TITLE: The Sign Of Christmas!

TEXT: Mt. 12:38-40; Is. 7:14; Luke 1:26-35;

Jn. 1:1-3, 10, 14; Is. 9:6-7

INTRODUCTION: This morning I want to talk about signs.

 The dictionary defines sign as:

 **sign** (sºn) *n.* **1.** Something that suggests the presence or existence of a fact, condition, or quality. 2. A posted notice bearing a designation, direction, or command.

1. A portentous incident or event; a presage: *took the eclipse as a sign from God.*

When you think about it, Signs are very significant and often very important things in our world.

 They suggest to us the presence or existence of a fact, a condition or a quality.

 Fact-Road closed!

 Condition-Road slippery when wet!

 Quality-Bump ahead!

 (hit the bump as your reading the sign!)

 Signs can be a posted notice bearing a designation, direction, or command!

Designation- London England!

 Direction-watch for crossing deer!

Command-Stop!

Signs can announce a portentous, a significant incident or event!

Trump wins reelection!

 Do you realize that signs are so important that even God uses them?

 There are two very significant signs that God has used sense man’s time on earth began...

 And it is these two signs that I want to talk about this morning.

**Matt 12:38 (NIV) Then some of the Pharisees and teachers of the law said to him, "Teacher, we want to see a miraculous sign from you."**

**39 He answered, "A wicked and adulterous generation asks for a miraculous sign! But none will be given it except the sign of the prophet Jonah.**

**40 For as Jonah was three days and three nights in the belly of a huge fish, so the Son of Man will be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth.**

The Pharisees and the teachers of the law wanted Jesus to perform some kind of miraculous sign to prove to them that He was who many claimed Him to be, the messiah, the Christ of God.....

 So they come to Him and say.....

**Teacher, we want to see a miraculous sign from you."**

 We want you to do something that will convince us that you are who you say that you are!

 In other words---Jesus, prove it!

 Notice Jesus response to them......

**39 He answered, "A wicked and adulterous generation asks for a miraculous sign! But none will be given it except the sign of the prophet Jonah.**

Jesus was going throughout the Judean countryside proclaiming the Word of God. Proclaiming the truth of God. Yet the simple truth of God’s Word revealed in Christ Jesus wasn't enough to convince the Pharisees and teachers of the law so they demanded some kind of miraculous sign.

 I am sure they wanted Jesus to do something so convincing, so out of the ordinary that it would twist their arm and force them into belief. What they were actually saying was Jesus, force us to believe.

 Jesus wasn't saying that there was anything wrong with Him giving a sign, after all he had been going around doing all kinds of miracles. He turned water to wine, healed the sick, the blind received their sight, He raised people from the dead.

 The difference was, the people that Jesus healed didn't ask for a sign to convince them to believe in Him, but Jesus, seeing the faith and belief that they already had, gave them a sign to confirm and affirm their faith and belief.

 So Jesus says to the Pharisees and the teachers of the law, those that should have had faith in Him just due to their position as the religious leaders who should have known and recognized what Gods Word had said about Him and His coming through the law and the prophets...**A wicked and adulterous generation asks for a miraculous sign! But none will be given it except the sign of the prophet Jonah.**

What is the sign of the prophet Jonah that Jesus said would be given to them?

**40 For as Jonah was three days and three nights in the belly of a huge fish, so the Son of Man will be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth.**

This speaks of the sign of all signs, the miracle of all miracles! It speaks of the death, burial and resurrection of Jesus!

Just as Jonah was swallowed up in the belly of a whale for three days, signifying death and the grave, and then being spit out on dry land by that whale, signifying resurrection from death to life, so Jesus will suffer literal death and the grave only to be raised in the newness of resurrected life!

 Jesus was saying you want a sign then this is the one that I will give you!

 The thing is, many of these same Pharisees and Teachers of the Law still refused to believe after Jesus was raised from the dead.

 But God gave the sign and many did come to believe because of it! Many are still coming to believe because of that sign today, the sign of the resurrection…

 But there is another sign that God gave prior to this one that should have convinced any doubting mind that Jesus was who He claimed to be....

 A sign that the Prophets of old testified would come! A sign that the Pharisees and teachers of the Law should have seen and recognized but didn't....

 The sign of Jesus miraculous birth!

The prophet Isaiah foretold of it!

 **Isai 7:14 (NIV) Therefore the Lord himself will give you a sign: The virgin will be with child and will give birth to a son, and will call him Immanuel.**

This prophecy, not only told the manner of Jesus birth, the virgin will be with child, but it also tells who this child really is, and he will be called Immanuel!

Immanuel literally means "God with us"!

**0410 'el {ale}**

**1d) God, the one true God, Jehovah**

The manner of birth attest to the identity of the one born!

 The virgin shall be with child!

Lets go to the reality, the realization of the event…

 **Luke 1:26 (NIV) In the sixth month, God sent the angel Gabriel to Nazareth, a town in Galilee,**

**27 to a virgin pledged to be married to a man named Joseph, a descendant of David. The virgin's name was Mary.**

**28 The angel went to her and said, "Greetings, you who are highly favored! The Lord is with you."**

**29 Mary was greatly troubled at his words and wondered what kind of greeting this might be.**

**30 But the angel said to her, "Do not be afraid, Mary, you have found favor with God.**

**31 You will be with child and give birth to a son, and you are to give him the name Jesus.**

**32 He will be great and will be called the Son of the Most High. The Lord God will give him the throne of his father David,**

**33 and he will reign over the house of Jacob forever; his kingdom will never end."**

**34 "How will this be," Mary asked the angel, "since I am a virgin?"**

**35 The angel answered, "The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you. So the holy one to be born will be called the Son of God.**

Folks, just as the resurrection of Jesus is proof positive of the deity of Christ, the miraculous birth of Jesus is also proof positive of the deity of Christ!

