

Fact, Fiction and the Birth of Christ

by Charles Pugh III

Much attention is given at this season to the birth of Jesus Christ. We need to examine what we hear in light of what the Bible actually teaches (cf. Acts 17:11). We need to separate fact from fiction.

It is a fact Jesus of Nazareth lived on the earth. The earthly existence of Jesus is as certain as any historical fact.

It is a fact Jesus was born of a virgin, Mary, in Bethlehem and laid in a manger (Luke 2:1-7).

It is a fact that the birth of Jesus was announced by an angel to shepherds watching their flock at night (Luke 2:8-14). They went to Bethlehem immediately and found the baby in a manger (Luke 2:15-16).

It is a fact wise men came from the east to Jerusalem to inquire about the birth of the "King of the Jews". They were guided by a star in the east and when they came to the child, they worshipped Him and gave Him gifts: gold, frankincense and myrrh (Matt. 2:11).

It is fiction to say the Bible says there were three wise men and that the wise men came to the stable. The Bible **does not** say how many wise men came. The Bible also says they came into a **house** to see Jesus (Matt. 2:11). Jesus was at least 40 days old when the wise men arrived (Luke 2:22; Lev.12:2-7; Matt. 2:13-14).

It is fiction that any man knows Jesus was born on December 25th, or that the Bible says anything about the New Testament church celebrating any date as Jesus' birth.

Have a nice holiday season. Enjoy the innocent customs of the season. But make sure when it comes to the doctrine of the birth of Christ that your attitude is like that of Jack Webb in the old Dragnet TV series. His motto was: "**Just the facts ... Just the facts!**"

- Chester Bulletin archives

The Rest of the Story

*We are wont to sing of shepherds
And the heavenly glory bright,
Of angels and their message
On that peaceful holy night.*

*But so oft we end the story
When 'tis only just begun,
For we fail to give the message
That this child is God the Son.*

*Here to give Himself a ransom,
Crucified on Calvary's tree,
Through His blood providing pardon,
Perfect cleansing, full and free.*

*And the tomb, thank God, is empty;
Jesus sits at God's right hand
Now a loving, mighty Savior;
Spread the news to every land!*

- L. W. Beckley -

God's blessings to all for this season and in the new year.

News & Notes

SCHEDULE OF SERVICES: *Sunday:* Bible Study, 9:30 a.m.; Worship, 10:30 a.m., 5:30 p.m. *Wednesday:* Bible Study, 7:00 p.m.

FACE COVERINGS REQUIRED: By request of our Elders, for **EVERYONE** in **ALL** of our assemblies regardless of where seated.

CONGRATULATIONS: To **Creston & Casandra (Miskimen) Holava** on their marriage last **Saturday, Dec. 11th**. Best wishes to them for many years of happiness together.

DONATIONS FOR TORNADO VICTIMS: Monetary donations are being taken through next **Wednesday, Dec. 22nd** to aid those affected by the recent devastating tornadoes in Kentucky and other states. Give your donations (cash or checks) to one of the elders. Funds will be sent to the Churches of Christ Disaster Relief Effort in Nashville, TN to purchase supplies, which will then be trucked to and distributed by local churches of Christ in the affected areas.

MEN'S BIBLE STUDY: Each **Tuesday** at **7:00 p.m.**

NEW YEAR'S BREAKFAST: **Sat., Jan. 1, 2022, 9:00 a.m.**, Fellowship Bldg. All invited. Sign-up sheet on the desk in the foyer. Our brothers will be cooking.

PANTRY: Pancake mix & syrup.

PICTURE GALLERY OF PAST MEMBERS: Submit pictures (black and white or color) to David Malcomson.

PRAYERS & CARDS REQUESTED: **Claudette Miller**. We rejoice that God has blessed Claudette in a continuing recovery and she will be returning to her home in the next week. Her address: 362 Arroyo Village Road, New Cumberland, WV 26047.

Jean Varrato (Jason Wright's aunt). Her address: 5395 Ottawa Road, Lima, OH 45805

SICK & SHUT-IN: Claudette Miller. **AT HOME:** Debbie Waite-covid, Melissa Rosohac-covid, Tim Adkins, Bob Riley, Jim Hadley, Marilyn Miller, Randy Beagle, Barb DeLong, David McCoy, Marlene Evans, Russell Martin, Emma Rine, Rick Beck. **IN FLORIDA:** Ilene Rayl.

"Be Of Good Cheer"

One thing in life is certain: we all have our share of pain, difficulty and suffering. Bad things happen, and they often happen to good people. Age, disease, and sickness seek to destroy our health. Family problems often threaten to destroy the lives and souls of those we love most dearly. Such problems, along with financial strain, job-related stress, and the everyday challenges of everyday life seem to be like Jesus' description of the poor — "With us always" (Mark 14:7).

This, though, should not surprise us. Didn't Jesus warn, "*In the world you shall have tribulation*" (John 16:33).

We can be thankful that Jesus didn't conclude His thought on that somber note, but continued by promising, "*but be of good cheer; I have overcome the world*" (John 16:33).

No problem, no catastrophe, no sorrow is larger than our God. And God, who "*cannot lie*" (Titus 1:2), has promised to help His own. "*God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble*" (Psalm 46:1).

The question is not "Does God care?" He does. The real problem that each one must answer is "Do I believe what God has promised?"

♦ Dalton Key, *Bulletin Digest*