

Saturday, December 25, 2010

CREATOR TO THE CRADLE

All things were made through Him, and without him was not any thing made that was made. In him was life, and the life was the light of men.

You probably heard about Tuesday's lunar eclipse coinciding with the winter solstice. Truly, it was a phenomenon to take note of. The resources we now have to understand and see such things are truly amazing. I can take a look at photos from the NASA web site or something called space.com. There were web casts of the experts telling us all the interesting detail of the phenomena and how privileged we all were to see such detailed photographs. Even this overpriced magazine entitled "Inside the Mysteries of the Bible" produced by the American Bible Society has a section on "Creation" and all the wondrous things associated with the relationship between the sun, the moon and the earth. Truly we can see the Word through whom all things are made.

One of the reasons why so many believe, despite the infinite nature of the universe, that human life is unique to earth is that this relationship between sun, moon and earth is made "just so" to support the limitations of the human body. Truly we can see the Wisdom through whom all things are made.

In the exactitude of how the heavenly bodies are placed to allow for human life we see in the heavens the signature of God. It is not chance. The moon and the sun play important roles in controlling the tides. They help keep the earth habitable for us. It's one wonder we can all too easily take for granted. And as for the sun, move the earth a little closer and we'd burn up, or a little further away and we'd ice up. In the sci-fi series "Defying Gravity", astronauts journey to Venus, and despite all the advances from even a futuristic world, the Venus walkers venture forth in a suit that can last for all of 20 minutes on the surface of that inhospitable planet.

Still, the greater mystery is proclaimed here this morning. The Creator enters the cradle. With language and theme echoing Genesis 1, John chapter 1 describes how the Word was with God and how through Him all things were made. The incarnation of the creator entering the cradle is the incredible mystery which we celebrate today. That which is infinite becomes simultaneously finite. That which is Divine simultaneously becomes human.

The Word, the Spirit and the Father, the whole Triune God was there at the creation of man. He was created in Light. In him was life, and the life was the light of men. In a sense, the hand of God is reflected in everybody he has made. So the psalmist declares, "Behold! I am fearfully and wonderfully made. (Psalm 139:14)" We have a skeletal system, a respiratory system, a muscular system and a nervous system just to name a few that all work together in wondrous harmony. I learned that our brain as part of nervous system has enough electrical output, which if it could be harnessed, could power a 10 watt bulb. That's about what Nathanael has in his bedroom as a nightlight. I think of all the pictures of the saints painted by the great masters with the glowing halo surrounding their heads. It gave new meaning and insight to this Christmas text. "In him was life, and the life was the light of

men". As we are fearfully and wonderfully made, truly a light issues forth declaring the wonders of the Creator.

Truly the light of life radiates forth only insofar as we are in Christ. The scientist who spoke of the electrical output of our brains powering light gave an important qualification "if it could be harnessed". It cannot. We don't know of any real life Uncle Festers who can screw a light bulb into their ear and power a bulb. As for the spiritual component, darkness is the greater certainty. For man is dead in his sins. The light has departed. We walk in darkness. In our Christmas carols we speak of walking in the dark streets in that Little Town of Bethlehem. Yet, when we are in this light of Christ, I'm certain that there we have a surge that powers more than a 10 watt bulb. "In the dark streets shineth an everlasting Light".

Christmas is about the coming surge from the Light of Christ which no man can darken. Christmas is about the fulfillment of Isaiah's statement about "those walking in darkness who have seen a great light (Isaiah 9:2-7)". The coming of the true light was foretold by prophets. "A star shall rise out of Jacob (Numbers 24:17). Christmas is about John 1 fulfilling all things from Genesis 1 concerning the Light. John 1 and Genesis 1 are entwined. Let me explain.

It is interesting to note that at Creation when God says "Let there be light" on the first day, it was before the creation of the Sun and the Moon. How could there be light? There is only one probable explanation based on Scripture alone. 1 John 5. "God is light and in Him there is no darkness". Also Jesus' statement "I am the light of the world".

Guess what? The True Light of Christ doesn't shine without having some effect on us. By participating in the life of the Son, believers themselves become children of the light. Moses saw the divine light in the burning bush; the whole nation saw it at the Red Sea in the pillar of fire. Isaiah saw it in his heavenly vision; and the three apostles saw it at the transfiguration.

Consider the Word of the Lord.

While you have the light, believe in the light, that you may become sons of light."
John 12:36

⁸for at one time you were darkness, but now you are light in the Lord. Walk as children of light (Ephesians 5:6)

⁵For you are all children of light, children of the day. We are not of the night or of the darkness. (Thessalonians 5:5)

We are given the task of reflecting the Light at Christmas. It is a question we must all ask ourselves. Do I reflect the Light? If not, maybe because I'm not standing close enough to the Light and basking in the Light.

Jesus is the light of the world. He is the Light which no darkness can overcome. He overcomes in each of our lives. On the Last Day he Triumphs completely. We look forward to heaven, where the sun and the moon are no longer needed. "...And the city has no need of sun or moon to shine on it, for the glory of God gives it light, and its lamp is the Lamb.

Christmas isn't just about a baby. It's about the Light of the World taking on human flesh. The Light shines upon us till we reflect it. The Light becomes our light in eternity.

Amen.