

"A BEAUTIFUL COLLISION"

Date: December 22, 2019

Speaker: Danny Clinton



(Vs) Luke 2:1-7 "In those days a decree went out from Caesar Augustus that all the world should be registered. ²This was the first registration when Quirinius was governor of Syria. ³And all went to be registered, each to his own town. ⁴And 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, ⁵to be registered with Mary, his betrothed, who was with child. ⁶And while they were there, the time came for her to give birth. ⁷And 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."

Every Christmas, many of us put up a cute little manger scene somewhere in our house or yard...

- These "Nativity Scenes" are a staple of holiday decorating due to the story of Jesus' birth... Inn & Inn Keeper, Animals, Mother, Father, Shepherds, Wisemen.
- But... the narrative of the nativity is so much more than a nice background for a Christmas card or a scene in a Christmas drama.
- With a closer look, there are some important lessons to be learned from *how* Jesus came into the world.
- Here are just a few things we can all learn from Jesus in the manger...

JESUS ISN'T AFRAID TO ENTER INTO OUR FILTH.

- We often imagine the manger scene as a clean, well-kept barn with golden-yellow hay.
- In reality, the environment Jesus was born into was most likely covered in the filth of animals and smeared with dirt.
- It's quite possible that the air was too hot or too cold.
- It's likely that the smell wasn't pleasant.
- It's probable that the environment that Jesus entered into was anything but clean.

To me, this says that Jesus isn't intimidated by our unfavorable conditions.

- We don't serve a God who tiptoes around uncleanness or is intimidated by the weakness in our humanity.

Christ died for us when we were at our worst...

(Vs) Rom. 5:6-8 – “For while we were still weak, at the right time Christ died for the ungodly. For one will scarcely die for a righteous person—though perhaps for a good person one would dare even to die— but God shows his love for us in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us.”

- Christ loves us so intensely that He came in the flesh to walk among us and then did the unthinkable by sending His Spirit to live in us.

GOD DOESN'T ALWAYS GIVE STEP-BY-STEP INSTRUCTIONS.

- Nowhere in Scripture does it say that Mary and Joseph were ready for what happened.
- While they of course knew they were to give birth to Jesus, it doesn't sound like they had all of the details.
- In no way does it seem that God gave them specific dates and times and instructions for how His will was to be done in the birth of Jesus.

Mary and Joseph were entrusted with the birth of the Son of God—the most important birth in history.

- ... yet it seemed that it all occurred without them being prepared for it any more so than any other couple on earth giving birth.
- I think we can learn from this that God doesn't always give step-by-step instructions for following His will for our life.
- But He is always there, through it all, as we lean on Him and follow the path, we'll later see that He laid out.

(Vs) Jeremiah 29:11-13 NIV – “For I know the plans I have for you,” declares the Lord, “plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future. Then you will call on me and come and pray to me, and I will listen to you. You will seek me and find me when you seek me with all your heart.”

GOD'S PLAN DOESN'T ALWAYS LOOK LIKE OUR PLAN.

- God had a specific plan and a purpose, but He didn't reveal it all to Mary and Joseph.
- I think this is because if we buy into a plan before a purpose, we may fail before we even get started.
- If God had told Mary and Joseph the exact conditions, they would be bringing their child into, they may have become overwhelmed by their adversity rather than trusting God.

“God will do the impossible through us, but the impossible is often beyond what our eyes can see, our ears can hear, and our minds can grasp.”

I firmly believe that if we pursue God's purpose, the impossible will become possible and His plan will become our plan...

- The manger was the birthplace of the greatest plan ever set into motion.
- It's a plan that continues to this day, and it's a plan we have all been invited to participate in.

(Vs) John 3:16,17 - "For God so loved the world, that He gave His only Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have eternal life. For God did not send His Son into the world to condemn the world, but in order that the world might be saved through Him."

That said... Have you ever considered that?

"God had at the birth of His son exactly who He wanted there."

- That He was saying exactly what He wanted to say through these specific witnesses... Allow me to explain...

All throughout the Bible...

- Darkness is often used to describe the things of this world...

(Vs) John 3:19 - "And this is the judgment: the light has come into the world, and people loved the darkness rather than the light because their works were evil."

- Likewise, light is used to describe Jesus...

(Vs) John 8:12 - "Again Jesus spoke to them, saying, "I am the light of the world. Whoever follows me will not walk in darkness but will have the light of life."

- Here's what I'm saying... The Nativity story is a picture of this!
- But we have to stop romanticizing the Nativity Scene in order to clearly see it.

The Nativity Scene is a Beautiful Collision...

- It's a picture of Light colliding into Darkness... Of Holiness colliding into Humanity...
 - ◆ Busy Inn & Inn Keeper - The Distracted.
 - ◆ Common Animals - The Overlooked
 - ◆ Teenage Mother - The Afraid
 - ◆ Failing Father - The Insecure
 - ◆ Poor Shepherds - The Marginalized
 - ◆ Traveling Wisemen - The Searching

It's all of these that first gave witness to the newborn child's cry that forever pierced the darkness on that Silent Night...