

Christmas Day Sermon: Luke 2:10-12: "Christmas Signs"

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Intro: Christmas is the season for signs.

- Discount signs.
- Bad spelling signs.
- Warning signs.
- And even church signs.

There are the signs of lights all over the place. "Santa stop here" signs, Christmas catalogues full of gift ideas, stockings hung up, Christmas Cards, food everywhere! Wrapping paper everywhere –

- Christmas is a big show with lots of signs!

It's hard to miss that it's Christmas in our society. And perhaps that's what a lot of people love about Christmas. It's over the top. And perhaps that's what some people hate about Christmas – it's over the top. Too much work. Too commercial. Too much drinking. Too much money. Too many decorations and lights.

- The first Christmas was a BIG show!

Here are the Shepherds in Luke 2. Looking after the sheep. Minding their own business. When the angel of the Lord appeared to them. Big Angel. Scary angel. Shining brightly, and saying "Don't be afraid". And then a whole heavenly host of angels appears! Who knows how many a great company is? Maybe hundreds or thousands or tens of thousands! Is this the Christmas sign for the shepherds? Is this why angels have become Christmas decorations?

And an angel appeared to Joseph. An angel appeared to Mary. An angel appeared to Zechariah, John the Baptist's Father, the cousin of Jesus.

Or what about Matthew 2 - the star appeared for the Magi, the wise men. They followed the star. Is this star the sign of Christmas? Is that why we have it on our trees?

There's the gold and frankincense and Myrrh of the wise men. Are these signs of Christmas? The first Christmas gifts?

We remember these signs because they mean something. They remind us of the amazing story of Christmas. But they are signs that point to the greatest sign, the reality of Christmas. The angels, the wise men, the shepherds, the star – where do they all point? Where do they all end up heading?

- *“This will be a sign to you: you will find a baby wrapped in cloths and lying in a manger.” (verse 12)*

Here is the Christmas sign – the birth of the savior. Big glowing angels. A special star in the sky. But the real sign is this: a baby in cloths in a manger.

- **III** – I wonder if you’ve worked out how much Christmas has cost you this year?

Financially - \$100?! \$1000? More? Less?

What about relationships? Have they been made better or worse over Christmas?

What about time? How much time has it cost you?

What about your mental health? Are you happier? Or more depressed? Are you tired? Stronger?

Christmas does cost us. In many ways.

But the greatest cost is God’s. God sent his Son into the world.

- *“Today in the town of David, a Saviour has been born to you; he is Christ the Lord. THIS will be a sign to you: you will find a baby wrapped in cloths and lying in a manger.”*

Today in the town of David – a prophecy told for thousands of years through God’s prophets, a Saviour has been born. A Saviour. One who saves. Born to YOU. Born for YOU. Born to save YOU. And at no cost to YOU. He is Christ – the Messiah – God’s King. The Lord. The ruler. The King over all things. In cloths in a manger.

This is the greatest unexpected sign of Christmas. **And the only true sign.** The angels and the star simply pointed the way TO him. The shepherds and the Wise men were simply a sample of the rich and poor, the powerful and the ordinary people, representatives of all of us, who this Saviour was born for. This was a Saviour for ALL people. For poor shepherds, and for rich Kings.

This is the sign. A baby wrapped in cloths. This is what it all points to. God saving the world, through a baby who grew up to die on a cross to take the punishment for our sins, and then rise again to offer us eternal life with God. Born to SAVE us. Born to live, and die, and rise again. Born that man no more may die. Born to raise the sons of earth. Sent at great cost to God. And at no cost to us.

This is the sign of Christmas. And this is the real COST of Christmas. The sign that we see less and less at the shopping centres. And less and less in the decorations in K-mart. The baby wrapped in cloths, born to save humanity.

What does your Christmas point to this year? What signs are you looking for? What point do your celebrations have? What costs are you counting?

Because Christmas is FREE. The real sign of Christmas was given to us FREE. There is no cost. All the stuff we add – it really is just to help us remember the real sign, and the real cost to God.

It doesn't matter who you are, or what you've done. It doesn't matter how rich or poor you are. It doesn't matter about the past. It doesn't matter if you're a poor shepherd or a rich King. It doesn't matter if you've ignored God or mocked him. The truth is that we all need saving. From life. From this world. And from ourselves. From our sinful desires. From our heart of selfishness. We need saving from being a naughty child, a bad Mother, an absent Father. We need saving from the mistakes we've made in the past. We need saving from a bad marriage, a terrible illness, an uncertain future, a life without purpose. We need saving. We might be lucky enough to be surrounded by family and friends and food and four hundred dollar ipods and fake Christmas trees. But we still need saving from this world and from ourselves. We need a Saviour.

Today, a Saviour has been born TO US. To YOU. And he will save us from this world, from ourselves, and from our sin.

Let's pray.

