

December 2016

From the Pastor



## Christmas Traditions

There are a bunch of Christmas traditions in our family. We do these things to celebrate what Jesus did for us. We also follow these traditions to remember special times in our family.



One tradition is that we make sure we wake up at our home on Christmas day. We do this to show how special our time together as a family is to all of us. It also helps us not to have to choose which parent's or grandparents' house we go to for Christmas. There is no need to travel. That's not what it was like for Jesus' parents before He was born.



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



Days before the first Christmas, Joseph and Mary traveled about 85 miles by foot from Nazareth to Bethlehem. It would take about a week to make that journey.



(over)

Another tradition we have is to have friends over just before our Christmas Eve service to enjoy a meal together. We come together to have a small celebration before the service. Mary and Joseph were alone on Christmas Eve.

**Luke 2:6-7** <sup>6</sup> *And while they were there, the time came for her to give birth.* <sup>7</sup> *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. (ESV)*

On the night before Jesus came Mary and Joseph were all alone in a barn. All alone except for some possible animals.

Our family also has the tradition of giving each other a Christmas ornament, which is the only gift we unwrap on Christmas Eve. Joseph and Mary had little to give each other. There were shepherds who came to see the baby Jesus and this is all they saw.

**Luke 2:16** *And they went with haste and found Mary and Joseph, and the baby lying in a manger. (ESV)*

There was nothing special about that stable. There were no decorations, nothing at all.

For the last few years our family has added another tradition. We get together with others from our church and sing Christmas carols. There was singing on that first Christmas, but it was a little different.

**Luke 2:13-14** <sup>13</sup> *And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host praising God and saying,*  
<sup>14</sup> *"Glory to God in the highest,*  
*and on earth peace among those with whom he is pleased!" (ESV)*

Imagine an army of angels singing praises to God!

Christmas for our family has all sorts of traditions. You may also have Christmas traditions in your family. Amidst all your traditions remember this; Christmas is about God who came to earth as a baby to a very humble family. Christmas is also about the fact that this baby was also God worshipped by the angels.

Merry Christmas!

In Him and for His Glory,

*Pastor Art*

