

Even Small, Dirty & Broken Vessels
Hope Chapel Honolulu
Luke 2:1-21

¹ In those days a decree went out from Caesar Augustus that all the world should be registered. ² This was the first registration when Quirinius was governor of Syria. ³ And all went to be registered, each to his own town. ⁴ 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, ⁵ 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. ⁷ 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. (Luke 2:1-7, ESV)

Introduction

There are many storylines that intersect the Christmas narrative here with the baby boy laid in a manger in a stable. And without a doubt it is the baby boy born that day who is the center of the story. However, that God Made Flesh was laid in a manger also has this significance for us: God has come to live amongst us, and He is not only the most powerful, loving and faithful Being in the universe, but He is also the most humble, gentle and compassionate!

1. She laid Him in a manger because there was no room for them in the inn. (Luke 2:1-7)

- a) The birth of Christ did not occur in a “once upon a time” setting.
- b) The humble setting of His arrival was a better fit than the trappings of great wealth.

2. Heavenly promises, persons and praises! (Luke 2:8-14)

- a) Angels, shepherds, the glory of the LORD and the fulfillment of prophecy.
- b) The heavenly reality of worship broke out almost in the middle of nowhere.

3. How we look and listen for God means everything. (Luke 2:15-21)

- a) The shepherds go to see for themselves this Cause for heavenly celebration.
- b) “Mary treasured up all these things, pondering them in her heart” (Luke 2:19).

Conclusion

Francis Schaeffer, said to be one of the greatest Western theologians of the 20th century, observed that with God “there are no little people, no little places.” In other words, when animated or inhabited by God, greatness, significance, even astounding glory, honor and power can be seen, heard, touched and received...no matter how small, seemingly insignificant or marginalized. The baby Jesus in the manger foreshadowed the filling of even the most unlikely believer with the Holy Spirit of God. The babe in a manger is a reminder that God’s greatness is unbound by our not-ness.

For our prayerful discovery, discussion and application:

1. Why is it important that we recognize the birth of Christ as a historical event?
2. What is the significance of Mary’s response to the words of prophecy repeated by the shepherds?
3. What is the one thing that the Word and Spirit of God is saying to you today?

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