

Melva's Corner

GOD MADE YOU SOMEBODY! (The Journey Continues)

December 18, 2006

(Matthew 1:20-21)

Central Truth: God wants us to be part of something important.

“I just want to be somebody! I want my life to matter!”

As kids, we played games pretending to be someone important. Our beloved stories as children involved ugly ducklings becoming beautiful swans and a mistreated stepdaughter, named Cinderella, becoming the beautiful princess chosen by the handsome prince. But life seems to beat the dreams out of most of us. We settle for more pedestrian plans and give up our “unrealistic” dreams of being someone important who is part of something important and is specifically chosen to do something important. We settle for being spectators cheering for strangers to win games that mean very little so we can chant “We’re number 1!”

Luke writes to reawaken our dreams. “Cinderella isn’t a fairy tale!” his story reminds us, “look at Mary, she becomes the mother of the Messiah.”

“Ugly ducklings do become lovely swans!” his gospel tells us, “remember Elizabeth and Anna who are gloriously blessed after years of disappointment.”

“Snow White CAN come back to life!” his words beckon us to believe, for “more than just hopes get resurrected in the Jesus story.”

And it all begins with the least likely of heroes...

Luke introduces us to an old, forgotten but faithful priest and his wife. God chooses Zechariah “by lot” to serve in the Temple, something he would only do once his whole life. The “barren” Elizabeth suddenly is given a son in her old age. Together, they are

filled with Spirit-inspired prophecy after nine months of a baby growing in Elizabeth's womb and silence covering Zechariah's days.

Mary, Elizabeth's relative, is given a child in her womb without the help of a man. The angel Gabriel, sent straight from the very presence of God Himself, informs her of this miracle. This peasant and godly young woman becomes the mother of God's Messiah, the Promised One of Israel.

Simeon, perceived as a devout "religious fanatic" is blessed to see and hold the Redeemer of Israel. He is filled with the Holy Spirit and prophesies about the destiny of this Wonder Child.

God chooses Anna, a "widow woman" dedicated to prayer in God's Temple, to be the first preacher proclaiming the arrival of the Savior.

Meanwhile, the rich, powerful, and influential are mere bystanders and pawns in God's great drama of redemption. King Herod is merely the token tyrant in the story. Caesar Augustus is only the prop that brings Joseph and Mary to Bethlehem. Quirinius, the governor of Syria, is a mere historical reference marking the time of the Messiah.

A whole host of everyday unknowns are swept up into God's glorious drama of grace. Shepherds, once glorious because of the heritage of Abraham and David, are now despised. Yet when God announces the birth of His Son with a heavenly chorus of angels, shepherds tending their flocks on the hillside are the chosen audience for God's symphony of joy. They become the first human witnesses proclaiming the birth of the Savior, Christ the Lord. The unknowns of the world — the village friends of Zechariah and Elizabeth, the residents of the unknown inn near where Jesus was born, the Temple goers who heard Anna and Simeon — become the first to know about God's glorious arrival.

You see, God wants us to be part of something important. So He had everyday folks play the key roles in His story of salvation. He wants us to identify with the person most like us, and realize that this story is not just FOR us, it is ABOUT us. We are important to the Creator of the universe. We are part of something important and lasting and wondrous when we tell others about this Jesus.

When God tuned the world to His grace, we were asked to join His heavenly chorus and proclaim with joy, “Our Redeemer, Christ the Lord, has come!”

Luke wants us to know that this story is ultimately about us being more than just another spectator. It is about us being chosen by God to be His partners, in His story, to share His joy and grace and salvation in the birth of His Son, Jesus the Christ!

Scriptural References:

“Joseph, Son of David, do not be afraid to take Mary home as your wife, because what is conceived in her is from the Holy Spirit. She will give birth to a son, and you are to give him the name Jesus, because he will save his people from their sins.” (Matthew 1:20-21)