

Pointing to the Son

Luke 2:1-20

Planning for a Big Celebration

What did God do to celebrate His greatest miracle?

What does that tell us about Him and what He values?

What does that tell us about what it's like to follow Him?

Luke 2:1-20

1-7: The lowly birth of the Son of God

Contrasts

Caesar Augustus.....Jesus

Emperor Peasant

Rome Small towns (1,000 people?)

Ruler of the Roman Empire Poor infant

Issued decrees..... Followed those decrees

All must obey him Poor parents paid taxes to Caesar

Lived in a palace Born with the animals

Had a royal bed Slept in an animal feeding trough

→ The lowest gets the worst sleeping room

Birth of the Son of God: The greatest possible event!

It is mind boggling in its greatness!

The Son of God, the creator, the infinite, the beginning and the end, the one who is Life, all powerful & glorious

Became a human being. Really!

"all the fullness of deity in bodily form" Colossians 2:9

To be the Savior for humanity

Shocking in its lowliness!

A baby born to a poor young couple, with the animals, sleeping in a feeding trough, ignored by humanity

That's it???

8-12: A glorious announcement brought to the lowly

Lowly audience and setting

Shepherds: Dirty, untrustworthy, troublemakers

At night, in the fields, outside a small village

God's angel: literally "messenger" (often appeared human)

The glory of the Lord: His overwhelming presence

Above and beyond the presence of an angel

Why rejoice? Good news (evangelism) of great joy!

Birth of God's Savior (Jesus) + Messiah + God

Sign: a loved baby in the lowliest place

who is the greatest possible being!

13-14: ...that got even more amazingly glorious!

"Suddenly": timing as well as significance

"Great company of the heavenly host" = the angelic army of God

Power & majesty

The right response to what just happened: praise!

Glory in the greatest place

Peace = full salvation to a broken world

The love and power of God has entered our broken world to bring life and joy!

15-20: Resulting in joyful praise and evangelism by the lowly

Amazingly glorious announcement given only to a few lowly people (angels went back to heaven)

They went to Bethlehem **because** they believed

They became the 'evangelists' (good news tellers) of this amazing news with joy and praise

Event (birth) and Meaning (Savior, Christ, Lord)

The most glorious 'hidden' in lowliness

The Big Idea

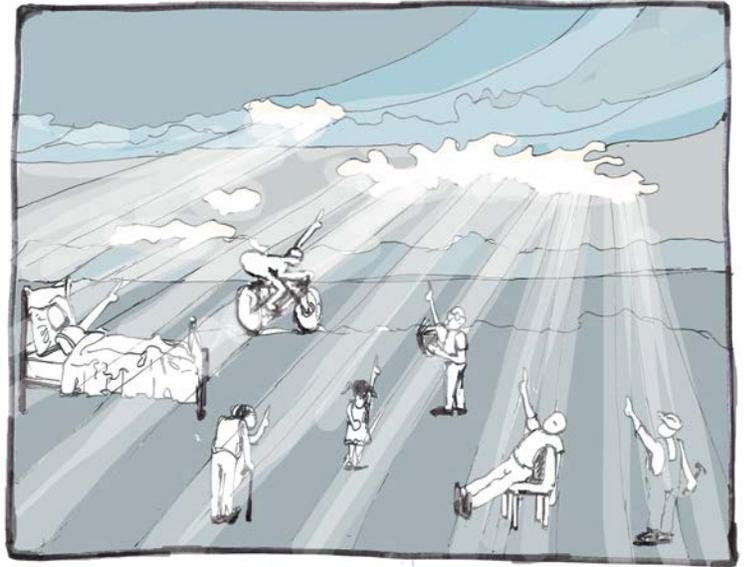
**God entered humanity
by the Son of God becoming a human being
to bring light and life to a broken and dying world
through and among the lowliest
of people and conditions**

Sunbeams

Little particles, like dust or water droplets
lit up by the sun
that together point back to the sun
especially when the sun is hidden

Sonbeams

Lowly, unimportant people
lit up by the Son
that together point back to the Son
especially when the Son is less visible
with joy!



Application

Give joyful praise to the Son of God who has entered humanity in great humility to bring us life and joy

God's solution is **not** a message, a rebuke, a threat, a pep talk, a technique, a good example to follow, ...

It is God Himself with us: Emmanuel

He is our salvation! Our rescue! Our hope!

In breathtaking humility

"The Son made himself nothing by taking the very nature of a servant, being made in human likeness. And being found in appearance as a man, he humbled himself by becoming obedient to death—even death on a cross!" *Philippians 2:7-8*

The world doesn't point us to this joy

It keeps pointing us to human problems and solutions

"Peter saw the wind and began to sink..."

It takes faith and intention to see the work of God in lowliness. Because...

God works out His purposes in human events even when appearances seem to deny His presence or power

It takes faith to see God's work of love among us

Choose to give joyful praise by looking at the Son of God

Trust in God's unstoppable work, even when it is hard to see

So few people knew of this greatest miracle of God!

So little changed in the next 30 years, then He died on a cross

Powerful people imagined they could oppose it

People who believed got discouraged and doubted it

Jesus said: "The kingdom of heaven is like a mustard seed, which is the smallest of all seeds on earth." *Mark 4:31*

"But the plans of the Lord stand firm forever, the purposes of his heart through all generations." *Psalms 33:11*

Where is **God's work** hard for you to see today?

The work of God is like yeast that seems to get lost in the dough...until it affects the whole batch! *Matthew 13:33*

The kingdom of God "grows and becomes the largest of all garden plants, with such big branches that the birds can perch in its shade." *Mark 4:32*

Be a Sonbeam

Unimportant people

→ Humility

God is **opposed** to the proud!

He is **not impressed** by what impresses people!

1 Corinthians 1:26-31

lit up by the Son of God

→ Standing in the light of God

2 Corinthians 4:6; 2 Corinthians 3:18

Contemplating the Lord's glory in His Spirit among us

Walking in Christ's ways in fellowship with the Holy Spirit

who joyfully point back to Him

→ for His name and fame

We are merely dust particles, lit up by the Son

Make sure we never forget His glory & our insignificance **except that we are God's loved children!**

"And whatever you do, whether in word or deed, do it all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through him." *Colossians 3:17*

Do everything like Jesus did things & how He taught us

By His power in the Spirit

For His glory not ours

"In the same way, let your light shine before others,

that they may see your good deeds and

glorify your Father in heaven." *Matthew 5:16*

Conclusion

Be Sonbeams!

Especially in darker days!

Trust the unstoppable work of God

For His good purposes that can never fail

Reflection Questions

1. What helps you give joyful praise for this greatest miracle of God, the incarnation of the Son of God to bring us salvation? What can you do this week to help others also give joyful praise for this unspeakable gift?
2. What helps you "contemplate the Lord's glory" (see 2 Corinthians 3:18)? What makes that hard to do? How is that action a part of "being transformed into his image with ever-increasing glory"?
3. What is humility? In what ways is God humble? What makes humility beautiful? How can we grow in humility?
4. What are good ways to "point back to the Son"? (see Matthew 5:16) What makes it challenging to do?
5. Read Psalm 33:10-11. God's plans and purposes can never fail. At the same time, God foils and thwarts the plans of people. How can we know the plans and purposes of God? How can we avoid the disaster of missing God's plans and purposes, and thinking that our plans and purposes are the same as His?