


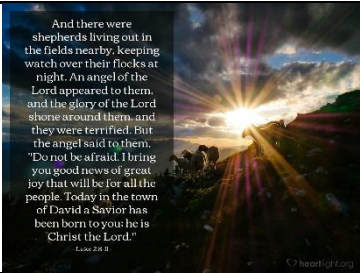






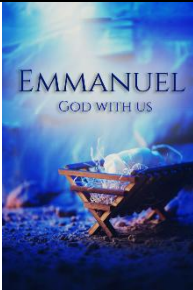

The Christmas Story – as told by Jaime Riggs

December 12, 2025

	
	
	<p>Hello, Friendship! My name is Jaime Riggs. My husband, Travis, and I have been married for 21 years, and we have 5 children... ALL BOYS! Yes, our house is loud and active!</p>
	<p>Each time we had a son be born, we sent out announcements to our friends and family.</p> <p>In our American culture, this is a common thing to do. On these cards, they typically have several things to note: They tell when, where, and to whom the baby has been born.</p>
	<p>Did you know that there was a special birth announcement Christmas card delivery in the Bible?</p> <p>Unlike the cards we sent out when our boys were born, this one was really special!</p> <p>But before I tell that part of the story, maybe I should start with a little more background on who this family was.</p>
	<p>Mary was a young Jewish girl who was engaged to be married to a man named Joseph. One day, while she was alone, the Bible tells us that an angel appeared to her! The word angel means “messenger”.</p> <p>The angel told her that she was very favored by God and that He had chosen her to carry His son. And this was not just any baby, but the Savior of the world!</p>

	<p>Mary must have been shocked! Mary wondered how all of this could be. How could she be pregnant? She was only engaged and a virgin.</p> <p>The angel told her not to worry, that God's Spirit would move and do a miracle.</p>
	<p>God also sent an angel to her soon-to-be husband to tell him the news as well.</p> <p>The angel told Joseph to take Mary as his wife, and he obeyed God.</p>
	<p>Soon after, Mary did become pregnant by the Spirit of God, and she began to carry this son, whom the angel had said should be named Jesus, which means God is salvation!</p>
	<p>When it was almost time for Mary to give birth, a census was announced by the Roman Empire. Every family had to go to the place of their ancestral birth to be counted.</p> <p>Even though Mary was "great with child," she and Joseph travelled to Bethlehem to be counted. This journey took them over a week to make, mostly on foot or by donkey.</p> <p>Can you imagine?</p>
	<p>Soon after they arrived, it came time for Mary's baby to be born. Because of the crowds who had gathered for the census, there was no room in the inns.</p> <p>The most special baby in all of history had to be born in a stable where the animals were kept!</p>
	<p>The Bible says that Mary birthed the baby, named him Jesus, wrapped him in cloths, and she laid him in an animal's feeding trough, which is called a manger.</p> <p>We celebrate the special day that God sent His Son to be born into the world on December 25th each year. And we don't just give it one day; we celebrate it for a whole season! It is that special!</p>
	<p>Now...we get to the part with the most unique Christmas / Birth announcement card ever!</p>
	<p>And there were shepherds living out in the fields nearby keeping watch over their flocks at night. An angel of the Lord appeared to them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were terrified. But the angel said to them, "Do not be afraid. I bring you good news of great joy that will be for all the people. Today, in the town of David, a Savior has been born to you: he is Christ the Lord."</p> <p style="text-align: right;"><i>Luke 2:8-11</i></p>
	<p>The Bible tells us that shepherds were sleeping in fields outside the city. Suddenly, an angel of God appeared before them. This was an angel of God. A messenger delivering a message from God.</p> <p>They were so shocked and afraid that they were frozen with awe. The angel told them, "Don't be afraid! I have wonderful news for you! Today (<i>when</i>) in the town of Bethlehem (<i>where</i>), a Savior has been born to you!" (<i>who</i>)</p>

	<p>Wait a second....born to YOU?</p> <p>Shepherds?</p> <p>Did I say that in my Christmas card? My son Tucker was born to you?</p> <p>Wow, this was unique.</p>
	<p>This baby Jesus had been born to the world. How do I know? The Bible tells us in another place (John 3:16) this:</p> <p>“For God so loved the world, that he gave his one and only Son. That whoever believes in Him will not perish but have everlasting life!”</p>
	<p>Friends, this Christ-child has been born to you!</p> <p>Born to save you!</p> <p>Born to give you a hope and a future!</p>
	<p>You might say, “But I am unworthy of this gift!”</p> <p>Remember, this announcement was not made to kings, important people, or to rich people.</p>
	<p>This good news was given to the shepherds. The lowly. The people who knew they needed this salvation more than most.</p> <p>The Christ was not birthed by a famous person, or in a royal family... He was given to the undeserving and common. People just like us!</p>
	<p>And the Christmas card birth announcement got even more special! A multitude of angels appeared in the sky, becoming a choir that sang the good news of “Glory to God!”</p>
	<p>A singing Christmas card!</p> <p>How unique and special.</p> <p>This was no ordinary birth. This was the birth of the Savior of the world. The Son of God. And I’m sure to the lowly shepherds, this felt like a grand announcement of the arrival of a King with a sky full of singing messengers!</p>

	<p>This true story is as unique as its announcement.</p> <p>God sent Jesus as a baby. He was born to a virgin, becoming both man and divine.</p> <p>Another name for Jesus is Emmanuel. Emmanuel means God-is-with-us.</p>
	<p>God loves us so much that God sent us Jesus, His son, to show us the way to God. Jesus announced the kingdom of God on earth when He came to us.</p> <p>The kingdom of God is a kingdom of peace, justice, holiness, love, and joy. Someday, for those who follow Jesus, we will fully live in the kingdom of God forever.</p>
	<p>When I think of forever, I think of far-off.</p> <p>But God sent His son long ago, and that means that God is with us. Here and now. God is with you now. Not because you are worthy, but because you are not. He has made a way to be with you through sending Jesus.</p>
	<p>Jesus is the best gift we could ever receive because through Him we can have access to God. Does this sound too incredible to believe? Well, remember that God has been doing incredible, unbelievable things all along. A virgin birth, a visit from angels, and a heavenly choir appearing to shepherds... just to name a few?!</p> <p>Yep, God is in the amazing and incredible working business.</p>
	<p>The story of the birth of Jesus is a story filled with wonder, mystery, angels, courage, danger and suffering.</p> <p>Most importantly, it is a story of Hope.</p>
	<p>It's a story that tells of God's great love for us. He was willing to send His Son to earth, to be born as a lowly baby, to live a sinless life and later die in our place. (We will talk more about that in our Easter story!)</p> <p>God wants to be near to you. You matter to Him.</p>
	<p>My prayer today is that you will see that <u>you</u> are who God sent this Christmas card birth announcement to. He loves you. He loves you so much that He made a way for you to know Him. He offers His presence to you through His Son, Jesus. His true story of the salvation of the world has been made known to you today. Because Jesus was born, we have hope. God loves us and wants to be near to us! And that, my friends, will surely give us a merry Christmas.</p>