

Ordinary People in an Ordinary World

Scripture:

Luke 2:10-14 “Then the angel said to them, “Do not be afraid, for behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy which will be to all people. ¹¹For there is born to you this day in the city of David a Savior, who is Christ the Lord. ¹²And this will be the sign to you: You will find a Babe wrapped in swaddling cloths, lying in a manger.” ¹³And 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!”

Introduction:

Out of all the holidays celebrated in America and probably the world, Christmas is the largest, most expensive, most demanding of all. Hardly a business, social organization, city or church allows the season to go by without notice. A fortune is spent on decorations, presents, parties and greeting cards which will take an entire year for some people to pay for. More demand is placed on people to attend Christmas functions, wade through the crowds of shoppers and come up with that special something that will bring real delight to the recipient than at any other time of the year. In Hank Ketcham's comic strip "Dennis the Menace," Dennis asks his father, "Why can't Christmas ever go into overtime?" Most people feel that enough is enough.

Because of the exceptional requirements and expectations of Christmas we sometimes lose sight of the fact that Christmas is not about the presents, the money, the shopping or the parties. It's not about important people doing important things to make a season of the year important. It's about ordinary people. People like you and me. Ordinary people living in an ordinary world allow God to use them to bring extraordinary meaning to life.

I. God uses ordinary people.

- A. Mary was an ordinary young girl called to bring an extraordinary savior into the world.
 - 1. She was not fashionable, wealthy or learned.
 - 2. She was not a prophetess with an international following.
 - 3. She was not royalty.
 - 4. She was not a famous actress, pop rock star or news commentator.
- B. What about Joseph. You might believe that one of the parents would have some credentials.
 - 1. He was not wealthy nor the son of the wealthy.
 - 2. He was not a well know politician, news anchor or conservative radio commentator.
 - 3. He wasn't a basketball icon nor a Christian rapper.
 - 4. He was just Joseph who didn't want to make a public example of Mary.
 - 5. Joseph was an ordinary man with no desire to bring any attention to himself or his family.
- C. The Angelic visitation came to ordinary shepherds watching their flocks by night.
 - 1. King Herod didn't get it.
 - 2. The High Priest working in the temple didn't get it.
 - 3. The Sanhedrin and the religious leaders of the day didn't get it.
 - 4. The leading world government of the day (Rome) didn't get it.
- D. God loves to take ordinary people and make them into the sons of God.
John 1:11-13 “He came to His own, and His own did not receive Him. ¹²But as many as received Him, to them He gave the right to become children of God, to those who believe in His name: ¹³who were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God.

II. God uses ordinary people in an ordinary world.

- A. O Little Town of Bethlehem.
 - 1. They didn't even have enough hotel rooms to accommodate the birth of Christ.

Luke 2:7 “And she brought forth her firstborn Son, and wrapped Him in swaddling cloths, and laid Him in a manger, because there was no room for them in the inn.”

2. Bethlehem was neither a political center nor a resort. The only reason Jesus was born there was to fulfill scripture.

Matthew 2:4-6 “And when he had gathered all the chief priests and scribes of the people together, he inquired of them where the Christ was to be born. ⁵So they said to him, “In Bethlehem of Judea, for thus it is written by the prophet: ⁶ ‘But you, Bethlehem, in the land of Judah, Are not the least among the rulers of Judah; For out of you shall come a Ruler Who will shepherd My people Israel.’”

- B. Jesus was born in an ordinary feeding trough, the manger.
 1. He wasn’t placed in a beautiful baby bed.
 2. He didn’t even have the privilege of the little country clinic.
- C. He was wrapped in ordinary swaddling clothes.

III. Why does God use ordinary people?

- A. God uses ordinary people because they will allow Him to receive the glory.
II Corinthians 4:7 “But we have this treasure in earthen vessels, that the excellence of the power may be of God and not of us.”
- B. God uses ordinary people because they cannot depend upon their own abilities.
I Corinthians 1:27-29 “But God has chosen the foolish things of the world to put to shame the wise, and God has chosen the weak things of the world to put to shame the things which are mighty; ²⁸and the base things of the world and the things which are despised God has chosen, and the things which are not, to bring to nothing the things that are, ²⁹that no flesh should glory in His presence.”
 1. The world would think that what God chooses is foolish.
 2. The world would think that God has chosen the weak.
 3. The world would think that God is scraping the bottom of the barrel.
 4. The world would think that ordinary cannot produce extraordinary.
- C. God uses ordinary people because they allow themselves to house the mystery of Christ and will reveal that mystery to the world.
Colossians 1:25b-27 “...to fulfill the word of God, ²⁶the mystery which has been hidden from ages and from generations, but now has been revealed to His saints. ²⁷To them God willed to make known what are the riches of the glory of this mystery among the Gentiles: which is Christ in you, the hope of glory.”
- D. God uses ordinary people and ordinary things to bring an extraordinary message to the world.
 1. The upper room was an ordinary place for the outpouring of the Holy Spirit on the day of Pentecost.
 2. An ordinary hillside became a restaurant for 5000 people.
 3. An ordinary tomb could not hold Jesus. Here’s a thought – We can’t hold him either. Let Him out.
 4. Paul wrote Epistles from ordinary dungeons.
 5. He used a burning bush to get Moses’ attention.
 6. God will use you if you will let Him.