

Gloriously Dependent

‘The incarnation has forever hallowed the flesh.’ Charles Williams (as quoted by Leanne Payne in *The Healing Presence*)

Today we rejoice in God assuming baby flesh—the Father and Son’s choice for the King of glory to become as small and dependent as we are. It’s weird: here I am on the crest of my 60th Christmas and I feel smaller than ever, reduced to utter dependence upon Jesus. Our spiritual life is not like our psychological journey in which we master one stage in order to proceed onto the next. In Jesus, we are continually reduced to His greater Life until we, aging fetuses all, launch into the Life for which we ache more today than yesterday.

It helps to revisit what happened on Christmas: ‘God really came down. He became an infant and placed Himself in a state of vulnerability and total dependence, which is the condition of a newborn human being. The Creator who holds the world in His hands, on whom we all depend, became a little child in need of human love’ (Dom Jean-Charles Nault). God depended on love.

That gives me hope. He gets the longing in our hearts for connection and communion, the ache for the full breast and strong chest, a yearning much deeper than survival or sexual needs: it is the ache to be enveloped and infused by the Creator. And here is the mystery of Christmas. The humble babe has never ceased to be Almighty God who declares to us today: ‘I am Jesus, and I will love you better than the best mother or father or friend or lover or spouse!’

God in humility entered into our dependency; in majesty, He offers Himself as the Source to whom we can cling. I don’t cling to people any more. But I linger longer in His Presence than before. The winds blow harder on my thinning skin. Over the last few weeks I have broken down on several occasions and just wept, His mercy priming my heart to feel the burden of those I love and to know somehow that Jesus is enough for them. Tears release my distress and draw me near the One who took on baby flesh in order to reduce me to utter dependence. Gloriously.

He upholds me for the sake of pure joy. Yesterday I dangled my grandson on one arm while throwing balls to our two labs. He loved it! His head bobbed as he tracked the dogs racing around the yard. What better than a laughing babe, rejoicing at creation for the first time? Jesus, Jacob, us. Merry Christmas.