

Luke 2:1Now it came about in those days that a decree went out from Caesar Augustus, that a census be taken of all the inhabited earth. 2This was the first census taken while Quirinius was governor of Syria. 3And all were proceeding to register for the census, everyone to his own city.

4And Joseph also went up from Galilee, from the city of Nazareth, to Judea, to the city of David, which is called Bethlehem, because he was of the house and family of David, 5in order to register, along with Mary, who was engaged to him, and was with child. 6And it came about that while they were there, the days were completed for her to give birth. 7And she gave birth to her first-born son; and she wrapped Him in cloths, and laid Him in a manger, because there was no room for them in the inn.

8And in the same region there were some shepherds staying out in the fields, and keeping watch over their flock by night. 9And an angel of the Lord suddenly stood before them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them; and they were terribly frightened. 10And the angel said to them, “Do not be afraid; for behold, I bring you good news of a great joy which shall be for all the people; 11for today in the city of David there has been born for you a Savior, who is Christ the Lord. 12“And this will be a sign for you: you will find a baby wrapped in cloths, and lying in a manger.” 13And suddenly there appeared with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host praising God, and saying,

***14“Glory to God in the highest,
And on earth peace among men with whom He is pleased.”***

15And it came about when the angels had gone away from them into heaven, that the shepherds began saying to one another, “Let us go straight to Bethlehem then, and see this thing that has happened which the Lord has made known to us.” 16And they came in haste and found their way to Mary and Joseph, and the baby as He lay in the manger. 17And when they had seen this, they made known the statement which had been told them about this Child. 18And all who heard it wondered at the things which were told them by the shepherds. 19But Mary treasured up all these

things, pondering them in her heart. 20And the shepherds went back, glorifying and praising God for all that they had heard and seen, just as had been told them.

21And when eight days were completed before His circumcision, His name was then called Jesus, the name given by the angel before He was conceived in the womb.

I want to talk to the children this morning. Don't worry, this won't be so long as a regular sermon. I want to explain to you children, what a miracle is. A real miracle. Not the ones they show on TV.

A miracle is when God makes something happen in the world that is inexplicable. Inexplicable means it can't be explained. There's no scientific or mathematical way to explain what happened.

Real miracles done by God also have something else happening that is the reason for them. God causes miracles in order that He will be glorified and also in order that people will believe something new, something important to the whole world, is happening.

So for instance if we were a half days walk out in the sage brush, walking towards Goldfield and we came across thousands of people listening to a man talk in a way no one was ever able to talk before, and all those thousands of people were hungry and had no food, but one small boy had a sack lunch with 2 peanut butter sandwiches and 3 of those little snacky bags of potato chips, and the man who was talking turned those sandwiches and bags of chips into enough sandwiches and chips to feed 20,000 hungry people . . . that's a miracle.

And you might decide to listen to what He's saying as if it were very important, after a miracle like that happened.

Or suppose you were in a fishing boat with that man and he was asleep,

taking a nice nap, but a wind was blowing water into the boat faster than you could bail it out, and you're thinking to yourself, this boat is going to sink in about 2 more minutes because we can't throw the water out as fast as the wind is blowing it in. So you wake up the man taking the nap and tell him, get ready to drown if you can't swim about 7 miles in a 40 mile an hour wind.

And that man wakes up and sees what's happening and he says. Shhhhhhhh. Be quiet, wind. And suddenly the wind stops. In fact it stops to the point that the water becomes like glass. Like a mirror. And all of a sudden it's a good thing you've got oars, because you're going to be rowing that boat 7 miles to shore. That's a miracle, when you can order the wind to stop . . . and it does!

Another time there was a storm, almost as bad, it was bad enough that the fishermen were stuck. Rowing rowing rowing, but the wind was blowing them backwards and they were getting farther and farther away from home instead of closer. And it was night time. Dark and you're lost out at sea getting farther and farther away from home, the harder you row.

But this time the man wasn't in the boat so they were losing hope. Probably getting a little bit panicky. Scared. And that time, the man who does the miracles came walking out to meet them, on top of the water. He was walking on the water, like it was dirt. Like it was solid. Right through the wind and the waves and all of it.

And when the fishermen saw him walking across the top of the water, coming towards them, then they really got scared. You know why? Because they thought he was a ghost. And they all screamed like little girls.

You can't blame them. It's night time. The wind is blowing you farther away from home. You're exhausted from rowing the boat trying to get back home. It's dark and cold and nasty and windy, and you look up and someone is walking on top of the water! That would freak out anybody.

So they were screaming like little girls and he says, Don't be afraid. It's just me.

And that night was different than the other time. They didn't have to row the boat 9 miles to get back home, because as soon as Jesus stepped into the boat, they looked up and they were home. Instantly back home, no rowing, no nothing. Only God can do that. Walk on water and then when He gets into the boat, poof, it's home.

But Jesus life, from 30 years before He was born, to perhaps 30 years after He went back up to heaven, was surrounded in miracles. So many miracles the whole world would be full of the books, if someone wrote every single one of them down.

Nothing like that has happened before Him and nothing like it has happened since Him. All the miracles are mostly within a few years of His life with us on earth. So many miracles.

Can you think of at least one miracle in our story tonight about Jesus being born in Bethlehem? There are actually quite a few miracles all happening at the same time, but one is real easy for anyone to see.

The shepherds didn't know anything important was happening that night. I'll bet they were just sitting by their camp fire, telling stories, joking and making fun of each other, like cowboys do, getting ready for some sleep when all of a sudden the sky which was just black night with stars, becomes lit up like day.

Then one of the angels tells the shepherds not to be scared. I'd be scared! And then the angels tell the shepherds about Jesus being born. And that is the biggest miracle of all, because Jesus is God. He became like us, even starting out as a little tiny helpless baby.

One time, when Jesus was all grown up, He was doing a miracle making someone who couldn't use their legs at all well again and while He was

doing the miracle He told the man that his sins were forgiven.

One of the miracles Jesus still does, is forgive our sins if we ask Him to. One last miracle He did that makes us believe everything He said, and all that is written about Him in the Bible are true is this;

Some bad men killed Him, and 3 days later, He came back to life from the dead. Lots of people we would trust saw Him, alive, after He was dead, and they wrote down all about it. It really happened.

Everything about Jesus was a miracle from His beginning that we celebrate at Christmas, until this very day. We believe in Him because of the miracles. And we believe the miracles happened because good honest trustworthy people, who were just like us, all saw them happen and all agree, and they wrote it down for us who would be alive today.

Jesus is still alive today, this very moment, with His Father in heaven, and He loves all children, and He hears you when you pray and speak to Him. I'm very sure He loved watching you all sing about Him and do the play about Him and ring the bells in His honor.

As we grow up, we want to love Him and honor Him with our lives for as long as we live. Big people and little people alike. We love Him because He first loved us. And He promised to come back and bring all of us who believe, up to heaven to be with Him and His Father some day soon. Let's pray together;

