

Christmas

Monday, 12/21/09 – Read Luke 2:1-5

My Observations _____

A Question to Answer: Great spiritual breakthroughs typically involve a long and arduous journey. This was true also of the birth of Jesus. The Christ was born into the world after his parents completed the journey from Nazareth to Bethlehem -- on foot -- and with Mary in the last days of her pregnancy. ... When have you gone on a spiritual journey? Maybe it wasn't even a geographical journey, or maybe it was. Maybe it was an educational course -- or a regimen of physical therapy -- or a process of personal transformation to get free of an addiction -- or a pattern of spiritual practice aimed at a deeper relationship with God. What has been your journey? What was the outcome? Would you say that the Christ was born again for you at the end of your journey?

Tuesday, 12/22/09 – Read Luke 2:6-7

My Observations: _____

A Question to Answer: After his birth, Jesus' mother placed him in a manger, a feeding trough for animals. Can you imagine? The very Word of God, entering this world as a helpless infant ... and placed in a manger! ... How do you think of God? As an overpowering tyrannical judge? As an impersonal cosmic force? ... Just imagine: the God of all that is arriving among us as a helpless infant, placed in a manger. ... If you were to take this seriously, how would you have to revise your understanding of God? Or said another way: what does the birth of Jesus tell us about who God really is?

Wednesday, 12/23/09 – Read Luke 2:8-12

My Observations: _____

A Question to Answer: The angels announced the birth of the savior ... to shepherds! Shepherds were low-class workers. They were frowned upon by the elite because they were dirty, uneducated, incapable of holding a real job. ... It was to these that the angels appeared. ... When you encounter those doing menial work, what attitude do you have about them? ... Next time you are served by someone doing a menial job, remember the shepherds and say to yourself: it was just to such a person as this that the angels sang and announced Jesus' birth. ... How would that change the way you look at that person?

Thursday, 12/24/09 – Read Luke 2:13-14

My Observations: _____

A Question to Answer: Try to imagine it: the sky filled with brilliant, blinding light. And dancing in that light are the angels of God -- God's own messengers. And then you hear them sing -- a song so beautiful that it takes away your breath, so beautiful that the tears well up in your eyes. When God appears, when the angels sing, the human is stunned by beauty. ... Picture it. Imagine it. Let the beauty of the angels wash over you.

Friday, 12/25/09 – Read Luke 2:15-20

My Observations: _____

A Question to Answer: The shepherds were down-to-earth, practical people. They didn't get distracted by abstract speculations. They didn't sit around on the hillside trying to figure it all out. They said to one another: "Let's go see. Let's check it out!" ... Do you sometimes need more of the shepherd's attitude? Do you sometimes need to move beyond speculation and argumentation and wondering ... and just go

see? ... Christmas proclaims the birth of the Christ. We sing the songs. We delight in the decorations. All good things. But do we need to move beyond and go check it out? ,, How might we do that? The angels proclaimed that the savior had been born. Check that out. Live today, tomorrow, this week trusting that your savior has come and that you are right with God -- really! ... Check it out, test it.

Saturday, 12/26/09 – Read John 1:1-18

My Observations: _____

A Question to Answer: The gospel of John celebrates the Word of God -- God's own self-expression, present with God from the beginning. And John's gospel claims that this Word of God has become flesh and lived among us. ... God's intention is to enter into the world of human living. God's intention, begun in Jesus, is to live in you -- to be "en-fleshed" in you. ... Will you open the door? Will you welcome God in? Will you allow God to live in you and through you? In your prayer today, talk with God about your readiness -- and about your resistance.

Sunday, 12/27/09 – Read Isaiah 11:1-9

My Observations: _____

A Question to Answer: The Hebrew prophets, like Isaiah, spoke of a time when God would set everything right -- that life would finally work the way we know it's supposed to. ... And Isaiah connects this with the leading of a little child (verse 6). ... If you were to reclaim the child in you, if you were to allow the holy Christ child to live and play in you, what would that be like? What would you do differently today -- if you were to let the little child take the lead in your activities? Will you do that today -- at least a little bit?

My Faith Journal, December 20, 2009

Advent 4

Sisterhood of Motherhood

What do I hear God saying to me today?

What action do I intend to take this week?

Each day this week, take a few minutes. Begin with PRAYER. Then READ through the Bible passage indicated on the inside of this guide. WRITE down your own thoughts, reactions, observations. ANSWER THE QUESTION to begin connecting the Bible with your life. Use additional paper or your own notebook if you need more space to write.