

Leadership Tip!

This time of year, Fellowship is natural and somewhat expected. Remember you don't have to do it all and sharing the load helps grow responsibility in future leaders.

No Vacancy "Making Do?"

STARTER QUESTIONS:

Describe your worst travel experience and why you think you still remember it.

MAIN IDEA:

Today we would never think of the "Nativity" scene as a time of chaos. Most scenes show a peaceful, calm, endearing time, but it was anything but a time of calm.

Luke 2:7 (NKJV)

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.

Imagine being forced to migrate to the place of your family's origin. Now picture walking 90 miles to get there with thousands of others, in the winter, through a desert and over mountains with a pregnant wife who is ready to deliver at any moment. After more than a week of walking, you arrive in your family's hometown only to discover that there is no one able to take you in from the weather. The small town of about 300, is overfilled with more than a thousand people. The best anyone can offer is a small stable to get out of the wind.

Why do you think the chaos of the census for Mary and Joseph was not documented in the Bible?

The answer to this question lays in what happen before the census started;

Read Matthew 1:18-24 and Luke 1:26-38.

What did God tell both Mary and Joseph through His angel?

What impact did this have on their lives?

Mary and Joseph had no idea what was ahead of them. But they were far from just making do. Instead they used the power of God's promises to direct their lives for the future. Both Mary and Joseph recognized where God had already intervened in their lives. This built a strong foundation of faith that they leaned on when chaos surrounded them. Their faith transcended their ability to understand. Their faith was squarely on their knowledge of God's ability to respond.

Proverbs 3:5-6

Trust in the LORD with all your heart, and do not depend on your own understanding. In all your ways acknowledge him, and he will make your paths straight.

When our faith exceeds our ability to understand

- It no longer matters how much faith we think we have, it's all about God's abilities.
- We no longer limit God's response to what we believe will happen, we may not understand it, but we trust in His work.
- That trust brings a peace into your life.

We tend to forget that the first Nativity scene was set with real people, who had worries and fears just like us. Unlike us, they had a fragment of their lives captured in images that now decorate people's homes, but these images give us a chance to see the scene for what it really is: Faith that exceeds understanding!

FINAL THOUGHTS:

The Nativity scene is set in the city of "Bethlehem". Literally translated, Bethlehem means "the City of Bread." From the "City of Bread" came the "Bread of Life," Jesus Christ. This time of year, we may have more opportunities to tell people about Jesus than any other time of year, and you can start that conversation with a baby in a manger.

NO VACANCY
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"And she gave birth to her firstborn son and wrapped him in swaddling clothes and laid him in the manger because there was no place for them in the inn." Luke 2:7 (ESV)

The Struggle:

We are committed to using the resources we have to make life turn out the way we want

The Compromise:

We reduce our lives to things we can control

The Trouble:

God's intervention in our everyday life becomes optional