



UPCOMING EVENTS:

Christmas Eve Service Times

Mark your calendars:

Christmas Eve will be at 5pm, 7pm, 9pm & 11pm
With nursery-preschool childcare at 5 & 7pm only

No Sunday Morning Services on the 24th!

Women's Ornament Exchange

December 20th, 6:30pm

Childcare is available but must sign up
women@ourelement.org

Upcoming in the New Year!

Didn't See That Coming!

Join us beginning January 7th for a 16-week series
about the Gospel!

Connect Party: January 19th

Open to all, this is a great dessert party for those who
would like to connect with the leaders of Element
and others who are new-er to the church.

Gospel Class: February 4th

8-week Class that covers Element's Theology
and Philosophy of Ministry and is necessary for
church membership.

Jingle all the Way

Week 4 - Embarrassing Families

Today's Verses:

Matthew 1:19
Luke 2:8-14
Luke 2:34-35

Mark 3:20-21
Mark 3:32-35
John 1:14

John 8:10-11
1 Timothy 1:16
Luke 13:6-9

Week 4 - Embarrassing Families

We all have people in our lives who are hard to deal with in terms of personality. Some people are stressed, some are disappointed, some are hazardous, and some are embarrassing. We need to be able to see ourselves in each of these people types because at some point, we have been each of these. God has extended His grace to us in the midst of our personal issues and we in turn should extend grace to others.

Who is the most embarrassing person in your life?

Why? What do they do (or not do)?

The cast of characters we see surrounding the birth of Jesus are not exactly the kind of people that most would have on their invite list today for, "birth of the son of God." You would think that God would have the elites and well placed in society, but the cast of characters in the birth narratives are the lowly and embarrassing.

- **The Shepherds:** In this time shepherds were not held in high regard, they would be like how many today see a lower class migrant worker.
- **The Magi:** The Magi were foreign dignitaries in town because they are following up on astronomical evidence of the birth of a new King.
- **Simeon:** He was an old man who spent his time hanging out at the temple (church) blurting out harsh truths.

If you were planning the "birth of the son of God" party, in all honesty, who would you invite first?

Who would you invite last?

Jesus lived in the real world with real issues and chose to deal with those issues in real, human ways. Jesus was fully God and fully man and as a man showed us the way to deal with the issues we still face today.

Read John 1:14.

Jesus steps into time and brings grace and truth. We need grace and we need truth; we also need to give grace and we need to tell truth. But what about time? Time means we're taking the moments needed to live in Gospel centered community with one another. There's no such thing as a "quick fix" when it comes to relationships.

Think about issues you have with friends or family.

What does it mean to work through those issues with grace AND truth?

What would happen if you threw (or allowed) time to be in the mix?

Read Luke 13:6-9.

Christmas is all about understanding that God came to rescue us. We are all lost. Jesus is the way, the truth, and the life; He came to give us grace. He stepped into time to walk with us, die for us, and secure our identity as adopted children of God. Through all of what Jesus does He takes time to grow us and allow us to change in ways that He sees fit. Usually, we do not change in a heartbeat, we change over the course of years as truth is better understood day by day through God's provision of grace.

In what way can you change your perspective about embarrassing people during this Christmas season that would line up more with a Gospel centered perspective?