

The Christmas Story

Text: Luke 2:1-20

The Washington, D. C. area was the home for my earliest Christmas memories. A big event for us was to go downtown and with wide-eyed wonder see the big department store windows. Every window had a theme--a Lionel train set or TinkerToys. And there was always the ubiquitous presence of a nativity. Later, when we moved to Florida, we had to give away our sleds, but the Christmas spirit was still in the air. There were 34 lakes in our small town and in the center of the town was Lake Mirror. It was appropriately named because of the pronounced reflection. It was especially pretty at Christmas because a huge Christmas tree was floated to the center and then Christmas lights surrounded the lakeshore. As a kid I remember helping to decorate the lake. It was nothing less than Christmas magic!

Nostalgic memories of Christmases past have the ability to prepare our hearts for Christmas. Along with the significant places, sights, sounds and even smells of Christmas, comes the Christmas stories. The stories that stand out to me would be Charles Dickens', *A Christmas Carol*; *It's a Wonderful Life*; *The Gift of the Magi*; *The Polar Express*; and this past Thanksgiving, Gramma and I thoroughly enjoyed watching *Miracle on 34th Street* with the Grandkids. Nothing, however will prepare our hearts better for Christmas than the Christmas story itself. Let's go there:

I. DIVINE PROVIDENCE

Luke 2:1-6

A. The Tax

Luke 2:1c: "...all the world should be taxed."

Proverbs 21:1: "The king's heart is in the hand of the LORD, as the rivers of water: he turneth it whithersoever he will."

B. The Tribe

Luke 2:3, 4c: "And all went to be taxed, every one into his own city...because he was of the house and lineage of David."

Genesis 49:10: "The sceptre shall not depart from Judah, nor a lawgiver from between his feet, until Shiloh come; and unto him shall the gathering of the people be."

C. The Time

Luke 2:5, 6: "To be taxed with Mary his espoused wife, being great with child. And so it was, that, while they were there, the days were accomplished that she should be delivered."

Galatians 4:4: "But when the fulness of the time was come, God sent forth his Son, made of a woman, made under the law."

II. DESIGNATED PLACE

Luke 2:7

A. Firstborn Son

Ex. 13:2a, c: "Sanctify unto me all the firstborn...it is mine."

B. Furnished Stable

Luke 2:7b, "...and wrapped him in swaddling clothes...."

C. Fullness Personified

Luke 2:7c: "...because there was no room for them in the inn."

1. No room in the business world
2. No room in the religious world of His day.
3. No room in the legal world of His day.

Christ and God may be used as swear words in public school, public parks and government buildings, yet the Bible and prayer are either frowned upon or prohibited.

4. No room in many of your hearts.

III. DEPENDABLE PEOPLE

Luke 2:8

A. Abiding

John 15:4, 7

B. Keeping

Proverbs 7:1; John 14:23

C. Watching

Colossians 4:2; I Thessalonians 5:6; Ephesians 6:18

IV. DETERMINATIVE PROCLAMATION

Luke 2:9-14

A. Great Glory

Luke 2:9b: "...the glory of the Lord shone round about them...."

B. Great Joy

Luke 2:10b: "...good tidings of great joy...."

C. Great Praise

Luke 2:13,14a: "And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host praising God and saying, and saying, Glory to God in the highest...."

D. Great Peace

Luke 2:14b: "...and on earth peace, good will toward men."

Romans 5:1

V. DASHING PASSAGE

Luke 2:15, 16

A. On Your Mark

Luke 2:15b: "...the shepherds said one to another, Let us now go...."

B. Get Set

Luke 2:15c: "...and see this thing which is come to pass...."

C. Go

Luke 2:16a: "And they came with haste...."

VI. DECLARITIVE PREACHERS

Luke 2:16b, 17

A. The Subjects

Luke 16b: "...and found Mary, and Joseph, and the babe lying in a manger."

B. The Seeing

Luke 2:17a: "And when they had seen it..."

Acts 4:20: "For we cannot but speak the things which we have seen and heard."

I John 1:3a: "That which we have seen and heard declare we unto you..."

C. The Saying

Luke 2:17b: "...they made known abroad the saying which was told them concerning this child."

VII. DESCRIPTIVE PROBE

Luke 2:18-20

A. The Connection

Luke 2:18a: "And all they that heard it wondered..."

B. The Contemplation

Luke 2:19: "But Mary kept all these things, and pondered them in her heart."

C. The Cheerful

Luke 2:20: "And the shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all the things that they had heard and seen, as it was told unto them."

-Pastor Pope-