



The Christmas Story

The Love Scene

Luke 2:1-7

Message #2 of 3 – S669

Sermon given on December 24, 2015



Christmas Eve Service

Pastor Rick Lancaster

The Christmas Story - The Love Scene

Luke 2:1-7

Opening Comments

- Today, we continue a three part series **The Christmas Story**
- Here we are on Christmas Eve with part 2 of the series
- Thank you for being here
- We have this service because we believe that this event that we will celebrate is so important that we want to pause from all the madness of this season and refocus on the reason for the season
- Tomorrow is Christmas, the annual celebration of the birth of the Savior of the World, Jesus Christ
- The birth of a child is a big deal in most families
- And if you hang around a group of mothers for any length of time, someone will probably tell their unique birthing story
- It is usually unique in that it didn't go as was planned
- Kelly and I have one of those stories
- A month before our first child, Robert was born, we moved into a house we were renting
- Kelly was eight month's pregnant, she was great with child
- About the only things that had been unpacked were those things we needed
- Everything else was in the garage
- Fast forward to the next Friday, alarm goes off, Kelly shares she has had a difficult night – false labor – or so she thought
- Hospital? Not sure – okay, I need to go to work = Mr. Sensitivity
- We both get up – water breaks immediately
- Remember, this is our first child – not sure what we are doing
- One thing everyone told us, and seemed to make a big deal about, have a hospital bag packed – three weeks early – no bag – need the bag – go get the bag
- She gets back into bed – I run out to the garage – one minute – Kelly has contraction – run back to her – back out to garage

- Back and forth several times – forget the bag – we’re going to the hospital
- We did not envision Robert coming into this world like that
- And in our message today, will see that Jesus didn’t come into the world in the way that Joseph and Mary had planned
- **Pray**

Teaching

- **The Christmas Story - The Love Scene**
- Turn in your Bible to **Luke 2**
- It probably shouldn’t have surprised Joseph and Mary that they would end up with a unique birthing story of their own
- Nothing about this pregnancy had been normal
- Mary is a young woman, 16, maybe 17 years old, as was the custom of the time
- She was betrothed, or engaged to Joseph
- Before the wedding, an angel appeared to Mary and told her that she was going to conceive a child in a supernatural way – by God, not her husband
- That happened and Joseph wasn’t buying the ‘by God’ part of Mary’s story of how she had become pregnant, until an angel showed and talked to him
- And then, Mary went to visit her cousin Elizabeth who was an older woman who was barren but had conceived
- When Mary walked in, Elizabeth’s baby leapt in her womb
- After Elizabeth’s baby was born Mary went back to Nazareth
- And like any mother, began preparing for the arrival of the baby
- Registering at Babies R Us and stocking up on Pampers
- Joseph was a carpenter, so he is getting the crib ready, a changing table, a little dresser for all the babies clothes
- They had a plan – God had a different plan
- **Luke 2:1-5**
- God’s plan was that the baby be born in Bethlehem
- How is that God’s plan, you might ask

- God had spoken hundreds of years earlier about the birthplace of this baby through the prophet **Micah 5:2**

But you, Bethlehem Ephrathah, *though* you are little among the thousands of Judah, yet out of you shall come forth to Me the One to be Ruler in Israel, whose goings forth *are* from of old, from everlasting.

- Bethlehem was about 5 miles from Jerusalem – about 70 from Nazareth
- It is hard to imagine what that journey might have been like
- Mary is over eight months pregnant
- The KJV says she was ‘great with child’
- Try to imagine that poor donkey
- God chose Mary from the city of Nazareth for other reasons
- She was a young woman who believed and trusted in God
- He also chose her because she lived far from Bethlehem
- **Luke 2:6-7**
- Because Mary was so pregnant, they couldn’t travel fast
- So by the time they show up in Bethlehem all the other people who had travelled there had taken all the best places to stay
- All that was left was the place where the animals were kept and fed
- All three of my children and both of my grandchildren were born in nice clean, safe hospitals
- Anyone who has ever spent any time around farm animals knows that is probably not where you want to be having your baby
- It would be dirty, stinky, and possibly noisy
- That is the backdrop for this love scene
- Not in a palace where princes are born, not on a white sandy beach, not under a canopy of trees in some tropical location
- This love scene took place in the most unlikely place
- How is this a love scene, you might ask?
- The Bible teaches us that God loves every human He ever created

John 3:16

For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.

- God the Father sent Jesus as proof of His love for us **1 John 4:10**
In this is love, not that we loved God, but that He loved us and sent His Son to be the propitiation for our sins.

- Jesus was born as proof of God’s great love for each one of us
- But the place where it happened is so important
- God picked this specific location on purpose
- It wasn’t an accident, or bad luck that there was no room, God sovereignly arranged for them to show up when there was no place other than this for them to stay
- Just like it wasn’t fate or the Force, or kismet, or Kermit that chose the poor young girl Mary to be the vessel through whom the Savior of the world would be born – God chose her because she was poor
- In the birth of Jesus, God did something that is so simple but so radical that many people miss it
- One of the things we believe is that Jesus was, is, and will always be God
- We agree with Peter’s confession **Matthew 16:16**
Simon Peter answered and said, “You are the Christ, the Son of the living God.”
- The Mormons say that Jesus is a son of God – He is the only begotten Son – there is none like Him – He is God
- Something happened when Jesus was born in that stable
- Jesus, God the Son stepped down out of heaven and passed through every strata of society, bypassing the palace , and the rich and famous, and powerful
- Jesus was born of the lowest possible circumstances so that there would be no one lower than Him
- So that there would be no one who was too low for Him to reach
- So that there was no one who couldn’t come to Him
- If Jesus had been born in a palace, only the powerful could relate to Him
- If He had been born in a rich man’s home, only the wealthy
- If He had been born in the temple, to one of the priests, only the religious could come
- But Jesus came to the poor young woman from the nothing town of Nazareth, born in the humblest of settings, so that He could reach up to everyone and lift them up to God
- God created every single human to be the object of His love
- To receive the gift of God’s love we need to come to Him

- That is why God the Father sent Jesus, to make a way for us to come to God **John 14:6**

Jesus said to him, “I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through Me.”

- And contrary to what some might believe, He is the only way
- Over 2,000 years ago God choreographed the most beautiful love scene this world has ever seen, the baby Jesus lying in a manger
- In that baby were the hopes of the entire world
- And for those who put their trust in Him, they also have the hope of heaven
- There is one thing I want you to hear, if you hear nothing else tonight, God loves you
- He has always loved you
- He is not waiting for you to be a better person to start loving you
- You may not feel loved in this world
- Your life has not gone according to your plan
- You might even feel like Joseph and Mary – nothing is going the way it should be
- You may not feel loved by those who should love you
- But God’s love for you is infinite and eternal
- You might not feel like God loves you
- That can change right now, by receiving God’s free gift of salvation through Jesus
- Jesus came, lived, died, and rose again so that you and every other living person could know God’s love
- This is the greatest gift ever given – and is offered to any who will come to Jesus and believe
- Why not receive that gift right now.

- **Pray**

May the God of peace who brought up our Lord Jesus from the dead, that great Shepherd of the sheep, through the blood of the everlasting covenant, make you complete in every good work to do His will, working in you what is well pleasing in His sight, through Jesus Christ, to whom *be* glory forever and ever.

Amen. Hebrews 13:20-21