



Myth = a popular belief or tradition that has grown up around something or someone
Fact = a piece of information presented as having objective reality

Opening Discussion

What myths drive you crazy that other people believe? How do you think that particular myth got started?

12 Christmas Myths

- 1) Mary rode a donkey to Bethlehem while Joseph walked alongside her.
- 2) Mary and Joseph arrived in Bethlehem the night Jesus was born.
- 3) Mary gave birth to Jesus in a barn because all the hotels were full. Man, people in Bethlehem can be so cruel to leave a pregnant woman without proper lodging.
- 4) Joseph delivered baby Jesus.
- 5) Jesus was born on December 25, 1 A.D.

- 6) Baby Jesus never cried.
- 7) The angels sang to the shepherds when announcing Jesus' birth.
- 8) Three kings worshiped Jesus on December 25 while he was still in a manger.
- 9) King Herod slaughtered thousands of baby boys in Bethlehem.
- 10) Mary remained a virgin until the day of her death.
- 11) Christmas has always been the biggest Christian holiday.
- 12) Abbreviating "Christmas" to "Xmas" is disrespectful to God because it takes the "Christ" out of "Christmas."

(Bonus: Jeremiah 10:1-5 condemns the practice of having Christmas trees.)

Which Christmas myth was the most surprising to you? Why?

After working through these myths, are there things that we should change about our Christmas celebration? How would you change them?

What should we do when we hear someone speaking a Christmas myth?

The Birth of Jesus (Luke 2:1-20 NIV)

2 In those days Caesar Augustus issued a decree that a census should be taken of the entire Roman world. ² (This was the first census that took place while Quirinius was governor of Syria.)
³ And everyone went to their own town to register.

⁴ 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. ⁵ He went there to register with Mary, who was pledged to be married to him and was expecting a child. ⁶ While they were there, the time came for the baby to be born, ⁷ and she gave birth to her firstborn, a son. She wrapped him in cloths and placed him in a manger, because there was no guest room available for them.

⁸ And there were shepherds living out in the fields nearby, keeping watch over their flocks at night. ⁹ An angel of the Lord appeared to them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were terrified. ¹⁰ But the angel said to them, “Do not be afraid. I bring you good news that will cause great joy for all the people. ¹¹ Today in the town of David a Savior has been born to you; he is the Messiah, the Lord. ¹² This will be a sign to you: You will find a baby wrapped in cloths and lying in a manger.”

¹³ Suddenly a great company of the heavenly host appeared with the angel, praising God and saying, ¹⁴ “Glory to God in the highest heaven, and on earth peace to those on whom his favor rests.”

¹⁵ When the angels had left them and gone into heaven, the shepherds said to one another, “Let’s go to Bethlehem and see this thing that has happened, which the Lord has told us about.”

¹⁶ So they hurried off and found Mary and Joseph, and the baby, who was lying in the manger. ¹⁷ When they had seen him, they spread the word concerning what had been told them about this child, ¹⁸ and all who heard it were amazed at what the shepherds said to them. ¹⁹ But Mary treasured up all these things and pondered them in her heart. ²⁰ The shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all the things they had heard and seen, which were just as they had been told.

Matthew 13:55–57 (NIV)

⁵⁵ “Isn’t this the carpenter’s son? Isn’t his mother’s name Mary, and aren’t his brothers James, Joseph, Simon and Judas? ⁵⁶ Aren’t all his sisters with us?”

Galatians 1:19 (NIV)

¹⁹ I saw none of the other apostles—only James, the Lord’s brother.

1 Corinthians 9:5 (NIV)

⁵ Don’t we have the right to take a believing wife along with us, as do the other apostles and the Lord’s brothers and Cephas?

John 2:12 (NIV)

¹² After this he went down to Capernaum with his mother and brothers and his disciples. There they stayed for a few days.

The Magi Visit the Messiah (Matthew 2:1-18 NIV)

2 After Jesus was born in Bethlehem in Judea, during the time of King Herod, Magi from the east came to Jerusalem ² and asked, “Where is the one who has been born king of the Jews? We saw his star when it rose and have come to worship him.”

³ When King Herod heard this he was disturbed, and all Jerusalem with him. ⁴ When he had called together all the people’s chief priests and teachers of the law, he asked them where the Messiah was to be born. ⁵ “In Bethlehem in Judea,” they replied, “for this is what the prophet has written: ⁶ ‘But you, Bethlehem, in the land of Judah, are by no means least among the rulers of Judah; for out of you will come a ruler who will shepherd my people Israel.’”

⁷ Then Herod called the Magi secretly and found out from them the exact time the star had appeared. ⁸ He sent them to Bethlehem and said, “Go and search carefully for the child. As soon as you find him, report to me, so that I too may go and worship him.”

⁹ After they had heard the king, they went on their way, and the star they had seen when it rose went ahead of them until it stopped over the place where the child was. ¹⁰ When they saw the star, they were overjoyed. ¹¹ On coming to the house, they saw the child with his mother Mary, and they bowed down and worshiped him. Then they opened their treasures and presented him with gifts of gold, frankincense and myrrh. ¹² And having been warned in a dream not to go back to Herod, they returned to their country by another route.

The Escape to Egypt

¹³ When they had gone, an angel of the Lord appeared to Joseph in a dream. “Get up,” he said, “take the child and his mother and escape to Egypt. Stay there until I tell you, for Herod is going to search for the child to kill him.”

¹⁴ So he got up, took the child and his mother during the night and left for Egypt, ¹⁵ where he stayed until the death of Herod. And so was fulfilled what the Lord had said through the prophet: “Out of Egypt I called my son.”

¹⁶ When Herod realized that he had been outwitted by the Magi, he was furious, and he gave orders to kill all the boys in Bethlehem and its vicinity who were two years old and under, in accordance with the time he had learned from the Magi. ¹⁷ Then what was said through the prophet Jeremiah was fulfilled: ¹⁸ “A voice is heard in Ramah, weeping and great mourning, Rachel weeping for her children and refusing to be comforted, because they are no more.”

Jeremiah 10:1-5 (NIV)

¹ Hear what the LORD says to you, people of Israel. ² This is what the LORD says: “Do not learn the ways of the nations or be terrified by signs in the heavens, though the nations are terrified by them. ³ For the practices of the peoples are worthless; they cut a tree out of the forest, and a craftsman shapes it with his chisel. ⁴ They adorn it with silver and gold; they fasten it with hammer and nails so it will not totter. ⁵ Like a scarecrow in a cucumber field, their idols cannot speak; they must be carried because they cannot walk. Do not fear them; they can do no harm nor can they do any good.”