**Sermon Title: The Supernatural Entrance**

**Sermon Text: Matthew 1:18-25**

**Sermon Purpose: To call the hearer to recognize the supernatural aspects of the miraculous conception of Jesus Christ.**

**Sermon Proposition: There are 4 observations to be realized about Matthew’s narrative.**

**Introduction:** There is much confusion about what Christmas is all about. Santa Claus, family gatherings, presents, kindness, good deeds, love and romance. Even in the Christian community of faith, there are various ideas about what the focus should or should not be. Some doubt whether we should even participate in the Christmas holiday celebration, because of the secularization of it, or the fact that Christ could not have been born in December. What should the Christian and the church do? Why should they do it?

 I would surmise, that whether you agree with all the misconceptions, there is one question and only one question, was Jesus Christ born supernaturally?

**Hebrews 1:1-4** God, who at various times and in various ways spoke in time past to the fathers by the prophets, **2** 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; **3** 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 Himself1 purged our2 sins, sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on high, **4** having become so much better than the angels, as He has by inheritance obtained a more excellent name than they.

There are 4 observations we can summarize from the Gospel narrative.

**I. Observation #1 The supernatural confession. V.18**

**II. Observation #2 The supernatural conception. Vv.19-21**

**III. Observation #3 The supernatural confirmation. Vv.22-23**

**IV. Observation #4 The supernatural command. Vv.24-25**

**I. Observation #1 The supernatural confession. V.18**

 Matthew’s genealogy found in verses 1:1-17 answered for the Jew the important question, a Jew would rightfully ask about anyone who was claiming to be “King of the Jews.” Is He truly a descendant of David through the rightful line of succession?

 Matthew answered yes!

 Mathew’s explanation can best be understood in light of Hebrew marriage customs. Marriages were arranged for individuals by parents, this is still common in some eastern cultures, a contract was negotiated.

 After this was accomplished, the individuals were considered married at this point, and called husband and wife. They did not, however begin to live together. Instead, the woman continued to live with her parents and the man with his for one year.

 The waiting period was to demonstrate the faithfulness of the pledge of purity given concerning the bride. If she were found with child in this period, she was obviously not pure, but had been unfaithful. Therefore the marriage could be annulled.

 Matthew’s story should be read with this background in mind.

 [**Bible Knowledge Commentary, New Testament, John F. Walvoord and Ray B. Zuck, p.20**]

 Marriage supper: John 14:1-6; Revelation 19:7-10; Ephesians 5:22-23; Matthew 25:1-10

 Betroth to Christ: Paul

 **Hosea 2:19** "I will betroth you to Me forever; Yes, I will betroth you to Me In righteousness and justice, In lovingkindness and mercy;

 **2 Corinthians 11:2-4** For I am jealous for you with godly jealousy. For I have betrothed you to one husband, that I may present *you as* a chaste virgin to Christ. **3** But I fear, lest somehow, as the serpent deceived Eve by his craftiness, so your minds may be corrupted from the simplicitythat is in Christ. **4** For if he who comes preaches another Jesus whom we have not preached, or *if* you receive a different spirit which you have not received, or a different gospel which you have not accepted-- you may well put up with it!

**II. Observation #2 The supernatural conception. Vv.19-21**

 A. Observe the character of Joseph. V.19

 (**Deuteronomy 22:13-21**)

 B. Observe the conception of Jesus. V.20

 (Sperma Greek = “progeny” or “children”)

 **Leviticus 15:6ff** uses the term “seed” to refer to semen.

 **Genesis 3:15** And I will put enmity Between you and the woman, And between your seed and her Seed; He shall bruise your head, And you shall bruise His heel."

 **Acts 4:12** "Nor is there salvation in any other, for there is no other name under heaven given among men by which we must be saved

 **Isaiah 53:10-11** Yet it pleased the LORD to bruise Him; He has put *Him* to grief. When You make His soul an offering for sin, He shall see *His* seed, He shall prolong *His* days, And the pleasure of the LORD shall prosper in His hand. **11** He shall see the labor of His soul1, *and* be satisfied. By His knowledge My righteous Servant shall justify many, For He shall bear their iniquities.

