

Paradox Participants Guide – Week 1 – 12/4/22

The Main Idea: We are more sinful and weaker than we could ever believe while at the same time more sought after and loved than we could possibly comprehend.

Discussion Questions:

- **How do you see this quote being true today? In what ways has 'evil subverted' what God has created?**
"One thing we know about evil is that we know it doesn't create anything on its own. It has no creative power. Evil can only subvert what already exists. It takes what is good and turns it on its head. It desecrates the holy and the sacred." Matt Walsh
- **Read Luke 1:26-38, Isaiah 7:14, 9:6-7. What grabs you from these passages? Why was Mary "greatly troubled?" How was she "overshadowed" by God?**
- **Paradoxes are a unique way of communicating where two things are put together that communicate something profound through their contradiction.**
"A paradox is Truth, held in the tension of contradiction. Paradoxes are how we discover the Truth about you and God, in the tension of contradiction." Kile Baker
Further Study of Paradoxes in the Bible. Prov. 13:7; Matt. 10:39, 16:25; Mark 8:35; Luke 17:33, John 12:25; 1 Cor. 3:18; 2 Cor. 6:4, 8-10; 2 Cor. 12:4, 10, 11; Eph. 3:17-19; Phil. 3:7; Rev. 21:18, 21
- **Why is the Incarnation of Jesus a Paradox? Why is it so hard to grasp?**
Incarnation: **Embodied in flesh *It refers to the conception and the embodiment of a deity or spirit in some earthly form *The appearance of a god as a human*
"God clothes himself with flesh and wriggles his way into the world through a womb—a new Adam coming to set the record straight. He is the Word made flesh. Bellowing as he drinks in the cold air with his lungs, this baby straightens to stretch, then draws his bony knees to his tiny ribbed chest; God is covered in the waxy vernix of humanity. Because God so loved the world, he gave his Son to show his face." Jen Pollock Michel
- **The Incarnation was not . . .**
 - the familiar idea in Greek and Roman mythologies of gods disguising themselves temporarily as humans and then mating with mortal women to produce demi-gods.
 - God did not sleep with the virgin Mary to produce a superhuman
 - God did not play the part of Jesus of Nazareth until the curtain drew at the hour of his crucifixion and he shed his fleshly disguise**The Incarnation was . . .**
Jesus was fully God and fully Human, and after his execution, he was bodily resurrected, his scarred palms and pierced side still bearing the evidence of his cruel torture
- **Who was Athanasius? Why is he so important to the Incarnation Paradox? Look up Athanasius at gotquestion.org**

Action:

Read the Nicene Creed. How does this Creed encourage you?

In what ways is the Main idea true to you?

PRAYER REQUESTS

The Nicene Creed

*We believe in one God the Father Almighty, Maker of heaven and earth, and of all things visible and invisible.

*And in one Lord Jesus Christ, the only-begotten Son of God, begotten of the Father before all worlds, God of God, Light of Light, Very God of Very God, begotten, not made, being of one substance with the Father by whom all things were made; who for us men, and for our salvation, came down from heaven, and was incarnate by the Holy Spirit of the Virgin Mary, and was made man, and was crucified also for us under Pontius Pilate. He suffered and was buried, and the third day he rose again according to the Scriptures, and ascended into heaven, and sitteth on the right hand of the Father. And he shall come again with glory to judge both the quick and the dead, whose kingdom shall have no end.

*And we believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord and Giver of Life, who proceedeth from the Father, who with the Father and the Son together is worshiped and glorified, who spoke by the prophets.

*And we believe in one holy catholic and apostolic Church. We acknowledge one baptism for the remission of sins. And we look for the resurrection of the dead, and the life of the world to come. Amen