

**Isaiah 9: 6; “Unto Us a Son is Given”, A Sermon for the Christmas Season, Delivered by Pastor Paul Rendall on December 19<sup>th</sup>, 2010, In the Afternoon Worship Service.**

It is good to be able to preach to you about the Incarnation of our Lord Jesus Christ. If it were not for the celebration of Christmas I think that there would be far fewer sermons preached on this blessed subject. We have no command in the Scriptures to observe the Incarnation as a religious day. We know that the date of December 25<sup>th</sup> cannot be the correct date. But still the subject matter is O so important to our salvation and our faith. The fact that the Son, the Divine and Eternal 2<sup>nd</sup> Person of the blessed Trinity, was given to fallen sinners of Mankind is a topic of wonder and joy. It will never be forgotten and it ought to be gloried in by every Christian. That the Father of glory should purpose it, and that the Eternal Son of God would agree to assume human nature with a real body of flesh and blood and a reasonable soul, is a matter which we should often think about, even though we cannot comprehend all the greatness of it. So this afternoon what we want to do is to think about the giving of the Son by the Father, to be our Savior. We want to think, first, about the fact that the Son who was given is the Only-Begotten of the Father. 2<sup>ndly</sup>- We want to think about how the Son of God is manifestly different from the angels. And then 3<sup>rdly</sup> – We want to think about the fact that in all believers the Son is born or begotten in them. What a great salvation we have been given. Let us ask ourselves whether we have been given this greatest of gifts. And let us see to it that we do not neglect such a great salvation, having received it.

**1<sup>st</sup> of all – Let’s think about the fact that the Son who was given is the Only-Begotten of the Father.**

There are basically 4 different usages of the word “son” in the Scripture. There is physical sonship of a boy to his earthly father, as Isaac was Abraham’s only begotten son. There is the Sonship of the 2<sup>nd</sup> person of the Divine Trinity; He who was “given”, it says, to Mankind-sinners. “Unto us a Son is given.” And “God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son....” That is what will focus on, primarily, this afternoon. Then there is also the sonship of the angels. Job Chapter 38, and verses 4-7. “Where were you when I laid the foundations of the earth?” “Tell Me, if you have understanding.” “Who determined its measurements?” “Surely you know!” “Or who stretched the line upon it?” “To what were its foundations fastened?” “Or who laid its cornerstone, when the morning stars sang together, and all the sons of God shouted for joy?” The “sons of God” and the “morning stars” refer to the angels who were created before the world was made and they watched and sang and shouted for joy at all the great and glorious work of God in laying the foundations of the earth. This was before Satan’s fall; his taking a number of the angels with him in his rebellion against the

plans and purposes of God in God's creating man. Job Chapter 1, verse 6 says this – "Now there was a day when the sons of God came to present themselves before the Lord, and Satan also came among them." Some angelic "sons" are pure and holy, and others unclean and unholy; but they are still referred to here as "sons". And then the 4<sup>th</sup> kind of sonship mentioned in the Bible is the sonship of those who become children of God through faith in the Lord Jesus Christ.

