

4. Even with good evidence for the birth, life, death, and resurrection of Jesus, we must still have faith. Why?

5. Read John 1:14. What does it mean that Jesus “pitched his tent” among us? What does your answer to this question mean for your life?

SERMON APPLICATION GUIDE

Advent 2022
“Based on a True Story”
Matthew 1:18-25

1. The gospel accounts are based on a true story.

Matthew 1:18-20: 18 This is how the birth of Jesus the Messiah came about: His mother Mary was pledged to be married to Joseph, but before they came together, she was found to be pregnant through the Holy Spirit. **19** Because Joseph her husband was faithful to the law, and yet did not want to expose her to public disgrace, he had in mind to divorce her quietly. **20** But after he had considered this, an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream and said, “Joseph son of David, do not be afraid to take Mary home as your wife, because what is conceived in her is from the Holy Spirit.

“The idea that Jesus did not exist is a modern notion. It has no ancient precedents. It was made up in the eighteenth century. One might as well call it a modern myth, the myth of the mythical Jesus.” —Bart D. Ehrman

2. Jesus will save his people from....

Matthew 1:21 She will give birth to a son, and you are to give him the name Jesus, because he will save his people from _____ .

Hebrews 11:6 And without faith it is impossible to please God, because anyone who comes to him must believe that he exists and that he rewards those who earnestly seek him.

3. They will call him "GOD WITH US."

Matthew 1:22-25 All this took place to fulfill what the Lord had said through the prophet: **23** "The virgin will conceive and give birth to a son, and they will call him "Immanuel" (which means "God with us"). **24** When Joseph woke up, he did what the angel of the Lord had commanded him and took Mary home as his wife. **25** But he did not consummate their marriage until she gave birth to a son. And he gave him the name Jesus.

Personal Reflection & Small Group Questions

Please complete this study on your own, then bring it to your small group for discussion.

1. Looking back over your notes from this week's sermon, what particularly caught your attention, challenged, or confused you?
2. Why does it matter that the birth, life, death, and resurrection of Jesus are real, historical events? What if the stories about Jesus were made-up, mean to teach good morals?
3. What are sins and why must we be saved from them?