

AlbertMohler.com

The Word Became Flesh and Assumed the Status of a Zygote

Friday, December 23, 2005

Bioethicist Nigel M. de S. Cameron points to a significance of the incarnation that may be missed by many — what he calls “[the bioethics of Bethlehem](#).”

Cameron points back to the conception of Jesus in Mary by the Holy Spirit, and to the concrete reality of Christ’s human nature during Mary’s pregnancy:

God took human form; and he took it not simply as a baby, but as the tiniest of all human beings, a mere biological speck, so small and so undeveloped that it could be mistaken for a laboratory artifact, a research specimen, an object for human experimentation. But this speck was God; this complete genetic human organism, in its primitive and undeveloped form, was so much “one of us” as to bear the existence of the Creator. He dignified humanity by taking the form of this creature he had made in his image; and he did it at the most inauspicious and feeble point in the human life story. At the heart of the Christmas celebration lies the fact of all facts, that God became a zygote.

Therefore: *It is important to realize that there are several powerful arguments against using human embryos for research, some of which do not depend on the idea that the embryo is “one of us.” And we can argue that the embryo is “one of us”—that human dignity is as indivisible as biological human nature—without ever arguing from theology and Christian belief. But if we are Christians, we have theological underpinnings for such arguments. We believe that all human beings are made in the image of God. We believe that Jesus Christ was God taking human form for himself. And we believe that we started right at the beginning—that incarnation took place in embryo.*

This is profoundly true and deeply significant. The Word became flesh and dwelt among us — even in Mary’s womb. This does provide a substantial and deeply theological basis for a Christian bioethic. Recognizing the true humanity (as well as the true deity) of the child in Mary’s womb, how can we not speak in defense of every child in every womb at every stage of development?

From Martin Luther’s incarnation hymn written for his five-year-old son, Hans, published four years later in 1531:

From Heaven above to earth I come, To bear good news to every home; Glad tidings of great joy I bring, Whereof I now will say and sing.

To you, this night, is born a Child of Mary, chosen mother mild; This tender Child of lowly birth, Shall be the joy of all your earth.

’Tis Christ our God, Who far on high, Had heard your sad and bitter cry; Himself will your Salvation be, Himself from sin will make you free.

Martin Luther, “Von Himmel hoch da komm ich her” [“From Heaven Above to Earth I Come”], 1531.

SEE: Nigel M. de S. Cameron, “[Bethlehem’s Bioethics](#),” in the December 19, 2005 issue of *Christianity Today*.

Content Copyright © 2002-2010, R. Albert Mohler, Jr.