Let us better distinguish the Sonship of Christ from the others, in this way. Christ, of all the sons is the only natural Son of God because of His deity and His relation to God the Father. He is the only-begotten of the Father. Like begets like in regard to nature. The 2<sup>nd</sup> person of the Divine Trinity was brought forth, or begotten, as the Son in eternity past. The Son of God in His incarnation is altogether unique in His nature and His person. In His incarnation He is fully God and fully man; two natures in His one Person. He is the Son of God and the Son of Man; 2 natures alongside of one another which interact with each other in His one blessed Person. On this account, He is a Mediatorial Person. He was Begotten of the Father to this work and office in eternity past. He was born of Mary in the fullness of time. He was co-equal with the Father, but agreed in eternity past, in the covenant of grace and redemption, that He would assume human nature to Himself. He would still be one person. He would in the incarnation become one person with these two natures. It is confessedly a great mystery. But that does not mean that we should not think of it, or try to understand it better. The Apostle Paul prays that we would come to understand better in Colossians 2: verse 2. He prays that we would, "attain to all riches of the full assurance of understanding, to the knowledge of the mystery of God, both of the Father and of Christ, in whom are hidden all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge." The Apostle John speaks of it this way in John 1: 1 – "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God." "He was in the beginning with God." And John 1: 14 – "And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we beheld His glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth." I like the distinction of Matthew Henry on this passage. He thinks of it as "the Word conceived" and "the Word uttered." Before the foundation of the World the only-Begotten Son is set apart in the mind of God as the Word to be spoken in time and space in the incarnation. The Father and the Son were entirely united in their conception of thought as regards what would bring glory to God in the creation of man. It is that all things would be summed up in Christ. Christ would reveal the Father, who could never be seen by men because He is Spirit. But, as it says in John 1: 18 – "No one has seen God at any time." "The only begotten Son (or God), who is in the bosom of the Father, He has declared Him." In this holy and wonderful way, the Word would be uttered. In Christ the Son all the fullness of deity would dwell in bodily form.

Turn with me to Proverbs Chapter 8, verse 22, and you will find the Son being spoken of in terms of His becoming God's wisdom personified. In this He is certainly "the only-begotten of the Father." "The Lord possessed me at the beginning of His way, before His works of old." "I have been established from everlasting from the beginning, before there was ever an earth." "When there were no depths I was brought forth, when there were no fountains abounding with water." "Before the mountains were settled, before the hills, I was brought forth; while as yet He had not made the earth or the fields, or the primal dust of the world." "When He prepared the heavens, I was there, when He drew a circle on the face of the deep, when He established the clouds above, when He strengthened the fountains of the deep, when He assigned to the sea its limit, so that the waters would not transgress His command, when He marked out the foundations of the earth, then I was beside Him as a master craftsman; and I was daily His delight, rejoicing always before Him, rejoicing in His inhabited world, and my delight was with the sons of men." Now we have to ask ourselves; If the person being described here is a master craftsman and He is with God in the beginning of the world creating all things and daily His delight; if he was helping in the preparation and the execution of the design and the formation of the world and his delight was with the sons of men before they ever came into existence; who is this magnificent person? Who is this wisdom personified except the pre-incarnate Lord Jesus Christ; the Word, the Logos of God? Here is the description of the personification of wisdom being "brought forth when there were no depths, and before there was one aspect of creation actually formed. His being brought forth was in relation to the delight that He would have "in the sons of men." He is "fairer than the sons of men" but His delight would be in them. This is the Son being given; being brought forth from before the foundation of the world; the only-begotten of the Father.

**2ndly- We want to think about how the Son of God is manifestly different from the angels.**

He is manifestly different from the angels who were formed as the sons of God at creation. Turn with me to Hebrews Chapter 1, verse 1. "God who at various times and in various ways spoke in time past to the fathers by the prophets, has in these last days spoken to us by His Son, whom He has appointed heir of all things, through whom also He made the worlds; who being the brightness of His glory and the express image of His person, and upholding all things by the word of His power, when He had by Himself purged our sins, sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on high, having become so much better than the angels, as He has by inheritance obtained a more excellent name than they." "For to which of the angels did He ever say: 'You are My Son, today I have begotten You?'" "And again: I will be to Him a Father, and He shall be to Me a Son?" "But when He again brings the firstborn into the world, He says: "Let all the angels of God worship Him." That is the great difference between God's only-begotten Son and the angels. They are "sons" of God by creation. The Son is the spoken Word of the

Father. God speaks to us by His Son. God intends Him to be worshiped by His people God while the angels are never worshiped.

