



Home for the Holidays

So Joseph also went up from the town of Nazareth in Galilee to Judea, to Bethlehem the town of David, because he belonged to the house and line of David.

Luke 2:4
Lesson Three: Family

Our short verse of Scripture speaks about roots, doesn't it? Bethlehem was a small town, one that would make Seymour, Indiana seem like a metropolis. Bethlehem was a sprinkling of homes on the land providing the border between farm land and desert. There were probably no more than 800 people there in 4^{BC}. It set in the shadow of the palace of Herod, perched on top of a hill less than a mile away.

In that verse, my eyes fixed on the phrase "he belonged." Joseph went to Bethlehem because he belonged there. We learned of his genealogy from the pen of Matthew. Luke reminds us here that he is from the house and line of David. The census beckoned Joseph, but it was in Bethlehem that he always belonged.

At Christmas we all have a real yearning to belong. Many who struggle at the holidays do so because they lack that sense of belonging. Some have lost loved ones who helped build that community. We look for ways to find the peace of "fitting in" – of belonging.

Please be reminded that no matter your circumstance, you can travel to Bethlehem and belong there. Paul encourages the Galatians to "understand then that those who believe are Abraham's children" (Galatians 3:7 NIV). Come to Bethlehem and see He whose birth the angels sing. It's right where you belong.

Isn't it ironic that the town once known for having "no room," now has over thirty hotels and its main industry is tourism for folks visiting the birthplace of Jesus?

Isn't it ironic that the town once known for having "no room" now has room for everyone – including you and me – as we commemorate the birth of its most famous guest.

It's probably just as ironic that God would choose you and I to share the good news about the gift of His son.

I guess He chose us because He knew we belonged.