

Christmas from Your Hometown

Matthew 1:18-25, Luke 2:1-7 (The Jesus Story)

The birth of Jesus Christ happened like this: his mother, Mary, had been engaged to Joseph, but before they came together she was found to be pregnant through the Holy Spirit. Joseph – a just man who did not want to publicly shame her – considered whether he ought to divorce her quietly. But as he thought about these things, an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream and said, “Joseph, son of David, do not be afraid to take Mary home as your wife, because the baby in her womb is from the Holy Spirit. She will give birth to a son, and you are to call him Jesus, for he will save his people from their sins.”

All this happened to fulfill the Lord’s words spoken through the prophet: “Behold, a virgin shall conceive and bear a son, and they shall call him Immanuel” (meaning “God with us”).

When Joseph awoke, he did what the angel of the Lord told him to do and took Mary home as his wife. But he did not know her until after she had given birth to a son, whom he named Jesus.

At that time a decree was issued by Caesar Augustus requiring the whole Roman world to register for a tax. (This first taxing occurred when Quirinius was governor of Syria.) So everyone traveled to his hometown to be registered. Along with Mary (who was now pregnant), Joseph left Nazareth in Galilee and went to Judea to be registered in Bethlehem, the town of David (since he was descended from David). While they were there, the time came for her delivery, and she gave birth to her firstborn son. She wrapped him in strips of cloth and laid him in a manger because there was no room for them in the inn.

Outline:

God is Sovereign and He Uses “Means” to Accomplish His Will

1. Supernatural Means Display His Divinity
2. Human Means Display His Understanding and Compassion toward Humankind

Task: Identify the Who, What, When, Where, How, and Why in our text today

Questions for Small Group Discussion

1. What is your hometown?
2. Does your hometown have a claim to fame?
3. What is significant about Mary being a virgin?
4. Why does that matter?
5. Why did Jesus to enter into our messy, human circumstances?