



## **feeding . . . gathering . . . carrying . . . leading. (Isaiah 40:11)**

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December 10, 2014

Dear Church,

This past Sunday Stuart delivered us his “Top Ten” from the Incarnation narrative, in David Letterman style. The story is chalk-full of drama, doctrine, and encouragement for our discipleship. It would be fruitful to read the narrative again this advent season with the following themes in mind:

1. The Incarnation story offers a dramatic display of the supernatural power of the Holy Spirit.
2. In this story we witness and explosion of worship.
3. We are given examples both of waiting on the Lord and of hastening to obey his word.
4. We learn, even in the nativity narrative, enough about the person and work of Christ to fill chapters of our systematic theology books.
5. We hear the promises of God made to a broken and weary world of sinners, and we see those promises fulfilled in Christ.
6. We learn that the realities of our personal life are not “taboo” subjects in the presence of God. The scandal of Mary’s unwed pregnancy (and who do you think everyone would have assumed had fathered the child?), the almost-enacted divorce, the abuse of political power; the narrative shies away from none of these things.
7. We learn about the nature of the kingdom of God.
8. The Word of God is central to the story. We learn about the fruitfulness and power of this Word, and we learn how to be responsive to the Word.
9. We learn of the Lord’s pastoral power, as he leads and guides his people (Mary, Joseph, Zechariah, Elizabeth, wise men, shepherds!) with strength and tender care.
10. We have enough in this text to provide material for a lengthy conference on prayer.

Rich blessings,  
Ben