

BSLC News

December 2017

JESUS IS HERE – DESPITE THE SCANDALS

Some months ago, when Playboy founder Hugh Hefner died, many were lauding him as the great media mogul and trendsetter in the adult entertainment industry. At the time, I recall posting on someone's Facebook wall, in response to such a claim, my personal opinion that Hefner was hardly a role model. Quite the contrary. I believe he, as much as anyone in the modern era, "normalized" the objectification of women and the commercial use of their bodies as a commodity. And, for that, his "work" should be judged as destructive. In fact, it may well be his influence on modern minds that has subtly led to the Lauer, Rose, Conyers, Weinstein, Moore sex scandals that are now flooding the airwaves. And, to make matters worse, the industry has moved way beyond Hefner, with the objectification of women sinking to new lows on the internet.

God had a much different idea in mind when He created Adam and Eve and joined them as one flesh. He fashioned them for an intimacy and love, as husband and wife, which would reflect His own qualities of unity, selfless commitment and unconditional love.

God made humans *in His image*—which meant that they were beautiful creatures, and that they were uniquely designed by Him to be in relationship to Him and to one another. They were never intended to be objectified, harassed, and abused. In fact, their unabashed nakedness, in the Garden of Eden, indicated their complete trust and utter confidence in one another.

Unfortunately, Satan and his cunning ways led Adam and Eve down the road of selfishness, greed and pride. And, almost immediately after the Fall,

we see them covering up their bodies because they now feel a sense of vulnerability and discomfort with one another. When confronted by God, rather than first showing contrition, they cast blame.

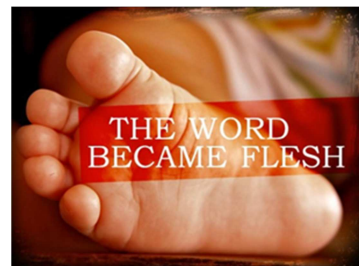
The "way of all flesh" was initiated; and soon, much like the wave of sexual scandal hitting the airwaves today, the consequence of evil brought challenge to every waking moment to our first parents and their offspring. And so it has continued through the ages.

BUT GOD HAD A PLAN. He Himself would take on our flesh and blood so that He could redeem us from the ruinous consequences of the Fall. He would walk in our shoes so that He could bring life and hope back to those who, in selfishness and pride, misused and mistreated one another.

Sadly, it would mean that He who was born *one-of-us* on a quiet night in Bethlehem, would also suffer and die as *one-of-us* on an ugly cross at Calvary. But because He is God in the flesh, His sacrifice would pay the price for all whose flesh-and-blood, soul-and-spirit, had been corrupted.

Are you feeling weary and burdened as you hear the abusive stories of powerful people in our world? Do you also feel the toll that your own body experiences as it makes its own sinful, selfish, prideful decisions contrary to God's plan? Then you need Jesus. The world needs Jesus.

AND JESUS IS HERE. HE CAME! Please join me as we kneel again at the manger and rejoice in Him who became flesh to rescue us from ourselves.



Celebrate the Good News that, in the midst of scandal and sin, there is hope and strength for all who trust in Him.

Merry Christmas,
Pastor Hillenbrand