

The Story Part 3 - “Unto Us” (12-14-25)

Main Text: Mathew chapter 1 and Luke chapter 2

Introduction: Mary returns home from her visit with Elizabeth, Joseph’s Dream, and the birth of Jesus

For Reference

Luke 1:56-58 (ESV) - [56] And Mary remained with her about three months and returned to her home. [57] Now the time came for Elizabeth to give birth, and she bore a son. [58] And her neighbors and relatives heard that the Lord had shown great mercy to her, and they rejoiced with her.

Note: Mary leaves Elizabeth after 3 months together. This season of joy and encouragement while walking through those early days of anticipation, now give way to face the reality of what comes next . . .

1) Joseph’s Decision

Matthew 1:18-19 (ESV)

[18] Now the birth of Jesus Christ took place in this way. When his mother Mary had been betrothed to Joseph, before they came together she was found to be with child from the Holy Spirit. [19] And her husband Joseph, being a just man and unwilling to put her to shame, resolved to divorce her quietly.

Note: Things just got real hard. The joy of the impossible, just met the realities of life. Mary and Joseph are each facing a very different life than they had planned.

The God adventures of those willing to say yes to Him, often lead us to places we don’t imagine, including incredibly difficult and challenging circumstances.

Matthew 1:20-21 (ESV)

[20] But as he considered these things, behold, an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream, saying, “Joseph, son of David, do not fear to take Mary as your wife, for that which is conceived in her is from the Holy Spirit. [21] She will bear a son, and you shall call his name Jesus, for he will save his people from their sins.”

Note: Joseph is being asked to believe in the unbelievable. To suffer the shame and embarrassment of believing what no one else will believe. To look ridiculous for the sake of his faith. To love his wife, when it appears to all others that she has betrayed that love.

How can God ask us to believe the impossible, and call us to step out in faith with costly obedience?

Matthew 1:22-23 (ESV)

[22] All this took place to fulfill what the Lord had spoken by the prophet: [23] “Behold, the virgin shall conceive and bear a son, and they shall call his name Immanuel” (which means, God with us).

Note: This kind of faith is possible, because of the great miracle that we are not alone. God is with us!

Matthew 1:24-25 (ESV)

[24] When Joseph woke from sleep, he did as the angel of the Lord commanded him: he took his wife, [25] but knew her not until she had given birth to a son. And he called his name Jesus.

Application: This Christmas consider again what it means to believe the unbelievable, to trust in the Lord, by believing Him and acting on His commands, no matter how hard the sacrifice may be. Remember . . .

Isaiah 7:14 (ESV)

Therefore the Lord himself will give you a sign. Behold, the virgin shall conceive and bear a son, and shall call his name Immanuel.

2) Journey to Bethlehem

Luke 2:1-3 (ESV)

[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.

Note: The apparent whims of a pagan ruler further complicate this season . . .

Luke 2:4-5 (ESV)

[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.

Note: The journey is 80-90 miles depending on route. About a week's journey, while poor and pregnant.

- Caesar wants a census (probably for taxation purposes)
- God's prophetic promise fulfilled. Messiah is not only from the line of David, but from his city too (Micah 5:2)
- A place for delivery away from the drama and scandal of home (Nazareth)

Luke 2:6-7 (ESV)

[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.

Note: We may often find ourselves questioning God's timing, and the location or circumstances He has us in.

We often consider faith through the question of can I trust God. But consider it from another perspective - can He trust me?

God entrusted his precious son to two people, who though poor and with no place, loved each other and said yes to Him. He wasn't overly concerned about their lack of resource. Their faith and love were enough!

3) Good News for All

Luke 2:8-14 (ESV and NKJV*)

[8] And in the same region there were shepherds out in the field, keeping watch over their flock by night. [9] And an angel of the Lord appeared to them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were filled with great fear. [10] And the angel said to them, "Fear not, for behold, I bring you good news of great joy that will be for all the people. [11] For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, who is Christ the Lord. [12] And this will be a sign for you: you will find a baby wrapped in swaddling cloths and lying in a manger." [13] And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host praising God and saying, *[14] "Glory to God in the highest, And on earth peace, goodwill toward men!"

Note: Hear the Good News - The Glorious God of Heaven has come bringing Peace and Favor toward us!

Luke 2:15-17 (ESV)

[15] When the angels went away from them into heaven, the shepherds said to one another, "Let us go over to Bethlehem and see this thing that has happened, which the Lord has made known to us." [16] And they went with haste and found Mary and Joseph, and the baby lying in a manger. [17] And when they saw it, they made known the saying that had been told them concerning this child.

Note: They respond to the good news, and come to see Jesus for themselves, and they share the good news!

Luke 2:18-19 (ESV)

[18] And all who heard it wondered at what the shepherds told them. [19] But Mary treasured up all these things, pondering them in her heart.

Note: Mary held onto what she saw and heard - she received it into her heart

Conclusion: May we hear the good news and respond in faith to the Lord!

Isaiah 9:6-7 (ESV)

[6] For to us a child is born, to us a son is given; and the government shall be upon his shoulder, and his name shall be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace. [7] Of the increase of his government and of peace there will be no end, on the throne of David and over his kingdom, to establish it and to uphold it with justice and with righteousness from this time forth and forevermore. The zeal of the LORD of hosts will do this.