Mark 1:12-13; Luke 4:1-13**

**What other things from Scripture are at least being alluded to by Jesus' temptation?**

**Recapitulation: "Summing Up"**

"A view of early Christian theologians, particularly Irenaeus (c. 130 - c. 200) that God "sums up all things in Christ" (Eph. 1:10) as the second Adam who restores the sinful creation by redeeming from all the sin done in Adam." (Donald McKim, *The Westminster Dictionary of Theological Terms*)

Jesus recapitulates both the Story of Israel and the Story of Humanity.

**The First Sunday in Lent, Year A**

* Genesis 2:15-17; 3:1-7
* Psalm 32
* Romans 5:12-19
* Matthew 4:1-11

**How are Jesus' temptations exemplary for us?**

**How are they not?**

**Jesus' Miracles**

**Jesus' Teachings**

**The Transfiguration: Matt. 17:1-13; Mark 9:2-13; Luke 9:28-36**

**In groups of 2-3, discuss: What's the theological significance of the Transfiguration?**

**Matt. 17:1-13**

And after six days Jesus took with him Peter and James, and John his brother, and led them up a high mountain by themselves. And he was transfigured before them, and his face shone like the sun, and his clothes became white as light. And behold, there appeared to them Moses and Elijah, talking with him. And Peter said to Jesus, “Lord, it is good that we are here. If you wish, I will make three tents here, one for you and one for Moses and one for Elijah.” He was still speaking when, behold, a bright cloud overshadowed them, and a voice from the cloud said, “This is my beloved Son, with whom I am well pleased; listen to him.” When the disciples heard this, they fell on their faces and were terrified. But Jesus came and touched them, saying, “Rise, and have no fear.” And when they lifted up their eyes, they saw no one but Jesus only.

And as they were coming down the mountain, Jesus commanded them, “Tell no one the vision, until the Son of Man is raised from the dead.” And the disciples asked him, “Then why do the scribes say that first Elijah must come?” He answered, “Elijah does come, and he will restore all things. But I tell you that Elijah has already come, and they did not recognize him, but did to him whatever they pleased. So also the Son of Man will certainly suffer at their hands.” Then the disciples understood that he was speaking to them of John the Baptist.

**Mark 9:2-13**

And after six days Jesus took with him Peter and James and John, and led them up a high mountain by themselves. And he was transfigured before them, and his clothes became radiant, intensely white, as no one on earth could bleach them. And there appeared to them Elijah with Moses, and they were talking with Jesus. And Peter said to Jesus, “Rabbi, it is good that we are here. Let us make three tents, one for you and one for Moses and one for Elijah.” For he did not know what to say, for they were terrified. And a cloud overshadowed them, and a voice came out of the cloud, “This is my beloved Son; listen to him.” And suddenly, looking around, they no longer saw anyone with them but Jesus only.

And as they were coming down the mountain, he charged them to tell no one what they had seen, until the Son of Man had risen from the dead. So they kept the matter to themselves, questioning what this rising from the dead might mean. And they asked him, “Why do the scribes say that first Elijah must come?” And he said to them, “Elijah does come first to restore all things. And how is it written of the Son of Man that he should suffer many things and be treated with contempt? But I tell you that Elijah has come, and they did to him whatever they pleased, as it is written of him.”

**Luke 9:28-36**

Now about eight days after these sayings he took with him Peter and John and James and went up on the mountain to pray. And as he was praying, the appearance of his face was altered, and his clothing became dazzling white. And behold, two men were talking with him, Moses and Elijah, who appeared in glory and spoke of his departure, which he was about to accomplish at Jerusalem. Now Peter and those who were with him were heavy with sleep, but when they became fully awake they saw his glory and the two men who stood with him. And as the men were parting from him, Peter said to Jesus, “Master, it is good that we are here. Let us make three tents, one for you and one for Moses and one for Elijah”—not knowing what he said. As he was saying these things, a cloud came and overshadowed them, and they were afraid as they entered the cloud. And a voice came out of the cloud, saying, “This is my Son, my Chosen One; listen to him!”And when the voice had spoken, Jesus was found alone. And they kept silent and told no one in those days anything of what they had seen.

**The Triumphal Entry: Matt. 21:1-9; Mark 11:1-10; Luke 19:28-40; John 12:12-19**

**Cleansing the Temple: Matt. 21:12-17; Mark 11:15-17; Luke 19:45-46; John 2:14-22**

**The Last Supper: Matt. 26:26-29; Mark 14:22-25; Luke 22:15-20**

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| Passover/Exodus Timeline | New Passover/Exodus Timeline |
| The original Passover meal (Exod. 12)  The Exodus from Egypt  The establishment of the Covenant  Israel's yearly remembrance of the Passover  In hope of future, final redemption | Original Last Supper  New Exodus  New Covenant  Church’s remembrance in Holy Communion  Hope for future, final redemption |

**The Crucifixion: Matt. 27:33-37; Mark 15:22-26; Luke 23:33-34; John 19:17b-27**

**The Resurrection: Matt. 28; Mark 16; Luke 24; John 20**

**The Ascension: Luke 24:44-53**

**What difference does it make that Christians worship a currently enthroned & embodied Lord?**

**So, should we revise the Creed(s)?**