

MADNESS & THE MANGER



Madness & the Manger

Rarely is our Experience – ‘All is Calm, All is Bright’

- preparations, celebrations, people & time
- loss, loneliness, stress on relationships

Pressure and madness surrounding our season



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1. Identifying the 'Madness'

a) Commercialism

b) Hollywood idealism

c) Expectations we Embrace

- family time & events
- gifts and responses
- feelings and holiday time

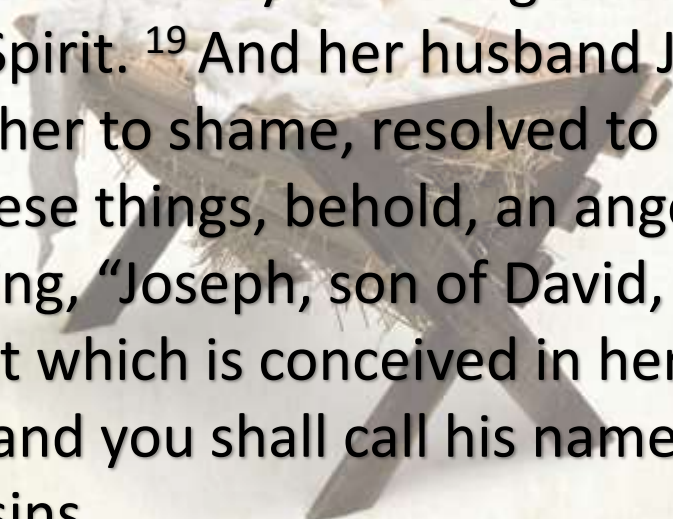


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2. First Christmas 'Madness'

a) Pre-marital pregnancy & difficult decisions – Matthew 1:18-25

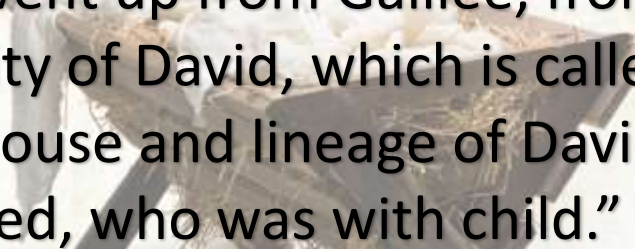
¹⁸ Now the birth of Jesus Christ took place in this way. When his mother Mary had been betrothed to Joseph, before they came together she was found to be with child from the Holy Spirit. ¹⁹ And her husband Joseph, being a just man and unwilling to put her to shame, resolved to divorce her quietly. ²⁰ 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.



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b) unplanned detours – Luke 2:1-6

“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. 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.”



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c) Stable birth – Luke 2:6-7

“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.”

- no prepared place, no family, no support



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3. God Moments in the 'Madness'

a) Angels Visit – Luke 1:26-38

In the sixth month the angel Gabriel was sent from God to a city of Galilee named Nazareth, ²⁷ to a virgin betrothed to a man whose name was Joseph, of the house of David. And the virgin's name was Mary. ²⁸ And he came to her and said, "Greetings, O favored one, the Lord is with you!" ²⁹ But she was greatly troubled at the saying, and tried to discern what sort of greeting this might be. ³⁰ And the angel said to her, "Do not be afraid, Mary, for you have found favor with God. ³¹ And behold, you will conceive in your womb and bear a son, and you shall call his name Jesus. ³² He will be great and will be called the Son of the Most High.

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And the Lord God will give to him the throne of his father David,
³³ and he will reign over the house of Jacob forever, and of his kingdom there will be no end.”

³⁴ And Mary said to the angel, “How will this be, since I am a virgin?”

