

Out of the Ordinary: Part 2- The Most Boring Christmas Ever.

Luke 2:1-7

I. ME

- A. Welcome / Online / So What About?
- B. Video Follow-up: Sometimes the smallest annoyances can ruin everything.

II. WE

- A. It doesn't take much to ruin our day / moment does it?
- B. You do the best you can to get through each day...
 - 1. Get up on time, don't yell at your kids / spouse / dog too much, go to work (do enough to not get fired), go home, have dinner, go to bed.
 - 2. That's a good day.
 - 3. No one died, you stayed married, the house isn't falling down, your kids aren't too scarred.
- C. But life never just stays plain and routine...
 - 1. Kid gets sick, car problems, in-law issues, dog throws up, you see your credit statement...
 - 2. There goes your day, week, month.

3. Life often seems to be a boring routine interrupted by frequent annoyances

- D. So we do what we can to not rock the boat... keep our head down... just get through and try to avoid as much pain as possible.
 - 1. Like race cars driving through a wreck.
 - 2. Mario Cart or Dodge Ball
 - 3. BUT...

E. When our main goal is to avoid pain... life becomes plain and mundane.

- 1. Work becomes monotonous
 - 2. Marriage becomes routine and passionless
 - 3. Hobbies become momentary distractions
 - 4. We never do more than just the bare minimum it takes to survive.
- F. But what if there is more going on behind the scenes than we know?
- 1. But we miss it b/c we are trying so hard to avoid pain and problems that we never actually live?
 - 2. We miss it b/c we resist it.
 - 3. BUT...

4. What if the annoyances are opportunities?

- 5. Opportunities to break out of the ordinary?
- G. Perfect example is in the story of the birth of Jesus.

III. GOD (Luke 2:1-7)

A. Luke- 60 AD

B. Birth of Jesus

- 1. One of the most boring sections of Luke's entire work
- 2. One reason I believe it's true... it's just so ordinary and plain
- 3. And it's full of simple annoyances you wouldn't make up

4. If someone was going to make up a story about the Chosen One born to save humanity coming to earth they would spice it up a bit.
5. **Hercules**- Step mom Goddess sending snakes to attack him
6. **Athena**- born out of Zeus' head after he swallowed her mother.
7. But this story is just so ordinary.
8. And instead of "Once Upon a Time" Luke starts it off talking about the most annoying thing... **taxes.**

C. V. 1-3

1. Worse than the beginning of SW Episode 1
2. Caesar Augustus, son of Julius Caesar's favorite niece.
3. Ruled as first emperor from 27 BC to AD 14
4. One of his great accomplishments was improving the empire's monetary and tax system.
5. Part of which was getting an accurate count of the people in the empire.
6. Had three major census and a smaller one done in 3 BC to celebrate the 25th year of his reign and the 750th anniversary of the founding of Rome.
7. Rome, being a smart empire, let locals keep a lot of their traditions.
8. Jews were very tied to their tribes and so most likely people would go to their ancestral home to register.
9. Isn't that boring?
10. Buckle up.

D. V. 4-5

1. Journey of about 80 miles... 7-10 Days
2. And it's just such a plain story that we've tried to add things to it.
3. We picture sweet Mary riding serenely on a donkey gently holding her belly.
4. While Joseph calmly and bravely leads the way
5. These two holy people on a lonely and majestic journey.
6. **Reality**- You ever try to drive somewhere with a very pregnant wife for longer than 10 hrs?
7. That's a lot of bathroom breaks.
8. There are no rest stops... that's squatting on the side of the road stuff.
9. Donkeys don't have seat warmers or lumbar support.
10. And there's no way they are travelling alone... to dangerous... so privacy or personal time to reflect on the majesty of what's about to transpire.
11. What would you and I be doing... COMPLAINING.
12. There's more

E. V. 6-7

1. Again so plain that we've added stuff.
2. There's no lamb and ox keeping time with some homeless kid and his drum
3. There's no victory over some selfish innkeeper.
4. Just a plain old 1st century birth probably in some cave.

