

The “Insignificant” Surrounding the Birth of Christ

Luke 2: 1-20

INTRODUCTION:

A. **Luke 2:1-20** -

1 And it came to pass in those days that a decree went out from Caesar Augustus that all the world should be registered.

2 This census first took place while Quirinius was governing Syria.

3 So all went to be registered, everyone to his own city.

4 Joseph also went up from Galilee, out of the city of Nazareth, into Judea, to the city of David, which is called Bethlehem, because he was of the house and lineage of David,

5 to be registered with Mary, his betrothed wife, who was with child.

6 So it was, that while they were there, the days were completed for her to be delivered.

7 And she brought forth her firstborn Son, and wrapped Him in swaddling cloths, and laid Him in a manger, because there was no room for them in the inn.

8 Now there were in the same country shepherds living out in the fields, keeping watch over their flock by night.

9 And behold, an angel of the Lord stood before them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were greatly afraid.

10 Then the angel said to them, "Do not be afraid, for behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy which will be to all people.

11 "For there is born to you this day in the city of David a Savior, who is Christ the Lord.

12 "And this will be the sign to you: You will find a Babe wrapped in swaddling cloths, lying in a manger."

13 And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host praising God and saying:

14 "Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, goodwill toward men!"

15 So it was, when the angels had gone away from them into heaven, that the shepherds said to one another, "Let us now go to Bethlehem and see this thing that has come to pass, which the Lord has made known to us."

16 And they came with haste and found Mary and Joseph, and the Babe lying in a manger.

17 Now when they had seen Him, they made widely known the saying which was told them concerning this Child.

18 And all those who heard it marveled at those things which were told them by the shepherds.

19 But Mary kept all these things and pondered them in her heart.

20 Then the shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all the things that they had heard and seen, as it was told them.”

B. The world would call this test “The Christmas Story.” We know it as Luke’s account of the birth of our Lord and savior, Jesus Christ.

1. The story we have just read has everything needed for a great story.
 - a. Political intrigue.
 - b. Conflict.
 - c. Anticipation.
 - d. The drama of a delivery room.
 - e. Fear.
 - f. Amazement.
2. But one thing that impresses me about the story is how simple and unadorned it really is.
 - a. What I want to really capture us this air is the “insignificant” element in the story.
 - b. I know I am treading on unplowed ground to raise this discussion.
 1. Some might object by saying, “Insignificant?” How could the birth of the virgin-born Son of God be insignificant?
 2. Indeed for God to become human is no small thing.
John 1:14 - “And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we beheld His glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth.’
 - c. I am not calling anything in the story insignificant.
 - d. But watch how the only Gentile to write a life of Christ shows in the story how God fills the seeming insignificant with His presence and makes what might have been mundane into profound mystery.

“INSIGNIFICANT” PLACES

A. The “happening” places of the world were Rome and Syria.

1. People who ruled others lived there, and that mattered.
2. No one cared much about Palestine, tucked away in a small pocket of the Roman Lake (Mediterranean Sea—except God.

B. But our story sets its focus on little places:

1. Like **BETHLEHEM** — granted, the City of David, but really not all that important in terms of size and clout.

2. Like **NAZARETH** — and even Nathaniel asked, “Can any good thing come out of Nazareth?” John 1:46
3. Like a **MANGER** — a common cow trough but mentioned three times in our text.
4. Like **FIELDS** — Where shepherd watch flocks. “Down on the farm” one might say.

C. The point is — When God comes near, all the little places become big!

“INSIGNIFICANT” PEOPLE

- A. The “important” people of the world were mentioned in verse 1 & 2.
1. The emperor: Caesar Augustus
 2. The governor: Quirinius
 3. They were the movers and shakers.
 4. When they spoke the world listened.
 5. They could call for a census and a tax and the word was, “So let it be done.”
- B. However, our story looks to different key players.
1. Like a **YOUNG POOR COUPLE FROM NAZARETH** — Mary and Joseph.
 2. Like **SHEPHERDS** — Biblically speaking, shepherds had important roles. But socially speaking, they were outcasts.
 3. Like the **INNKEEPER** — seeming so insignificant that technically he is not even mentioned in our text.
- C. The point is — When God comes near, all the “little” people suddenly seem to matter!

“INSIGNIFICANT” EVENT

- A. The event that would make news was taxes—and, it still does.
- B. But our story gives attention to the birth of a baby. Granted, for the believer this is anything but normal.
1. There was the matter of fulfilled prophecy — Specific prophecies that had never been fulfilled until these events.
 2. There was the matter of the appearance of the star — Even the universe was involved in the transpiring events.
 3. There was the matter of the virgin conception and birth — That had never happened before nor has it happened since.

C. But think — The salvation of mankind begins with the birth of a baby.

1. Babies are born everyday . . . Baby boys are born every day.
2. A Bethlehem paper could have read the next morning: Joseph and Mary, a boy.
3. The community would read it and say “Big deal”—it only happens every day.

D. But therein is the wisdom of God.

1. **1 Corinthians 1:26-28** - “For you see your calling, brethren, that not many wise according to the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble, are called.
But God has chosen the foolish things of the world to put to shame the wise, and God has chosen the weak things of the world to put to shame the things which are mighty;
and the base things of the world and the things which are despised God has chosen, and the things which are not, to bring to nothing the things that are.
2. God does not think as we do and we do not think as God does in these matters.

E. The point is — When God comes near, all little events take on spiritual power!

CONCLUSION:

A. This wonderful story makes a universal announcement for all the ages.

1. All **PLACES** are significant to God.
 - a. All countries.
 - b. All cities and towns.
 - c. All communities—large and small
2. All **PEOPLE** are significant to God.
 - a. Every individual.
 - b. Every family.
 - c. Every congregation—whether large or small
 - d. Every individual Christian.
 - e. Every elder
 - f. Every deacon.
 - g. Every preacher.
 - h. Every teacher.
 - i. Every child.
 - j. Every adult.
 - k. Every member.
 - l. Every non member.

- m. All are included and none are excluded.
- n. You are significant!
- o. You are important here!

3. All **EVENTS** are significant to God.

- a. International.
- b. National.
- c. Local.
- d. Every work.
- e. Every effort.
- f. Every attempt is significant to God.

B. Had He come in royalty, only the rich could have appreciated Him.
Truly He is a Savior for all of us.

C. God's Plan for Man's Salvation