

The Birth of Jesus: Certainty, Humility, and the Call to Respond

Overview

This sermon explores Luke's account of Jesus' birth, highlighting Luke's careful historical method, the humble circumstances of Christ's arrival, and the profound implications for faith and discipleship. The message emphasizes the certainty of the gospel, the inclusivity of Christ's coming, and the necessity of personal response.

Core Scripture:

Luke 2:1–20 (NKJV)

Luke's Purpose and Approach

- **Meticulous History:** Luke writes as a careful historian, aiming to provide an accurate, orderly account so believers "may know the certainty of those things in which you were instructed."
- **Eyewitness Testimony:** Luke's narrative draws on both written accounts and the spoken testimony of eyewitnesses.
- **Faith Grounded in Fact:** The events of Jesus' birth are anchored in real history—verifiable by Roman records and geography.

The Nativity: Real People, Real Circumstances

- **Historical Context:** Jesus' birth is set during a specific census under Caesar Augustus and Quirinius, grounding the story in a precise time and place.
- **Fulfillment of Prophecy:** Joseph and Mary's journey to Bethlehem fulfills the requirement that the Messiah be born in David's city, demonstrating God's orchestration through even oppressive Roman policies.
- **Humble Beginnings:** Jesus is born in a manger because there was "no room for them in the inn." This rejection reflects both the social stigma Mary and Joseph endured and the humility of Christ's entry into the world.

The Shepherds and the Angelic Announcement

- **First Witnesses:** Ordinary shepherds, considered lowly in society, receive the angelic announcement—"good tidings of great joy which will be to all people."
- **The Message:**
 - A Savior is born—Christ the Lord.
 - The gospel is for "all people," not just Israel.
 - The sign: a baby in swaddling cloths, lying in a manger.
- **Heaven's Response:** A multitude of angels praise God, declaring peace and goodwill toward men—peace between God and humanity, not merely among humans.

Responses to the Birth of Christ

- **Shepherds:** They quickly go to see Jesus, then spread the news widely. God chooses the humble and available to be His messengers.
- **The People:** Most simply marvel—astonished but unchanged, failing to respond with deeper commitment.
- **Mary:** She treasures and ponders these events in her heart, building a foundation of faith through reflection and remembrance.

Application: From Marveling to Following

- **Certainty in Faith:** The gospel is not a fairy tale; it is rooted in history and evidence, giving us reasons to believe.
- **Invitation to All:** Jesus came for everyone—God's plan has always included all people.
- **Call to Action:**
 - Don't merely marvel or be sentimental about Jesus.
 - True discipleship means coming to Jesus, staying close, and following Him wherever He leads.
 - Faith is more than astonishment—it requires decision and commitment.
- **Encouragement:** Like Mary, we are to treasure God's works and words, building up reasons for faith until we are moved to action.

Closing Prayer Highlights

- Gratitude for the certainty and wonder of Christ' s birth.
- A plea for each listener to move from marveling to personal commitment: not just recognizing Jesus as Savior, but as "my Savior."
- Blessing over the fellowship and shared meal, and thanks for those who served.

Amen.