5. Plain old 1st century birth? Not pretty.
 6. Is this how you write a story of God coming to earth to fulfill a promise to save humanity?
 7. Only if it's actually what happened.
 8. It's just so painfully ordinary and annoying,
 9. Taxes, donkeys, pregnant bladders, mangers.
 - 10. The ordinary will always eclipse the extraordinary if we let it.**
- F. See behind all of it... there was something more going on...
1. This was all part of God's mind-blowing plan to save the world.
 2. 700 years earlier God had told his people through the Jewish prophet Micah... **Micah 5:2.**
 3. God used all of this to bring about the central climax of all human history...
 4. Jesus (God the Son) coming in human form to offer forgiveness and eternal life to all of humanity.
- G. Mary and Joseph had a choice to make...
- H. They could have complained about the whole thing... missed all of it.
1. They could have focused on the ordinary and missed the amazing
 2. **Complaining about the ordinary is the best way to miss the extraordinary.**

- I. They could have compared their story to others'
 1. Elizabeth's story
 2. J the B announced at the temple
 3. Celebrated as a miracle by everyone
 4. All over Instagram
 5. While M and J are probably ridiculed, far from home, dealing with everything they have had to go through to get there.
 6. Or Pagan Caesar making US, the parents of the rightful King, have to go out of our way and have a baby in this dirty cave.
 7. Could have easy said, "this is unfair" and missed the beauty of the moment.

8. When you compare, life always seems unfair.

- J. Instead of complaining or comparing... they accepted their story and trusted that God was working behind the scenes.
1. If God had this baby happen, and allowed Caesar to call for this census then we will go along and trust him to take care of it.
 2. They could have resisted it all... but instead they trusted and experienced the most ordinary and annoying of circumstances turning into the most extraordinary story ever told.

K. God uses the ordinary to create the extraordinary.

IV. YOU

- A. It's the same for you
 - 1. God is working behind the scenes for you.
- B. We think life is just an ordinary routine dotted by annoying problems
 - 1. So we either complain and compare and become more miserable
 - 2. OR.....
- C. We try to change the circumstances... we try to fix it.
 - 1. And make choices that end up hurting ourselves and others.
 - 2. Maybe a new job with fix it, new car, house, spouse, new church.
 - 3. Those just get boring and routine too.
 - 4. So now not only are you stuck in the same ordinary cycle
 - 5. You've left a trail of guilt and pain behind us with nothing to show for it.
- D. But it's really all about trust and perspective
 - 1. Can we trust that God is FOR us?
 - 2. If so then we gain perspective... we begin to see the annoyances as opportunities.
 - 3. This is where the ordinary becomes the extraordinary.
 - 4. My job history

- E. Jesus says there another option other than complaining, comparing or trying to fix the situation ourselves...
 - 1. A better option... the reason he was born in Bethlehem and died on the cross...

1. John 10:10

- 2. Jesus came to give us life... for eternity and abundant, extraordinary life now... Not easy life... but extraordinary.
- 3. Not obeying all the rules and living a life so boring that God won't get mad at you.
- 4. But a full / purposeful life... knowing that God is FOR you and trusting that he knows what he is doing.
- 5. Maybe a full/abundant life means growth / gain from every circumstance?
- 6. Wouldn't that be a full/abundant life... WIN /Win all the time!

F. What are you missing because you're resisting?

- 1. What is God trying to do behind the scenes in your life?
- 2. What aren't we seeing b/c we're too distracted with the ordinary annoying problems?
- 3. So instead of complaining or comparing what if we trusted and watched?
- 4. What if we trusted that he is doing something that we might not understand and just watched for our part to play?
- 5. Every day is another part of the journey in God's plan.
- 6. It's an opportunity to step out of the ordinary and experience the extraordinary in the midst of it all.

G. What's your part?

1. Starts with TRUST

2. To find your extraordinary ask... What does trust look like right now?

H. Start with trusting that God loves you and cares about you.

1. Just like M and J- God has orchestrated your life to bring you to where you are right now...

2. And he's using the stuff of our daily lives to show us his love and care...

3. That's extraordinary... that's the full/abundant life!

4. Maybe even to hear this truth... God loved you so much that he died for you and offers you eternal life simply by trusting him.

V. WE

A. SO what if instead of letting the ordinary annoying problems ruin are daily routine...

B. We saw our lives as opportunities to be loved by our heavenly father and share that love with others?

C. Each annoyance is another step on a journey that is being orchestrated from behind the scenes... to bring you right where God wants you to be?

D. Trust and Watch

E. God's greatest work is often done in the most ordinary ways.