

Christmas – The Story Begins I – 'The Invitation to Meet Jesus'

SMALL GROUP NOTES

Tim Wilson – 7th December 2014

Theme

Starting our short Christmas series we looked at the story of the Shepherds' invitation to go to Bethlehem and see Jesus, the promised Christ and Saviour. Our application is how we continue what the Shepherds started of being a witness and inviting others to meet Jesus in response to what we have found when we have both met and known Him.

Scriptures

Luke 2:8-20; Galatians 3:28; Luke 14:12-24; Isaiah 55:1; John 7:37; Matthew 11:28

Outline

1. How were the Shepherds Invited?
 - a. A Blockbuster Invitation declaring 'good news of great joy' which was matched by the 'thing' itself resulting in the shepherds sharing what they had seen with passion and enthusiasm
 - b. Does that reflect how we invite?
 - c. We Can Feel Responsible for people being saved or we can doubt that God can save the person we are thinking of inviting
 - d. We can be reassured that we are Inviting on God's Behalf-he will do the saving
2. The Significance of the Shepherds being Invited First?
 - a. Indicator that the invitation to meet Jesus is 'for all people' – the shepherds are ordinary working people
 - b. Further demonstrated by invitation to 'wise men from the East' – intellectuals and foreigners
 - c. Galatians 3:28 – We are all one in Christ Jesus – all social and national boundaries are broken down
 - d. The Parable of the Great Banquet (Luke 14:12-24) – let's not limit ourselves to inviting the people we would normally invite but see how wide we can spread our inviting
3. What can we do this Christmas to Invite People to Meet Jesus
 - a. We are bringing the foundations to why we celebrate Christmas
 - b. We can do the inviting part of our missional strategy of invest and invite and follow up the people we have been investing in

- i. 8 S's
- ii. Our Stepping Stone Events – Xmas Factor, Christmas Services
- iii. Sundays – Big Objections (February-March 2015)
- iv. Alpha

Questions for discussion

1. In what situations do we find it easy to invite people to church events? In what situations do we find it harder?
2. Does anyone identify with either that over sense of responsibility for saving the people we invite or a fear that the person we want to invite won't be saved so we hold back from inviting them
3. Is there encouragements within the group where people have stepped out and invited people who are very different from themselves? What do we find challenging about this?
4. Pray for people you would like to invite to this year's Christmas events and Big Objections, pray for each other for boldness, passion and excitement in the inviting and keep each other to account.

Tags

Christmas, Nativity, Shepherds, Angels, Invite, Invitation, Witness, Mission, Evangelism