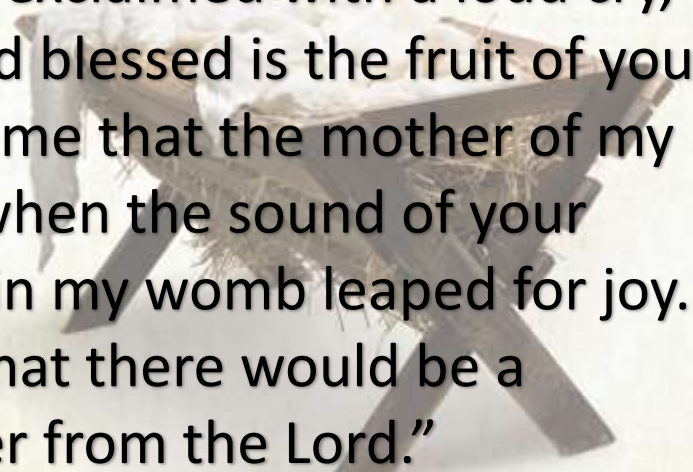
³⁵ And the angel answered her, “The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you; therefore the child to be born will be called holy—the Son of God.

³⁶ And behold, your relative Elizabeth in her old age has also conceived a son, and this is the sixth month with her who was called barren. ³⁷ For nothing will be impossible with God.” ³⁸ And Mary said, “Behold, I am the servant of the Lord; let it be to me according to your word.” And the angel departed from her.

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b) Elizabeth's Greeting – Luke 1:39-45

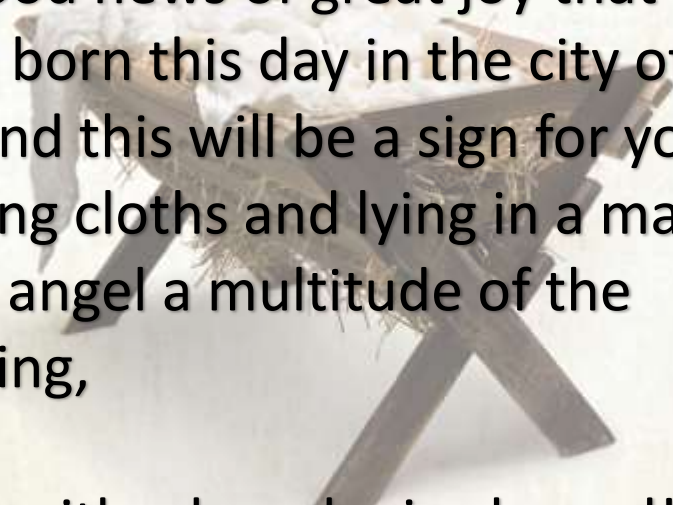
“In those days Mary arose and went with haste into the hill country, to a town in Judah, ⁴⁰ and she entered the house of Zechariah and greeted Elizabeth. ⁴¹ And when Elizabeth heard the greeting of Mary, the baby leaped in her womb. And Elizabeth was filled with the Holy Spirit, ⁴² and she exclaimed with a loud cry, “Blessed are you among women, and blessed is the fruit of your womb! ⁴³ And why is this granted to me that the mother of my Lord should come to me? ⁴⁴ For behold, when the sound of your greeting came to my ears, the baby in my womb leaped for joy. ⁴⁵ And blessed is she who believed that there would be a fulfillment of what was spoken to her from the Lord.”

A small, rustic manger scene is positioned in the lower right quadrant of the slide. It features a wooden manger filled with straw, containing a small baby figure. A brown cow and a grey donkey are standing nearby, looking towards the manger. The scene is set against a light, textured background.

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c) Shepherds Visit – Luke 2:8-20

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 among those with whom he is pleased!”



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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. 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. ²⁰ And the shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all they had heard and seen, as it had been told them.

- made known – vs.17

- treasured up and pondered – vs. 18

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4. Looking for Manger Moments in the Madness

