



Lessons from the first Christmas

December 19th, 2021

Introduction: Even though we are individuals we are all a part of a bigger picture and are divinely placed, to leave a lasting impact, on the lives of others whether for a brief moment or for many years.

This was the case with all the people involved in the first Christmas story. Each individual was unique in their calling and purpose but, all of them together were part of the bigger picture of God's eternal plan to redeem mankind from sin. All of these people played a role that has left a lasting impact even on all our lives.

This morning I want us to look at each of these people involved in the first Christmas story and draw lessons that we too use to make an impact on the lives of those around us.

Mary teaches us the importance of submission

Luke 1:38 (NLT) Mary said, "I am the Lord's servant! Let it happen as you have said."

Submission – a yielding of one's will to the will of superior without murmuring.

From Joseph we learn value of obedience

Obedience - Compliance with a command

Mat 1:20, 24 (NLT) but while he thought on these things, behold, the angel of the Lord appeared unto him in a dream, saying, Joseph, thou son of David, fear not to take unto thee Mary thy wife: for that which is conceived in her is of the Holy Ghost. Then Joseph being raised from sleep did as the angel of the Lord had bidden him, and took unto him his wife.

Matthew 2:13, 14 after they (The Wise Men) had left, an angel of the Lord appeared to Joseph in a dream. The angel said to him, "Get up, take the child and his mother, and flee to Egypt. Stay there until I tell you, because Herod intends to search for the child and kill him." Joseph got up, took the child and his mother, and left for Egypt that night.

Mathew 2:19-21 After Herod was dead, an angel of the Lord appeared in a dream to Joseph in Egypt. The angel said to him, "Get up, take the child and his mother, and go to Israel. Those who tried to kill the child are dead." Joseph got up, took the child and his mother, and went to Israel.

The shepherds teach us the importance of sharing the good news

Luke 2:15-18 the angels left them and went back to heaven. The shepherds said to each other, "Let's go to Bethlehem and see what the Lord has told us about." They went quickly and found Mary and Joseph with the baby, who was lying in a manger. When they saw the child, they repeated what they had been told about him. Everyone who heard the shepherds' story was amazed.

Zachariah's story shows us the importance of not questioning God's ability

Luke 1:11-13; 18-20 Then, to the right of the incense altar, an angel of the Lord appeared to him. Zechariah was troubled and overcome with fear. The angel said to him, "Don't be afraid, Zechariah! God has heard your prayer. Your wife Elizabeth will have a son, and you will name him John. Zechariah said to the angel, "What proof is there for this? I'm an old man, and my wife is beyond her childbearing years." The angel answered him, "I'm Gabriel! I stand in God's presence. God sent me to tell you this good news. But because you didn't believe what I said, you will be unable to talk until the day this happens. Everything will come true at the right time."

Elizabeth's example teaches us to put others first

Luke 1:41-45 when Elizabeth heard the greeting, she felt the baby kick. Elizabeth was filled with the Holy Spirit. She said in a loud voice, "You are the most blessed of all women, and blessed is the child that you will have. I feel blessed that the mother of my Lord is visiting me. As soon as I heard your greeting, I felt the baby jump for joy. You are blessed for believing that the Lord would keep his promise to you."

Perhaps it was from his momma that John the Baptist learned to put Christ first, when he said (John 3:30) He must increase, but I *must* decrease.

The Wise men display true worship

Matthew 2:9-11 after they had heard the king, they started out. The star they had seen rising led them until it stopped over the place where the child was. They were overwhelmed with joy to see the star. When they entered the house, they saw the child with his mother Mary. So they bowed down and worshiped him. Then they opened their treasure chests and offered him gifts of gold, frankincense, and myrrh.

Even though, perhaps, they may have had images in their mind of royalty, a king in a palace, surrounded with guards and servants ready to lead the Jews to victory, they didn't express disappointment and dismay. They chose instead to worship.

These people all were used by God, some for a brief moment and for a lifetime, to impact the life of Christ and leave us lesson to draw from.

What lessons and examples will we leave to those behind us? What will your children say about us when we are gone? What will God say to us when you meet Him face to face?

May we live a life of submission to God's will. May our obedience be immediate and our faith in God's ability to do the impossible be steadfast. May we live a life of true worship that results in putting others first, by sharing the good news of the Savior to the world.