

Mothers have known it all along, I suspect, but for me it is kind of a new thought. It occurred to me the other day when I thought of how my doctor was but a baby when I was already fully-grown. Had I been in the right place at the right time I could have held him in my arms – tickled him under his chin, quieted his crying with a pacifier or bottle. I never would have guessed that one-day I would be seeking his advice, trusting his training and wisdom. Every child born, every life that comes into this world is full of possibility. Mothers know that, maybe some fathers too. Mother Theresa was a baby once, Einstein, Ghandi, Martin Luther King. Someone changed their diapers, and fed them their first solid food and delighted when they took their first step. And dreamed of what this infant would one day be and do and say.

When Luke tells the story of Jesus birth he tells us that Mary kept all the things that people and angels were saying and pondered them in her heart. The angel announced to her that this child would be the son of the Most High, son of God. The shepherds told of another angel who said that this child would be Savior and Messiah. So small, so vulnerable, so dependent on Mary, yet full of the possibility of God in human life, Emmanuel.

It was probably nearly a hundred years after the birth of Jesus that the writer of the fourth gospel looking back on Jesus earthly life, death and resurrection wrote these words:

In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God and the Word was God. And the Word became flesh and lived among us.

The writer of the gospel was convinced that the very wisdom and purpose and guidance of God are in Jesus. The gospel writer took the very first words of the Bible – In the beginning – and declared that Jesus was the word from God that said, Let there be light and there was light. God in that word and that word God. And every word of God thereafter – all the wisdom and commands and power of God speaking is Jesus – the word become flesh. This prologue to the gospel of John concludes with these words, “No one has ever seen God, the only Son who is in the bosom of the Father, he has made him known.

All these possibilities were in the baby that was born of Mary and laid in a manger.

For you and me these possibilities become reality, as we believe in him. Our gospel reading says it in this way: “To all who received him, who believed in his name he gave power to become children of God who were born not of blood or of the will of the flesh, or of the will of man but of God.” When you receive him, when you believe in his name, you become a child born of God. All the wisdom of God, all the power of God, all the purpose of God are in him. When you open your ears to his word, and live by that word the wisdom, power and purpose of God are in you.

This past week I read this passage from John’s gospel in a paraphrase by Eugene Peterson called, “The Message” I was struck by these lines:

“whoever did want him, who believed he was who he claimed and would do what he said, He made to be their true selves, their child-of-God selves. These are the God-begotten, not blood-begotten, not flesh-begotten, not sex-begotten.”

God begotten – when you believe Jesus is who he claims and will do what he says you are God begotten. God makes you into your true self - your Child of God self.

These words make me realize that we are all newborns – full of possibilities. Every day, every moment presents the possibility that you will live by Jesus word and forgive and love and trust. Every moment presents the possibility that you will live by God’s power and that God will be powerful in you. More than you can begin to imagine God is able to do in you when God makes you your true self, your Child of God self.

Pray that God will make you your child of God self in every situation in your life. Believe that God can make you your child of God even in the parts of your life that you have given up hope for. God who was able to squeeze all the plans and purpose and power of God into the tiny baby born of Mary can squeeze God’s plan and purpose and power into you.

Receive Jesus. Believe on his name. Forever.