WOODVALE
PENTECOSTAL CHURCH

Connect Group Sermon Aligned Notes

Sermon Title: 'Why That Place?' From the Christmas Series-Part 4 of 4
Key Scripture: Luke 2:1-12
Recorded Sermon: www.woodvale.ca/pastservices/christmas-series-2023
Date + Speaker: December 17, 2023; Pastor Mark Scarr

The BIG IDEA (the suggested 'take away' for this study derived from the sermon):
The 'When' and the 'Where' of our lives matter. God's intentions are specific and important, not random or thoughtless. There are no 'happy accidents' in the Kingdom of Heaven. Be encouraged because God is at work 'behind the scenes' in your insignificantly significant life. (Bethlehem, Stable, Manger)

Starter Question:
1. The definition of 'a coincidence' is - a remarkable concurrence of events or circumstances without apparent causal connection. Share with the CG an example of this type of occurrence from your life. Today, we will examine a story whose details may appear coincidental but were, in fact, put in motion from the beginning of time by God (providence).

Discussion Questions to Review (observation):
2. READ the key scripture in its entirety. Collect and share data from these verses that answer 'When' and 'Where' and 'Who'?
3. Now READ Isaiah 7:14, Psalm 72:9 (desert tribes =shepherds) and Micah 5:2. What connections do you observe between these verses and the ones read in Question 2?
4. What else from these passages or the sermon drew your attention or evoked a strong emotional response and why?

Discussion Questions for Digging Deeper (interpretation and application):
5. Reread Luke 2:4 and Micah 5:2 and read Exodus 25:30 (AMP), and John 6:30-35. Discuss how the location of Jesus' birth (house of bread) and the references to bread from one of the first books of the Bible until Jesus' mortal life are significant. What might this mean for your life?
6. Providence = the protective guidance and care of God. Reread Luke 2:1-6 How would you describe the difference between something being considered a coincidence versus providence? What significance does this have in a Christian's life?
7. Reread verses 7, 8 and 12 of Luke 2. Read Phil 2:6-8. How is poverty highlighted here? [no guest room, baby is placed in a manger or feeding trough] Jesus wasn't born in a palace (as one might imagine a KING, or LORD or SAVIOUR might be) Read Luke 2:10 Why is this really good news? Where are you experiencing need or lack? How does seeing the full picture and reviewing the circumstances around Jesus' birth give you hope?

8. Prayer point: God has been, is and will continue to be at work behind the scenes AND in obvious ways in ALL of our lives. Pray for the needs expressed and consider ending by praying the Lord's Prayer (Matthew 6:9-13) together.