

## Christmas Stump the Pastor—Part 1

### I. The What, When, & Where of Christmas:

#### a. Why do we use the term Christmas when it is not in the Bible?

- i. 1038 AD = Christmas = *Cristes Maesse* = "Christ's Mass" or "the Mass of Christ"

#### b. When was Jesus born since the flocks were grazing and that would happen in spring even though we traditionally celebrate Christmas December 25<sup>th</sup>?

- i. The Year = 6-4 BC = Herod the Great died 4 BC
- ii. The Month = December = 155-220 AD = Tertullian = Conception & Death March 25<sup>th</sup> & Birth December 25<sup>th</sup>
  1. September = Zacharias' priestly service in June
  2. March to November = Sheep sheltered during winter

#### c. Why is Christmas Celebrated on December 25<sup>th</sup>?

- i. Early church thought Jesus was born and died on the same day; the anniversary of Creation, March 25<sup>th</sup>
- ii. Saturnalia = a Festival from December 17<sup>th</sup> to 24<sup>th</sup>
- iii. Sol Invictus = "Invincible Sun" held on December 25<sup>th</sup>

#### d. When did we start Jesus' birth celebration in December?

- i. 235 AD = Hippolytus of Rome
- ii. 336 AD = Philocian Calendar

#### e. Were there really "inns" when Jesus was born?

- i. *inn* = *kataluma* (κατάλυμα) = "a place for the lodging of travelers" or "a guest room" (Luke 2:7; 10:34; 22:11)

### II. The Historicity of Christmas:

#### a. If the Gospel writers (Matthew, Mark, Luke, John) were the same age as Jesus or younger, where did they get their information about Jesus' birth?

- i. 3 of the 4 Gospel writers were eyewitnesses of Jesus' earthly ministry (cf. Luke 1:1-4; 46-55)
- ii. All 4 Gospel writers were Inspired by the Holy Spirit (cf. 2 Tim. 3:16-17; 1 Peter 1:20-21)

### III. The What, When, & How of Advent:

#### a. What is Advent?

- i. Advent = "arrival" or "appearing"

- ii. A Season of Preparation and Reflection focused on Jesus' Appearing that runs from the 4<sup>th</sup> Sunday before Christmas to Christmas Eve.

#### b. What is the history of Advent? & Where did the tradition of Advent come from?

- i. 380 AD. Council of Sargossa = attend church everyday from December 17<sup>th</sup> to 29<sup>th</sup>
- ii. 567 AD. Council of Tours = official Advent Fasting & 4 Sundays before Christmas
  1. 2 weeks of preparation for Jesus' 2<sup>nd</sup> Coming in Judgment
  2. 2 weeks of preparation for Jesus' 1<sup>st</sup> Coming in Humility

#### c. What key principles and practices should we take from this time of reflection? & How should we, as Christians, celebrate Advent today?

- i. You are FREE in Christ to either celebrate Advent or not
- ii. Suggestions: Advent Calendar, Decorations, Devotional, Reading Plan, Advent Wreath, Christmas Hymns, Prayer & Fasting
- iii. Principles that Regulate our Worship:
  1. Your Heart Motivation \_\_\_\_\_
  2. Your Worship is Biblically \_\_\_\_\_
  3. For the \_\_\_\_\_  
(cf. 1 Cor. 10:31; Col. 3:17; 23-24)

### IV. The 12 Days of Christmas:

#### a. Why are there 12 days of Christmas & When is the 12 Days of Christmas

- i. The 12 Days of Christmas (Christmastide & Yuletide) begin Christmas morning and run until January 5<sup>th</sup>; the day of Epiphany (the day the Magi's arrival is celebrated; aka. Three Kings Day, The Feast of the Nativity, & Twelfth Day)
- ii. 567 AD Council of Tours
- iii. 1780 *Mirth Without Mischief*

### V. The Son of God & of Man

- a. **Since it was Mary and Joseph who had Jesus, does that mean He is the Son of God and Joseph?**
  - i. No = Joseph had no part in Jesus' conception (cf. Luke 1:34-35ff; Matt. 1:24-25)
  - ii. Yes = Joseph was Jesus' Dad who raised Him like his own
- b. **Why is Jesus called "the Son of Man" when He is God's Son and we are His children?**
  - i. In the Old Testament the term "son of man" was often used to describe a human man; highlighting his humanity compared to God's holiness (90 times for Ezekiel)
  - ii. Jesus calls Himself "THE Son of Man" to connect Him with Daniel's prophecy (cf. Dan. 7:13-14) and to highlight that He is both fully God and fully man.

## VI. The Incarnation:

- a. **Why was the Incarnation necessary?**
  - i. So He Could \_\_\_\_\_  
(cf. John 1:1-2; Col. 1:15-17)
  - ii. So He Could \_\_\_\_\_  
(Heb. 4:15)
  - iii. So He Could \_\_\_\_\_  
(cf. John 1:29; Rom. 5:19; Heb. 10:10; 2:17-18)