

A. SERMON SLIDES

Slide 1:
The Arrival
Luke 2:1-7

Slide 2:
Luke 2:1-7 (ESV)
In those days a decree went out from Caesar Augustus that all the world should be registered. This was the first registration when Quirinius was governor of Syria. And all went to be registered, each to his own town. And Joseph also went up from Galilee, from the town of Nazareth, to Judea, to the city of David, which is called Bethlehem, because he was of the house and lineage of David, to be registered with Mary, his betrothed, who was with child. 6 And while they were there, the time came for her to give birth. And she gave birth to her firstborn son and wrapped him in swaddling cloths and laid him in a manger, because there was no place for them in the inn.

Slide 3:
For hope to be Hope, it must be as tangible and real as the Problem itself

Slide 4:
The true story of Christmas reads nothing like a magical tale

Slide 5:
Luke is not a storyteller

Slide 6:
Inn = Guestroom

Slide 7:
The world didn't magically break, and magic wasn't going to put it right again

Slide 8:
The "way" in which the Arrival happened is communicating something to us

Slide 9:
The Rescuer is being rejected at His very birth

Slide 10:
"Seek not in courts or palaces
Nor royal curtains draw
But search the stable
See Your God extended on the straw"
William Billings

Slide 11:

"Always after a defeat and a respite, the Shadow takes another shape and grows again"

J.R.R. Tolkien (Gandalf)

Slide 12:

Jesus arrives in a form that communicates:

Submission, not Resistance

Vulnerability, not Power

Not to break, but to bear the Shadow

Not to be crowned, but to be killed by the Shadow

B. GROUP DISCUSSION

1. Read Luke 2:1-7 and talk about anything that stands out to you. What questions would you have of the text?

2. Luke isn't concerned with the "magic" of this story. There are so many details that he leaves out that would have given color and emotion to the story. Does this surprise you? Why is the emphasis for Luke on historical accuracy, and why is this, therefore, the emphasis of God upon the text?

3. What is God communicating about the remedy in the way in which the Rescuer arrives upon the earth? Try not to project forward what you already know about what this Rescuer would become and do.

The Problem is Evil, and a baby arrives. What is this communicating?

4. Think about the first Passover. Please read Exodus 12:1-4.

This imagery and foreshadowing would not be lost on the Biblical authors later when they wrote about the Messiah.

The "lamb" comes into the home on the 10th day, and is "taken care of" by the family for 4 days, and then killed on day 14.

Jesus came in the "fullness of time" (Ephesians 4:4), and "fullness of time" is the exact interpretation of the number 10. 10 means completion or fullness. Jesus came on "Day 10!" And then he stayed with us for 4 days. 4 is the number of the creation of the earth. North, south, east and west. The material world was created on Day 4. Jesus stayed with us for "4 Days!"

God was signaling to all that His remedy for our Problem would require a perfect sacrifice, and Jesus came in exactly that form.

5. Prayer and praise