

St. Andrews Lutheran Church, Tallebudgera QLD

Christmas Day 2025

**Luke 2:8-20**

**Q&A IN A MANGER**

Our lives are full of questions, aren't they? (there's one now!) The little everyday questions of 'what do I do next?', 'when and what should I eat?', 'is my sporting team going to win?', and I'm sure you can think of many others. Then we can move up to the bigger questions, the questions which affect the purpose, meaning, and direction of our lives. Very often these questions begin with the words; Why? What? And Who? For example: why are we here? What is our purpose in life? And who is in control of everything which happens? They are the questions which, in their own different ways, every religion and belief system in the world have always attempted to provide the answers to.

Christian author Philip Yancey tells the story of when he was once driving through America's Bible belt, in which there are apparently many roadside billboards carrying prominent Christian messages, and he saw a sign which proudly and boldly proclaimed 'Jesus is the Answer'. Not an uncommon sign apparently for that area, but what made this one different is someone had managed to paint underneath that proclamation: 'What is the question?' And that itself is a good question, isn't it? And Yancey then uses that billboard Q&A exchange to introduce what are essentially the three questions which people ask in relation to God: 1. Does God care (about me)? 2. Do I matter? 3. Does God act (why doesn't God do something)? As people consider the questions about if there is a god, what that god is like, what that god means to them in their lives and to us

all in our world, these three questions do a good job of summing up the bigger questions of life we are often seeking answers for.

Have a look at these questions; are they ones you ever ask? Do you ever wonder, as one person in a world which over time has contained billions upon billions of people, and as part of a vast galaxy of Creation which we have no idea how big it actually is, do you ever think; how can the God who both created and cares for this vast Creation and all that is in it know about and care for me? Do you ever wonder if your life, and what happens to you, really matters, because God has plenty of other people to have a relationship with so perhaps I am a bit inconsequential or dispensable? Or, in the face of what we see happening in the world, the suffering we see around us, the evil being committed, people going through hardship through no fault of their own, perhaps even things which you yourself or others close to you are going through, do you ever ask yourself; if God could create this world, if God can keep everything running, why doesn't He intervene so that everyone can be safe and happy? Whether we have a close relationship with God, or one we only think about and touch on from time to time, it can involve a bit of Q&A, can't it, although very often with a lot more questions than we think we receive answers.

Sometimes the answers can be there, right in front of us, but we don't see them because they aren't the answers we are looking for. 2,000 years ago, in that manger, in that humble birth, God came down in human form to answer all of those questions we have. It's the answers to these questions we have about God and His role in our lives and our world that an angel proclaimed saying, "Don't be afraid! I have good news for you, which will make everyone happy. This very day in King David's hometown a Savior was born for you. He is Christ the Lord. You will know who he is, because you will find him

dressed in baby clothes and lying on a bed of hay.” (v. 10b-12). The answer to these questions is what the shepherds then heard when a whole multitude of angels came to sing, “Praise God in heaven! Peace on earth to everyone who pleases God.” (v. 14)

And when the shepherds then went off to see the baby the angels had spoken of, they saw God answering our questions by coming into our world, in the humblest way possible, as a human baby, for whom no room could be found, whose parents were far from home, the legitimacy of whose birth would always be questioned, and who would ultimately end up dying the shameful death of a criminal even though he was the most innocent person ever to live. Does God care about me? So much so that in Jesus He gave up the glory of heaven so He could live the life we live so we can know He is with us in all we go through. Do I matter? Because God loves you so much, He has done everything He possibly can, including sending His own Son to die, so that your relationship with Him can be restored; there is no greater love. Does God act? In our world which has been corrupted by sin, and suffers from the free will we have as people to make our own choices, God has acted by coming into this world to bring the light of His love into the darkness of sin, to bring the promise of life where there had only been death, and to give a hope and a strength in calling all His people to know and to share this love and this light into the world.

In that manger, in that child, God in love came down to put an exclamation mark on our questions: Here is my love for you! Here is how much I care for you! Here is what I am willing to do for you! Here is the only way that life and love can truly be restored for everyone! Know it! Receive it! Live in it! Share it! There is no doubt the shepherds would have had plenty of questions over what they saw and heard that night when they were just out minding their sheep, but from what we are told no doubt also that

they saw and learnt things which changed their lives. In this child, in this baby who is both the Son of God and God Himself, they saw the truth of God's love in action which would not only change their lives, but the lives of all people from that time on.

Christmas is all about God answering our questions, in a real and final way, about His love for us and our relationship with Him. It is about Q&A in a manger. It is God putting an exclamation mark where we have a question mark. Our lives will still be full of questions, including, because that's who we are as people, about God and His place in our lives and our world. But, when we look with open hearts at that baby in the manger, and think about the life He led, the death He died, and the new life He came to claim, we see there all of our questions answered when we have Him in our hearts and our lives. Q&A in a manger, in this baby God's love has come to us all. Amen.

### **FOR FURTHER DISCUSSION/REFLECTION**

- What are some of the questions you ask in life; both the smaller and inconsequential ones, as well as the bigger more significant ones?
- How do you think the shepherds would have felt when the angels appeared to them that night? What questions would they have had?
- How does God, by coming into our world in Jesus, answer the questions you have about Him and your relationship with Him? Are there questions you still struggle with?
- If you see Jesus in the manger as God answering our questions with a bold exclamation mark, how does this change your life? What affect does it have on your life?

Pray: thank God that in Jesus He came into our lives and our world. Ask Him to help us accept that in Jesus we have the answers to all of our questions about His love for us and His place in our lives.

*Pastor Andrew R. Koehler  
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