

Duvinson Jeanty

NT 503 Reading the New Testament

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Subject: The Study of the Historical Jesus Chapter 8

Week 5

The incarnation of God in human form in the person of Jesus Christ, his Son, represents the greatest event that ever happened for the Christian faith. Although the resurrection of the Lord Jesus Christ is considered by many as the pinnacle for the basis of the Christian faith; nevertheless, his fatherless birth by a virgin woman is by far more special. This historical fact is accepted by all Christians and perhaps by non-Christians alike. With the faithful, the image of a God-Man-Jesus remains imprinted in their subconscious mind forever.

Many years ago, when I was a little child, in my quest to discover the historical Jesus, I used to imagine myself sitting at Jesus' feet as the equivalent of his disciples listening to his soft voice instructing me on heavenly matters. Suddenly, I was pretending hearing his voice say words or expressions like: *The kingdom of God is like* Looking back, this act presently means to me a time reminiscent of a glorious past and historical souvenir. As per my personal experience and based on my observation in reading this chapter, the main point or key message to be learned or understood is that matters of faith go hand in hand with historical facts. Even though I did not live that time with Jesus and his apostles, I really believe who Jesus is and his revelation to humanity. However, some would go as far as saying that Jesus has never existed or if he existed, he was probably a New Age guru, a hippie revolutionary, a freemason and so on. As a devout Christian, not only do I believe in a historical Jesus, but I also have my faith anchored in him. In this optic, "engaging in a historical study of Jesus is a necessary and non-negotiable aspect of Christian discipleship" (174).

Subject: The Profile and Praxis of a Prophet Chapter 9

The presence of Jesus Christ on the Galilean scene was an enigma. In his Jewish context, he personified a new life and the beginning of a new era. With him, life had a new meaning and his followers recognized his inexplicable mighty power by the multiple miracles he was performing. The good news of the kingdom was announced and the formation of the early church was built upon him. The real question for everyone, including his disciples was: who is he?

Never before had the world seen a human being like him. He was unique in style, actions, performance, and was unphased by not even an extremely dangerous storm. In order to understand Jesus' actions in the first century context, we would need to explore his intentionality behind his actions and his sayings which would be a daunting task. Who can really do that when even his disciples did not know who he was? That is exactly why Wright puts it this way, "The explanatory power of any reconstruction of Jesus' life, message, and aims comes down to whether or not it presents a realistic and persuasive narrative about Jesus" (189). Until it was revealed by the Father through the Holy Spirit that Jesus was effectively the Son of the Living God, the identity of the Savior of the world remained a mystery. Even John the Baptist before testifying about Jesus as, "The Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world" (John 1:29b), previously sent his disciples to Jesus asking him: "Are you the one who is to come, or should we expect someone else? (Luke 7:20b).

In his multifaceted public persona, "Jesus seems to fit into various types of Jewish holy men, including rabbi, sage, healer, exorcist, messiah, and philosopher. Yet, if one category stands out, in terms of Jesus' public persona, it is that he is constantly seen as a prophet" (193). The apparition of Jesus on the scene as a prophet is not an accident. His announcement was made

by Moses in Dt 18:18-19. By his actions, Jesus bears the praxis and profile of the divine prophet.