

Eynsford Carol service

Everyone loves a quiz at Christmas!

So, here's my very quick Christmas quiz – how many of these questions can you answer?

1. How did Mary travel to Bethlehem?
2. How many inn doors did Joseph knock on before he got the offer of a stable?
3. What present did the shepherds give baby Jesus?
4. How many wise men visited Jesus?
5. How did they travel?
6. Was Jesus still in the stable when they got there or had he moved into more suitable housing after the crowds had left from being taxed?

If you managed to answer any of these questions you are a better person than I am, for the bible is silent on all of these things...although of course we have come up with some pretty good guesses!

Does this mean then that we are left in a cloud of unknowing about the first Christmas?

Well, maybe about some of the details, but the bible writers are very clear about the things that really matter.

Things like:

- This baby was truly human and divine – a product of God the Holy Spirit 'over-shadowing' the human Mary. As such he was both Immanuel, God with us, and the perfect human to show us what life as flesh and blood could be.
- He left the glories of heaven to live a human life, to die a human death, that he might defeat evil, overcome death and lift humanity to God.
- He was born as a light to shine in the darkness of this world, to light the way to God.
- To all who believed in him he gave the right to become children of God.

We live in a world of pressing issues:

- on 29th March will we be in or out?
- Do I have enough left on the credit card to pay for the turkey?
- Who will win Strictly (I'm going for Stacey Dooly)!

But I would want to say to you today that there is no more pressing issue than what you make of Jesus... how you respond to God's gift of his son at the very first Christmas.

Its interesting that the very people who should have spotted who Jesus was, the religious leaders of the day, completely missed what God was doing. It was left to shepherds on the hillside and a bunch of foreign star-gazers to pay Jesus the attention he deserved.

So, here's the final two questions in my Christmas quiz:

- Who is Jesus?
- And how will you respond to him?

These are questions I would suggest have a very good answer.

And they're questions its worth making sure you answer correctly.

For the prize for getting the question right is more than a chocolate Santa Claus or box of matchmakers... its nothing less than adoption by God as his child and everlasting life.

In Jesus name,
Amen