

Christmas Day 2022
Luke 2:1-12
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Teaching Notes

And today we are going to take a fresh look at...
... the birth of this newborn, new kind of king in Luke.

Luke **2:1** 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.

The birth of the new kind king begins with an old kind of king

- An old kind of king rules with pride and authority.
- He forces his enemies into submission
- He takes the best for himself.

Here we are introduced to a man named Caesar Augustus

He was the ruler of most of the known world.

When Caesar spoke, the world moved.

How he came to rule is an interesting story in light of Jesus.

Caesar Augustus was born as Octavian.

His great uncle was Julius Caesar.

Octavian was a promising leader.

...And when Julius Caesar was assassinated...

...Octavian, Mark Antony, and Lepidus took charge of Rome.

Lepidus was out and then he defeated Mark Antony & Cleopatra,

... and Octavian became the ruler of the Roman world.

Octavian means “the eighth” but he wanted to be first.

“Octavian the eighth” changed his name to Caesar Augustus.

...Augustus means “sacred or exalted one”

Augustus also took advantage of an interesting occurrence.

At that time, Halley’s Comet made an appearance over Rome...

He said it was Julius Caesar’s spirit entering heaven as a god.

...And if Julius Caesar was a god, then he...

...Ceasar Augustus was the son of god.

- Ceasar Augustus conquered with power and violence.

- He called himself the exalted and sacred one.
- He even made himself the son of god.
- He used a heavenly occurrence to substantiate his status.
- And he even brought peace as the first emperor.

But, Caesar Augustus was just a puppet in the hand of the true and living God.

God is the one who had a plan.

God had been working on it for generations.

God is the one fulfilling his purpose and flexing his power.

God was the one that would put a star in the sky and bring lasting peace to the people.

Jesus is not coming to take, He came to give.

He won't lift himself up in pride, but He will be lifted up on a cross.

He will bring peace not by the force of power...

...but by the power of love and service and sacrifice.

For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son that whosoever believes in Him will not perish but have everlasting life.

The true Son of God is about to be born.

And the Father has predicted where this would happen.

And God uses Caesar to make sure it happens in the right place.

God is at work and the world doesn't even realize it.

God is working out His purpose and people don't even know it.

No matter how crazy the world seems...

No matter how crazy world leaders get...

Don't forget...

...God is always working and His plan will come to pass.

Do you remember from last week the prophecy that the Messiah, the King, the Savior would be born in a particular city?

...What city was it?

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.

So by Caesar's decree and God's design...

...Joseph and Mary make their way to Bethlehem.

Joseph, we remember, was part of the royal line and a descendent of David the great king.

Joseph lives in Galilee but the prophecy of Messiah's birth is...
...Bethlehem.

Luke calls Bethlehem the city of David.

...Up until now, Jerusalem has been the city of David.

Jerusalem was the city David conquered...

...but Bethlehem was the place where he was born.

Jesus was not coming to kill and conquer...

...Jesus came to be born into a family...

...and to lay His life down so we could be family.

Micah 5:2 tells us But you, O Bethlehem Ephrathah, who are too little to be among the clans of Judah, from you shall come forth for me one who is to be ruler in Israel, whose coming forth is from of old, from ancient days.

Bethlehem was too small to even be counted.

But, it was just the kind of place that God would choose.

When God wanted to birth a new kingdom...

...He started small, but it would last forever!

God chose Bethlehem because it would bring him glory.

Have you ever felt too little or too young or too old...?

...Ever thought you were insignificant, not important enough ...for God to know you or love you or use you...?

...Just remember Bethlehem, remember Joseph and Mary.

...Joseph was a poor carpenter and Mary a young teenage girl.

God often doesn't start by choosing great things.

He chooses the little things, the insignificant people...

...Abraham, Joseph, Gideon, Esther, David...

He starts small and He exalts them all for His glory.

I Cor 1: [27](#) 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; [28](#) 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, [29](#) that no flesh should glory in His presence.

Great things and important people can be distracting.
We look to them, we trust in them, we idolize them.

God says, I choose the weak, the lowly, the poor so people will know and trust Me.

Everything else will let you down—keep your eyes on Him!

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.

Out of all the situations that you could hope for as a young mother...this is probably right at the bottom of the list!

- An 80 mile journey pregnant with her first child.
- Young and alone
- Staying in a cave that was like a barn in a tiny town with no room for them.
- Laying your newborn precious baby in a feeding trough.

It doesn't feel like we are having the Son of God?!

It is interesting we don't have much of a narrative.

We don't know what was going on,

Or how they felt

Or what they talked about.

What were they thinking?!?

...Even when it doesn't feel like it, God is working!

So...Who else would know or care that a little baby was born in a little town in a little cave sleeping in a feeding trough?

Who were the first people that God would announce the birth of His son to?

...Just some regular people working the night shift...

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.”
As a mother, Mary could have wished for a crib or a nice house.

But God used this humble manger as a sign.

The sign of the savior was not an impressive golden crib or a mansion on a hill, it was a baby in a feeding trough.

Jesus is a king like no other. He has a kingdom like no other.

The sign of his birth is a manger...

...and the sign of his kingdom was a cross.

He didn't come to force people into submission but to submit to His Father and lay down His life so that we could have life.