The application to ourselves is this. We should never place having experiences of meeting angels on the same level with our experience of worshiping Christ. The angels worship Christ, and if you ever saw one of them they would deny your worship of them. The angels understand that Jesus Christ is their God, and they no doubt greatly treasure their positions as His servants and messengers. You and I ought to do the same. Our highest aim ought to be to know Christ and the power of His resurrection, and our greatest desire ought to be to have deeper, more meaningful fellowship with Him in the Spirit. This comes, in the normal way, through meditating upon His Word and praying over it. Often people, in order that they might appear more spiritual in front of others; they will try and claim that they have seen angels, or talked with angels. How can they prove this? It is highly doubtful. There are very few encounters between men and angels recorded for us in the scriptures. When they appear to men, it is always for a momentous reason. Let us appreciate the fact that there are holy angels watching over us and leave it at that. We will no doubt be able to converse with them in the life to come. But there is something that is much more important for us to be doing while we are here upon the earth. It is that we would cultivate our relationship with Christ. The fact that our Lord Jesus Christ in His deity had His delight in the sons of men before one of them was ever created, should show you how dearly you are loved by the Father and the Son. The Son could have stayed in the “ivory palaces” of heaven which are mentioned in Psalm 45, verse 8. His throne as God was established forever and ever there with the Father but He left those hallowed halls and God anointed Him with the oil of gladness in coming into this fallen and sinful world, for your sake and for mine. He did it for the joy that was set before Him; to purchase a people for God’s own possession and to get Himself a Bride to spend all of eternity future with. Stand in awe of such great love to sinners, and admire the wisdom of the Father that He would give Him for us. Give Him thanks every day for this indescribable gift!

**And then 3rdly – We want to think about the fact that in all believers the Son is born or begotten in them.**

“Unto us a Son is given.” Who is the Son given to? In the context you can see that He was given first of all to the nation of the Jews. In verse 3 of Isaiah 9 it says, “You have multiplied the nation and increased its joy. The Lord God would bring them back from captivity and let them rebuild the temple. In this He would increase their joy. But even greater would be their joy when the Messiah would appear and given them spiritual light. “The people who walked in darkness would see a great light. In “Galilee of the Gentiles” this would happen. The good news and good tidings of salvation would eventually come to more nations than just the Jews; because Christ would come. The Jews would have the joy of seeing their temple rebuilt. And the glory of this 2<sup>nd</sup> temple would be greater than the first, in

that Christ would come into it. He would also walk and teach by the sea of Galilee. Light would come to the people in the coasts of the land of Zebulun and the land of Naphtali. This prophecy is quoted by Matthew in his gospel in Chapter 4, verse 12 and following: “Now when Jesus heard that John had been put in prison, He departed to Galilee.” “And leaving Nazareth, He came and dwelt in Capernaum, which is by the sea, in the regions of Zebulun and Naphtali, that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by Isaiah the prophet, saying: “The land of Zebulun and the land of Naphtali, by the way of the sea, beyond the Jordan, Galilee of the Gentiles; the people who sat in darkness have seen a great light, and upon those who sat in the region and shadow of death, Light has dawned.” “From that time Jesus began to preach and to say, Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand.” Jesus is the light of the world. Jesus so preached, and so lived and so died that light and life would come to fallen sinful men; so that by God’s Spirit, they would be begotten of God. He, by His death, would break down the wall of separation between Jew and Gentile, so that the Elect among the nations could come in the kingdom of heaven. They would be born again. They would be given the Son too. I want you to turn with me to 1 John 4, and verse 9. “In this the love of God was manifested toward us, that God has sent His only begotten Son into the world, that we might live through Him.” And 1<sup>st</sup> John 5, verse 1 – “Whoever believes that Jesus is the Christ is born of God, and everyone who loves Him who begot also loves him who is begotten of Him.” Only God the Father and the Holy Spirit can beget someone; can give them Christ and the salvation which is in Him. Only the Son can will to reveal the Father. Matthew 11: 27 – Jesus says, “all things have been delivered to Me by My Father, and no one knows the Son except the Father.” “Nor does anyone know the Father except the Son, and the one to whom the Son wills to reveal Him. But what a great step in the battle for our salvation was taken by the Lord Jesus; beginning with His conception in Mary’s womb, beginning with His incarnation, and resulting in His birth at Bethlehem; the beginning of the life that would be the light of men. The light of the Son of God would shine in the darkness, and the darkness would not overcome it, because “unto us a Child was born; unto us a Son was given.

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