

11.27.22 / What? / Luke 2:1-20

There are so many tales and traditions that shape our imagination and form our activities in the Christmas season. Some have a lot to do with what we believe to be the meaning of Christmas... and some have very little to do with it... [illus: Moving the mouse](#)

Amidst all the tales and traditions there is **a story** that claims to be true and not just true... but once examined, we find that it **impacts** everything. It's the story Jesus's birth. Each week throughout this advent season we'll examine this story as recorded in the Gospel of Luke. Each week we'll look at this same story, same account and approach it with a **different** question: **What? When? Who? Where? Why?** So that by the end of our Advent worship services we will have thoughtfully investigated this incredible story and its claims.

So first... **What happened?** (four what's)

1. **A census**
2. **A journey**
3. **A baby's birth**
4. **A big announcement**

1. A census

What is something massively inconvenient that you've experienced?

V1-3

- Roman world – picture the map, 1400 miles by sea, 2500 by land
- Census - Enrollment prior to taxation – finding out who they can tax
- Endeavor required travel - Nazareth to Bethlehem – 90 mile walk (3mph, 7 hr/day – 4-5 day walk – one way)
- Massively inconvenient (Government orders) - [Voting, COVID – how about taking 10 days off work and walking 180 miles?](#)

How would you respond? [Submit, rebel, seek exception/exemption?](#)

How **do you** respond when something massively inconvenient happens? What kinds of conversations do you have with the Lord?

2. A Census / A journey

Write it down – [what is a wild journey you've been on?](#)

V4-5

- Nazareth to Bethlehem – distance... donkey...
 - 90 mile walk (3mph, 7 hr/day – 4-5 day walk – one way)
- With pregnant woman / who was not yet his wife / nearing the end of her pregnancy! (a 90 mile trip!)

- Avg 5000 steps per day – (2000=mile) – about 2.5 mi. **Raise your hand if you've ever walked more than 20000 steps in a day (10 miles).** This journey may have been about 42,000 steps per day (21 miles). This was quite a journey!

3. A Census / A Journey / A baby's birth

Recall – one of your children's birth **or** what you recall hearing about your own birth story.

V6-7

- It came time for the baby to be born **and they are** 4 days trip away from the comforts of home)... in a stable – a house/dwelling/shelter **for animals!** The baby is resting in a feeding trough!
- No room available!

Have you ever felt like everything was going wrong? Yet the baby is healthy... so there is reason for rejoicing.

Meanwhile...

4. A Census / A Journey / A baby's birth / A big announcement

V8

It's a normal, quiet night; cold and lowly shepherds are in the fields with sheep. Boring – I know we heard stories of King David as a shepherd boy fighting off lion and bear but... that's the exception.

V9

Have you have encountered a sight or sound so grand and surprising that it was terrifying? Being awoken in the middle of the night. **Illus – construction helicopter, Ryan or Amanda waking me up. Scared stuck...**

Variety of responses – Scared stuck, hysterical, pass out

V10-12 Angel speaks – those who were stuck go hysterical, those hysterical go stuck, passed out – still laying. The angel speaks.

They hear... A Savior (deliverer), Christ (Anointed One) – *has been born to you.*

- Sign – baby wrapped in clothes and lying in a manger

V13-14

Imagine awe and tears as heaven is opened up – hear this announcement of Glory, peace, favor resting on God's people. The Shepherds move from **terror to awe and worship and thanksgiving!**

Have you had moments in your lifetime when heaven has been opened/revealed - when your heart has felt the touch/voice/presence of God?

- **Extraordinary examples:** Mission trip, two car rides, hotel lobby,
- **more common examples:** sing, read scripture, or have a deep conversation with the brother or sister in Christ.

When you feel the touch/voice/presence of God you are filled with gratitude, humility, and sometimes confession and I imagine that's what's happening with the shepherds this spectacular visit.

V15 The shepherds are moved by this **holy message** and they are ready to go! So they go (hurried off) in right response to this spectacular announcement of **the Savior** being born.

V16-20 When your heart is filled to overflowing – when you learn of spectacular news... **you share it!** Everyone around you gets spilled on. **Do we live like we have spectacular news to share? What spectacular news are you most excited about?**

Whenever you think about this story this Advent season, I challenge you to reflect on this question – **What difference is it making in your life that our Savior has come and He is coming again?**

Is this news that you're sharing?

Is this news that you're living?

V19 Mary pondered these things... no doubt asking God with wonder and anticipation, **"What is going to happen next?"**

I hope and pray that this story stirs up your heart. We've examined **what happened**. I can't wait to examine... When? Who? Where? Why?

I hope you'll join us next week for worship.