

# Bible Studies for Life: December 19

*The Savior Who Came to Us • Luke 2:4-12, 16-20*

*By Paula Smith*



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*And Joseph also went up ... to Bethlehem, because he was of the house and lineage of David. (Luke 2:4 ESV).*

Lineage: “The line of descendants of a particular ancestor” (dictionary.com).

For years I have enjoyed using Chronological Bible Storying to give God’s Word to others. A friend told me of using this method herself to reach a people group with no written language. She worked with a new Christian from that location to learn the culture and language, and then told Bible stories in a form they could understand.

As my friend started with the Book of Matthew, she decided to put the lineage at the end and begin the story with verse 1:18: *“This is how the birth of Jesus the Messiah came about”* (ESV).

As she began to tell the stories, she was surprised that the people seemed to think they were not true – just neat stories. She was about to conclude with the lineage when, oddly enough, the translator got so excited. He said, “Then it’s true! There IS a Savior for us!”

It seems in that particular culture a story is not truth unless it can be traced back to its origin; lineage is important to them. When they realized that Jesus' lineage can be traced back to Abraham and King David (fulfilling God's promise in 2 Samuel 7:16), they KNEW it was a true story. Many believed and were baptized!

The angel declared the good news of great joy for ALL people! (Luke 2:10) Why is this such good news? Because when God came to earth at the birth of Jesus, He set in motion the events that would make possible our salvation! Do you know this good news the angel announced?

During a hot Saturday in July right after my tenth birthday, I was hanging out with my good friend and neighbor, Wilton. He was preparing to preach his first sermon. I was so excited to help him get ready. He cut blocks and I painted them. I sat on his back doorsteps and was his "audience" while he practiced his sermon. I was enthralled!

Wilton held up a block with a hole. He explained everyone has this void or emptiness and only God through Jesus can fill it. As he held up a black block, he explained that everyone is what the Bible calls a sinner or living a self-directed life. *"For all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God" (Romans 3:23 ESV).*

The red block was next. The only way to be rescued from this self-directed life was through God giving His Son, Jesus, to die for us. *"But God shows His love for us in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us" (Romans 5:8 ESV).*

The yellow block signified that when we rebel against God, what we earn is eternal death and forever separation from Jesus. *"For the wages of sin is death, but the free gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord" (Romans 6:23 ESV).*

Holding up the green block, Wilton explained that in order to

begin a new life in Jesus, a person must believe that Jesus died for his/her sins and accept Him as Savior through faith. Faith is trusting in what Jesus has done for you, rather than trusting in your own futile efforts to attain eternal life. Faith involves genuine sorrow for our wrongdoings and a willingness to turn away (repent) from sin.

With the white block, Wilton pointed to God's promise: If I accept Jesus, God will accept me. *"Everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved" (Romans 10:13 ESV).*

I understood what Wilton preached that day. I was genuinely sorry and gave my life to Jesus and like the shepherds, I was so thrilled I could not keep silent!

After their initial fear, the shepherds comprehended the words of the angel and rushed to see Jesus for themselves. *"And they went with haste and found Mary and Joseph, and the baby lying in a manger" (Luke 2:16 ESV).*

They were filled with awe and could not help but tell everyone what they had seen and heard. They could not be silent! This was too good to keep to themselves. Even to this day, the good news MUST be shared! WE must share it!

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