

## **Christmas 2010**

### **All In?**

### ***Slide Notations***

Thank God for Christmas... the time when I can give Him the greatest gift I can give... all of me!

The Christmas Story: "Now the birth of Jesus began like this... A young girl named Mary was engaged to a man named Joseph. An angel appeared to Mary saying, "You have been chosen by God for a great blessing!" When she saw and heard him she was troubled, and wondered what was coming next! "Don't worry Mary, you are the favored one of God you are going to conceive and have a son... and you will call His name Jesus! He is going to be a great and will be called the Son of God and God is going to give Him the throne of His ancestor David and He will rule over the house of Jacob forever and of His kingdom there will be no end..." 'How can this be true since I am a virgin?' And the angel said, "the Holy Spirit will overshadow you and you will conceive the One who will be called the Son of God!" At that Mary said, 'Let it be just as you have said!' Now when Joseph heard that Mary was pregnant he determined to break things off. Because he loved her and didn't want her to be publicly exposed or put at risk he had decided to do it privately, quietly! While he was still thinking how this could best be done, he dozed off. Immediately an angel appeared to him in a dream saying, "Joseph, heir of David, don't hesitate to take Mary as your wife. She hasn't sinned. The seed in her womb was placed by the Holy Spirit. She will give birth to a son that you will name Jesus for He will save His people from their sins..." All of this was right in line with Isaiah's prophecy, "a virgin will conceive and birth a son and they will call Him Emmanuel, God with us!" Then Joseph waking up did what the angel from the Lord had told him; the wedding was back on and they became husband and wife...! There was a lot of activity during this same time! Wise men from the east saw a star at its rising and interpreting it as a sign of the birth of the great Messiah, they followed the star to Jerusalem. There they made inquiry about the new king's birth and were directed to Bethlehem. Because it was also the year of a national census and taxation, Joseph & a very pregnant Mary were making their way south from Nazareth of Galilee to Joseph's hometown of Bethlehem! While they were there she gave birth to her firstborn son, wrapping him up tightly because she had Him in an outdoor manger. There were shepherds in nearby fields watching over their flocks. At His birth an angel showed up, the area around them lit up with the glory of God and they were afraid! The angel said, "Fear not, I proclaim good things, joyful things for all people to hear... the Savior you have been waiting for has been born in the City of David and this is how you will know you've found the right one, he will be wrapped up tightly, laying in a manger..." And suddenly they saw their angel surrounded by multitudes of heavenly angels praising God and saying, 'Glory to God in the highest places and on earth, peace to men of good will!' As the vision faded away the shepherds said, "let's go see if what we have been told is true!" And when they found Him, just like the angel said, they went and told everyone they could find about the baby! And everyone who heard it was filled with wonder. Right about this time the Wise Men from the East found him in His mother's arms and came, fell down and worshipped, opened their treasures and gave Him gifts! But Mary kept all these things and pondered them in her heart! At His dedication in the Temple a very old man named Simeon, who had the promise that he would not die without seeing the Lord's Christ, saw Jesus and took Him up in his arms saying, "Now I can die, I have seen with my own eyes, the salvation of God..." And Joseph and Mary both marveled at what was being said. And Anna, a prophetess who prayed and fasted day and night, came and said the same things about Jesus being the Redeemer! Then Joseph, warned in another dream that Herod would try to kill Jesus, took the child and His mother to Egypt and was there until the wicked king died. In another dream he was instructed to return and settle in Nazareth, fulfilling the prophecy that He would be called a Nazarene...

**No matter how you approach this story... you have to be touched with the sheer genius of it!** Orchestrated on hundreds of pages and thousands of years of prophecy... Engaging the players, from different backgrounds, places, faiths... Landing in the lap of two people who would ultimately say "yes" to God...

**No matter how you approach this story... you have to be touched with the sheer insanity of it!** *Little girl*, from a culture of sexual holiness/arranged marriages/legislated morality/lethal consequences! Prepared, in love, course set! Life turned upside down, inside out, by a "different plan!" How do you move ahead with that? *Jewish man*, culture of propriety/pride/ punishment, resisting his society on the word of a young girl and an angel... Can

you imagine how this pray-er, prayed in this stressing time? How he fought back, fear, anger, name calling, condemning, doubts? This was going to cost him everything!

**No matter how you approach this Christmas story... you have to be touched w/the deep reality that these two were all in for God!**

*As they were hearing they knew;* Not about me, my dreams, my hopes, my future... it's about God doing what He wants – thru me!

**So... what about us this Christmas... start of our new year... what are we in it for?**

**Three Guys!** *“as they were on their way a certain man came and said, ‘I will follow you wherever you go.’ Jesus answered: “Foxes have holes, birds have nests but the Son of Man has no where to lay His head.” Lk9.57,58*  
The movement has momentum and this guy wants in! Jesus punctures the motives/heart!

The moment we came into the kingdom we were extracted from the world order! Received a glimpse of our new country and given a new uniform/mission! “and having food and clothing let us be content!” 1T6.8 “storing up here is foolish since at any time we might be headed home!” Lk12.20,21

**The kingdom is not about what we can get but the life we can bring!**

**Three Guys!** “Jesus said to another, “Follow Me!” the man said, ‘Yes. But give me a little time to make funeral arrangements for my dad.’ Jesus replied, “Let the dead bury the dead. Make no mistake, your business is with the living, and the delivery of the gospel is urgent.” This isn't Jesus' brief against funerals... It's His warning against breach/mission! How many have passed their life mourning someone's passage into *life*? How many people live among the dead and forget the living who are dying? ***Our business is with the living!***

**The Kingdom of God continually moves forward toward the people on earth who have yet to hear!**

**Three Guys!** “A third man chimed in, ‘I'm ready to follow you... but... let me first (proton): first in order, significance, importance, go and say farewell to my family. Jesus said, “No man having put his hand on the plow and looking back is fit for the kingdom of God.”

**The Kingdom is focused... and if you put your hand and heart to the work... you must be ready to give it all!**

**2010/2011** We can spend our time like the three guys, having a hard time making a decision about what to do w/Jesus! Or we can look a little further ahead and see 70 others willing to give it their all... walking into miracle life!

“And He sent seventy others, in groups of two, saying, the harvest is plentiful and ripe... ask the Lord of the harvest to send others to help you, but regardless, I am sending you out as lambs among wolves... don't worry about money or what you will eat or where you will stay... you will be cared for along the way... but you focus on healing all that are broken and sick and tell them it's happening because the kingdom of God has come near...”

**Lk 10.1ff**