 “As regards the Virginal Conception of Our Lord, [the ‘Virgin Birth’ should, more accurately be called ‘the Virgin Conception’] we acknowledge and uphold belief in it as expressing the faith of the Church of England.” – Anglican House of Bishops in England

 [**The New Encyclopedia of Christian Quotes, p.1090**]

 “All of us accept that the belief that Our Lord was conceived in the womb of Mary by the creative power of God the Holy Spirit without the intervention of a human father can be held with full intellectual integrity.” –Anglican House of Bishops in England

 [**Ibid. ,p. 1090**]

 C. Observe the commissioning of Jesus. V.21

**III. Observation #3 The supernatural confirmation. Vv.22-23**

 Prophesied 700 years before by the Prophet Isaiah.

 **Isaiah 7:14** "Therefore the Lord Himself will give you a sign: Behold, the virgin shall conceive and bear a Son, and shall call His name Immanuel.

 Scholars sometimes dispute whether the Hebrew term in Isaiah 7:14 and in Matthew means “virgin” or “maiden.” Matthew here quoting form the LXX which uses the unambiguous Greek term for “virgin.” Thus Matthew, writing under the Spirit’s inspiration ends all doubt about the meaning of the word.

 The Immaculate Conception used by the Catholic Church is not referring to the “Virgin Birth.” It is a doctrine by them which says Mary was also free of original sin.

 “The virginal conception was understood from the very beginning as a statement about God and about Jesus, and only secondly about Mary.”– Graham Leonard

 [**Ibid. p.1090**]

 “The Gospel story is rather about how Mary conceived without any form of intercourse with a human male, through the “overshadowing work of the Holy Spirit.”

 **Luke 1:34-35** Then Mary said to the angel, "How can this be, since I do not know a man?" **35** And the angel answered and said to her, "*The* Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Highest will overshadow you; therefore, also, that Holy One who is to be born1 will be called the Son of God.

 As such, the narrative is without precedent either in Jewish or pagan literature.”

 [**Dictionary of Jesus and the Gospel, Joel B. Green, Scott McKnight, I. Howard Marshall, p.70**]

**IV. Observation #4 The supernatural command. Vv.24-25**

 **Jeremiah 31:31-37** "Behold, the days are coming, says the LORD, when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah-- **32** "not according to the covenant that I made with their fathers in the day *that* I took them by the hand to lead them out of the land of Egypt, My covenant which they broke, though I was a husband to them1, says the LORD. **33** "But this *is* the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, says the LORD: I will put My law in their minds, and write it on their hearts; and I will be their God, and they shall be My people. **34** "No more shall every man teach his neighbor, and every man his brother, saying,`Know the LORD,' for they all shall know Me, from the least of them to the greatest of them, says the LORD. For I will forgive their iniquity, and their sin I will remember no more." **35** Thus says the LORD, Who gives the sun for a light by day, The ordinances of the moon and the stars for a light by night, Who disturbs the sea, And its waves roar (The LORD of hosts *is* His name): **36** "If those ordinances depart From before Me, says the LORD, *Then* the seed of Israel shall also cease From being a nation before Me forever." **37** Thus says the LORD: "If heaven above can be measured, And the foundations of the earth searched out beneath, I will also cast off all the seed of Israel For all that they have done, says the LORD.

 A. The **conception** was supernatural, the **birth** was normal.

 B. The **Son** was supernatural, the **parents** were normal.

 C. The **Gift** was supernatural, the **need** was normal.

 **Isaiah 9:6-7** For unto us a Child is born, Unto us a Son is given; And the government will be upon His shoulder. And His name will be called Wonderful, Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace. **7** Of the increase of *His* government and peace *There will be* no end, Upon the throne of David and over His kingdom, To order it and establish it with judgment and justice From that time forward, even forever. The zeal of the LORD of hosts will perform this.