**Isai 7:14 (NIV) Therefore the Lord himself will give you a sign: The virgin will be with child and will give birth to a son, and will call him Immanuel.**

The virgin will be with child!

 Folks, from the worlds prospective this is impossibility!

 A virgin cannot become pregnant and remain a virgin!

 That would defy the very laws of nature!

Virgin=

**3933 parthenos {par-then'-os}**

**1) a virgin**

**1b) a woman who has never had sexual intercourse with a man.**

**2a) a man who has never had intercourse with women.**

 Scripture doesn't say that the virgin will have a child, leading one to possibly think that Mary may have lost her virginity and then become pregnant but it makes it very clear that the virgin was with child! Mary was with child while still being a virgin!

 This cannot happen in the natural but only by the super natural!

 That is why Mary was so puzzled by what the angel announced to her so she asked,

**34 "How will this be," -- "since I am a virgin?"**

**35 The angel answered, "The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you. So the holy one to be born will be called the Son of God.**

 How would people know that this child was the Son of God? What would make any other assumption impossible?

 How could God pull this off so that there could be no doubt as to the true identity of this baby? That this child was God in human flesh?

**"The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you. So the holy one to be born will be called the Son of God.**

 The virgin became pregnant! The virgin was with child!

 The hymen, the seal and proof of a woman's virginity was not broken! It remained intact yet Mary was pregnant with child at the same time! (Example)

 Because of this one fact the immaculate conception could be proven....

**So the holy one to be born will be called the Son of God.**

 Mary was not impregnated from without but from within through the power of the Most High God overshadowing her!

Folks, the miraculous birth of Christ is as big a miracle as the resurrection of Christ!

 Both are miraculous signs God has given to bring us, direct us, to Christ Jesus!

Again A sign is.....

**sign** (sºn) *n.* **1.** Something that suggests the presence or existence of a fact, condition, or quality. 2. A notice bearing a designation, direction, or command.

A portentous incident or event!

 In the virgin birth God gave us a sign that marked a portentous event! A sign that suggested the presence of a fact, condition and quality! A sign that bears a designation, direction and a command!

 The portentous event? And His name will be called Immanuel-God with us!

 It suggest a fact---Jesus is the Son of the most high God!

It suggest a quality-- he who knew no sin became a sin sacrifice for us!

 It bears a condition---If you confess this Christ child as your Lord you will be saved.

 The miraculous birth of Christ bears a designation-Jesus is God! Jesus is the earthly incarnation of God almighty!

**John 1:1 (NIV) In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.**

**2 He was with God in the beginning.**

**3 Through him all things were made; without him nothing was made that has been made.**

**10 He was in the world, and though the world was made through him, the world did not recognize him.**

**14 The Word became flesh and made his dwelling among us. We have seen his glory, the glory of the One and Only, who came from the Father, full of grace and truth.**

 The sign gives direction ---Jesus said "come and follow me"! Seek My kingdom and My righteousness first in your life!

I Am the way, the Truth and the Life and no one comes to the Father unless they come through Me.

 It comes with a command--be holy because I am holy!

 -- Charles Swindoll

 *Immanuel. God with us. He who resided in Heaven, co-equal and co-eternal with the Father and the Spirit, willingly descended into our world. He breathed our air, felt our pain, knew our sorrows, and died for our sins. He didn't come to frighten us or judge us, but to show us the way to warmth and safety and save us. To show us the way to be forgiven our sins and the way to enter into the Kingdom of God!*

 This is what the sign God has given us in the virgin birth of Christ points to! It is the message that this sign proclaims!

 Isaiah prophetically speaks of this message when he says-

**Isai 9:6 (NIV) For to us a child is born,**

**to us a son is given, and the government will be on his shoulders. And he 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. He will reign on David's throne**

**and over his kingdom, establishing and upholding it**

**with justice and righteousness from that time on and forever. The zeal of the LORD Almighty**

**will accomplish this.**

How have you responded to the miraculous birth of Christ?

That the virgin was with child! Gave birth to that child and that child is Immanuel, God with us?

 God the creator taking the form of the created to offer a way for us to be saved from our sin and embrace eternal life in Him.

 This is the miracle of Christmas!

**Therefore the Lord himself will give you a sign: The virgin will be with child and will give birth to a son, and will call him Immanuel.**

-- Stuart Briscoe

 *The spirit of Christmas needs to be superseded by the Spirit of Christ. The spirit of Christmas is annual; the Spirit of Christ is eternal. The spirit of Christmas is sentimental; the Spirit of Christ is supernatural. The spirit of Christmas is a human product; the Spirit of Christ is a divine person. That makes all the difference in the world.*

 Have you embraced the miracle of Christmas in your life this morning?

 Have you embraced Jesus by allowing Him to become the Lord and savior of your life?

 Has this Christ Child become Immanuel to you?

Close with Immanuel