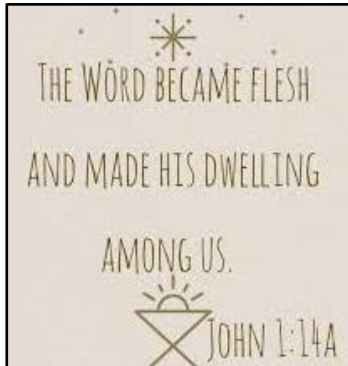




But?!?! (Part 1)



While teaching a small group this past fall, part of the research was to answer the question, “Can you be saved without knowledge of a Triune God?” My answer was an unequivocal “No!” Then we brought the question to the small group we were teaching for discussion. My answer is still no but let’s talk about why.

We have a friend that when he accepted Christ did not immediately realize God was Triune. God, Jesus, and the Holy Spirit in his mind were separate. Was he saved? Yes, we truly believe so. His lack of knowledge, initially, was not his fault. The coworker that led him to Christ may have assumed he knew. God in His gracious goodness preserved his new faith until someone could straighten our friend out.

BUT!! We also need to make sure we have the correct definition of the Trinity. If our friend met up with a false religion, the outcome may not have been as good.

The pseudo Christian religions OddDuck teaches about, across the board, twist the meaning of the Trinity. Mormons will say they believe in a trinity (Godhead) but with a completely different meaning than the Historic Orthodox Faith Tenet definition. To them, God and Jesus are exalted men who earned their godhood. It’s their reward for a job well done. Jehovah Witnesses will say because the word Trinity isn’t in the Bible then the concept of God, Jesus and the Holy Spirit can’t possibly be true, The word “Trinity” is from the enemy. World Mission Society claims the founder is the “Holy Spirit” part of the Trinity and will be the one to return. I’ve been told by a non- trinitarian pastor that in John 1:1 “He” should have been translated “it”.

All translations of the Bible have it wrong according to these (and other) groups. Their religions, though, through progressive revelation, fixed everything.

But then here come the questions:

If the “Word” was to be translated as “it” and not “He” in John 1:1, how did “it” 13 verses later become flesh? I didn’t think quick enough to ask.

If the Holy Spirit is only a spirit or God’s “life force”, how can He be grieved (Eph.4:30)? Lied to (Act 5:3)? Fellowshipped with (2 Corinthians 13:14)?

If Jesus is not also God, why then did the Chief Priests and all of the Sanhedren try to kill him? Jesus clearly claimed deity (John 5:18; John 8:58-59; Exodus 3:14). To do so according to the religious leaders and the Law, was to speak blasphemy and was punishable by death (Lev. 24:10-16; Luke 22:70-71; Mark 14:62-64). As someone who did not lie (one cannot live a perfect sinless life and lie), Jesus would not claim to be someone He wasn’t (1 Peter 2:22; 2 Corinthians 5:21).

And then we get to the beloved Christmas word “Emmanuel”.

If Emmanuel wasn’t “God with us” then who was he? Clearly, Isaiah Chapters 7, 8 and certainly 9 are Messianic Prophecy. Isaiah 9:6 is cited in Matthew 1:22-23’s Christmas story. Even the Jehovah Witnesses we spoke with agreed to that. They were floored when the husband looked up the meaning of Emmanuel. And left our house very quietly.

Friends, we must understand the doctrine of the Trinity correctly, with God, Jesus, and the Holy Spirit being three-in-one, of one substance, equal in deity, purpose, omnipresence, omnipotence, and omniscience. If Baby Jesus was not God humbling Himself by coming to Earth for the sake of our sinful selves, then Jesus’ crucifixion and resurrection about 33 years later was, quite frankly, all for nothing.

Something to consider in the new year,

Susan and Joe Wolf

Below are links for the articles referenced and Moody Bible Institute’s Statement of Faith.

<https://www.gotquestions.org/is-the-Holy-Spirit-God.html>; <https://www.str.org/w/where-did-jesus-claim-to-be-god->; <https://www.oneplace.com/ministries/bible-answer-man/read/articles/did-jesus-claim-to-be-god-by-hank-hanegraaff-8825.html> ; <https://www.moodybible.org/beliefs/>