

January 5, 2021

“Having been warned in a dream, he withdrew to the district of Galilee, and he went and lived in a town called Nazareth. So was fulfilled what was said through the prophets, that he would be called a Nazarene”

Matthew 2:22-23



God's got the New Year in His hands

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When we read the story of Jesus' birth, there's a part we sometimes overlook because we fail to see its significance. However, in this crazy season, when many of us seem to be facing detour after detour, it's an encouraging thing to understand. Though our Lord was born in Bethlehem so that prophecy would be fulfilled, his parents took Him and fled to Egypt because they feared evil King Herod, who was trying to kill Him. It was years before He returned to Israel, and when he did, He didn't go back to the area in which He was born, because there was another wicked king reigning there by that time. Instead, His parents moved to a town called Nazareth, which was in the region of Galilee. Though it was probably only about 300 people strong, this was the place where it was traditionally thought - and expected - that the Messiah would come from. In fact, Matthew states in his Gospel that Jesus lived there in order that the words of the prophets would come to pass, and that He would be called a Nazarene. Although the journey to his city of upbringing was unconventional, the Lord used every twist and turn to get His Son to the place where He was supposed to be. And if that was true for Jesus, it's just as true for you and me today.

Dear friend, with the COVID-19 pandemic raging and getting worse, you may be feeling discouraged - like your existence is nothing but a series of detours. If that's the case, be encouraged by the story of your Savior's journey. Though His life was threatened, and His family was forced to relocate to protect Him, His Heavenly Father had a greater plan, and He used each step along the way to move Him to where He truly belonged. Likewise, the Lord is using the stops and starts of this season to bring you closer to His heart and to carry you to where you need to be fulfilling your calling. Though you feel worn, He is faithful. And even now, you can trust Him to consistently unfold the beautiful story He's already written on the pages of your soul.

Would you pray with me?

Jesus, help me to hold fast and stand strong in the midst of life's detours, knowing that You are faithful.
Amen.

Pause for Reflection - How do you expect God may use this season to prepare you for an even greater calling?

Whatever this new year holds, we know that we are held by Jesus .. so tenderly and lovingly. Aren't you really glad that we can trust Him?

Pastor Bob,

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