a) Perspective Check

- how am I viewing my circumstances
- am I looking for manger moments showing

Gods care

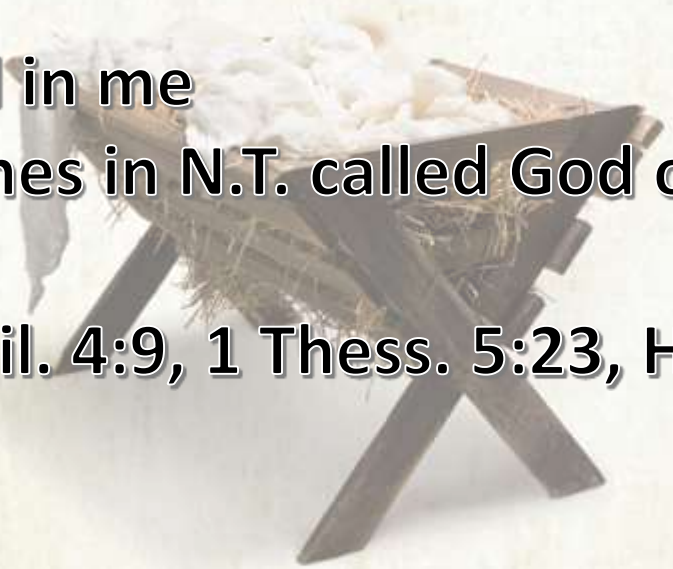
b) Promise of God Renewed in me

- peace on earth – 5 times in N.T. called God of

Peace

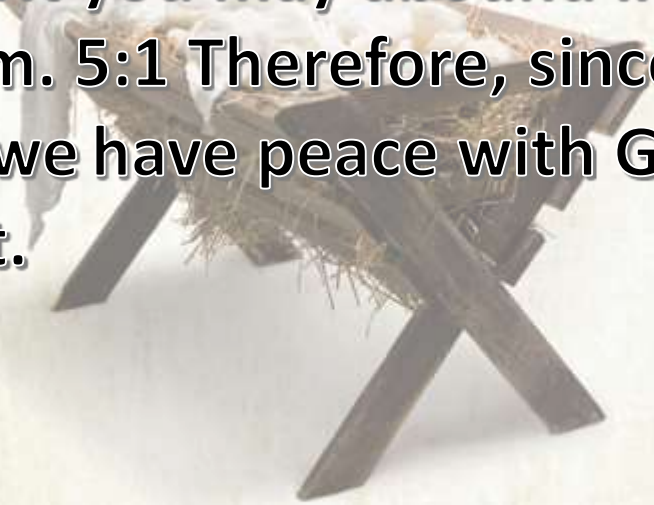
- Rom. 15:13, 16:20, Phil. 4:9, 1 Thess. 5:23, Heb.

13:20



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- Jesus words – gives us His peace – John 14:27
- Jesus called our peace – Eph. 2:14
- Key to the how – Rom. 15:13 ¹³ May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, so that by the power of the Holy Spirit you may abound in hope.
- Peace with God – Rom. 5:1 Therefore, since we have been justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ.

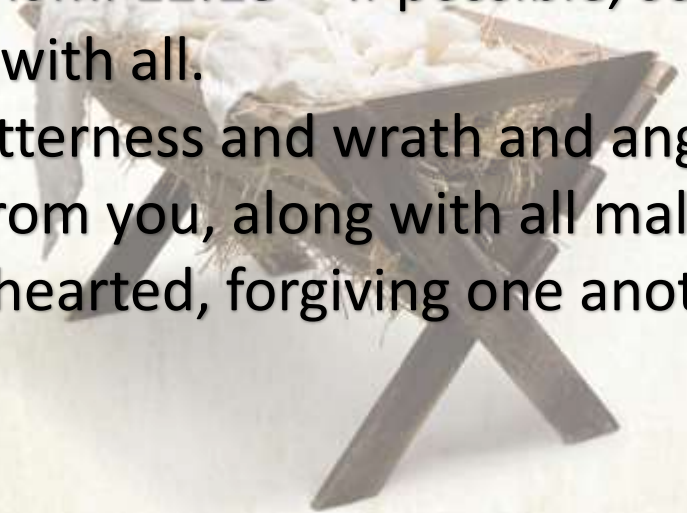


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- **Peace with Ourselves** – Phil. 4:6-7 ⁶ do not be anxious about anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God. ⁷ And the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.

- **Peace with Others** – Rom. 12:18 ¹⁸ If possible, so far as it depends on you, live peaceably with all.

- Eph. 4:31-32 - ³¹ Let all bitterness and wrath and anger and clamor and slander be put away from you, along with all malice.
³² Be kind to one another, tender-hearted, forgiving one another, as God in Christ forgave you.



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c) Preparing to Glorify God

- time
- heart
- bringing meaning to the madness



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So What?

1. Set aside expectations brought by others and our world

2. Prepare Well

- adjust your time and perspective

3. Embrace Manger Moments

- mark & celebrate the care of God in your life and

season



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