

AT FIRST THE INFANT

September 29, 2013

Psalm 139:1-24

"Lo, children are an heritage of the LORD: and the fruit of the womb is his reward."

Psalm 127:3

William Shakespeare's poem "The Seven Ages of Man" describes life in seven stages, from the infant through the "second childhood." For each of these stages there is biblical instruction to be considered, and it is our purpose in this message and in six to follow to investigate biblical teaching relevant to these various stages of life. Regarding infancy, Scripture teaches that:

I. Our children are a gift from God.

A. God gives conception

"So Boaz took Ruth, and she was his wife: and when he went in unto her, the Lord gave her conception, and she bare a son." Ruth 4:13

"For the Lord had fast closed up all the wombs of the house of Abimelech, because of Sarah Abraham's wife." Genesis 20:28

B. God superintends their gestation in the womb.

"For thou hast possessed my reins: thou hast covered me in my mother's womb. I will praise thee; for I am fearfully and wonderfully made: marvellous are thy works; and that my soul knoweth right well. My substance was not hid from thee, when I was made in secret, and curiously wrought in the lowest parts of the earth. Thine eyes did see my substance, yet being unperfect; and in thy book all my members were written, which in continuance were fashioned, when as yet there was none of them." Psalm 139:13-16

II. Our children are sinners at birth.

"Behold, I was shapen in iniquity; and in sin did my mother conceive me." Psalm 51:3

"The wicked are estranged from the womb: they go astray as soon as they be born, speaking lies." Psalm 58:3

"Wherein in time past ye walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience: among whom also we all had our conversation in times past in the lusts of our flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind; and were by nature the children of wrath, even as others." Ephesians 2:2-3

III. Christ identified childlike qualities as virtues to be emulated.

“At the same time came the disciples unto Jesus, saying, Who is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven? And Jesus called a little child unto him, and set him in the midst of them, And said, Verily I say unto you, Except ye be converted, and become as little children, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven. Whosoever therefore shall humble himself as this little child, the same is greatest in the kingdom of heaven.”
Matthew 18:1-4

“And they brought young children to him, that he should touch them: and his disciples rebuked those that brought them. But when Jesus saw it, he was much displeased, and said unto them, Suffer the little children to come unto me, and forbid them not: for of such is the kingdom of God. Verily I say unto you, whosoever shall not receive the kingdom of God as a little child, he shall not enter therein. And he took them up in his arms, put his hands upon them, and blessed them.” Mark 10:13-16

IV. The Son of God entered human existence as an infant.

“And the angel said unto her, Fear not, Mary: for thou hast found favour with God. And, behold, thou shalt conceive in thy womb, and bring forth a son, and shalt call his name JESUS. He shall be great, and shall be called the Son of the Highest: and the Lord God shall give unto him the throne of his father David: And he shall reign over the house of Jacob for ever; and of his kingdom there shall be no end.” Luke 1:30-33

“And so it was, that, while they were there, the days were accomplished that she should be delivered. And she brought forth her firstborn son, and wrapped him in swaddling clothes, and laid him in a manger; because there was no room for them in the inn. And there were in the same country shepherds abiding in the field, keeping watch over their flock by night. And, lo, the angel of the Lord came upon them, and the glory of the Lord shone round about them: and they were sore afraid. And the angel said unto them, Fear not: for, behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people. For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord. And this shall be a sign unto you; Ye shall find the babe wrapped in swaddling clothes, lying in a manger.” Luke 2:-12

“And without controversy great is the mystery of godliness: God was manifest in the flesh, justified in the Spirit, seen of angels, preached unto the Gentiles, believed on in the world, received up into glory.” I Timothy 3:16

“But when the fulness of the time was come, God sent forth his Son, made of a woman, made under the law, To redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons.” Galatians 4:4-5