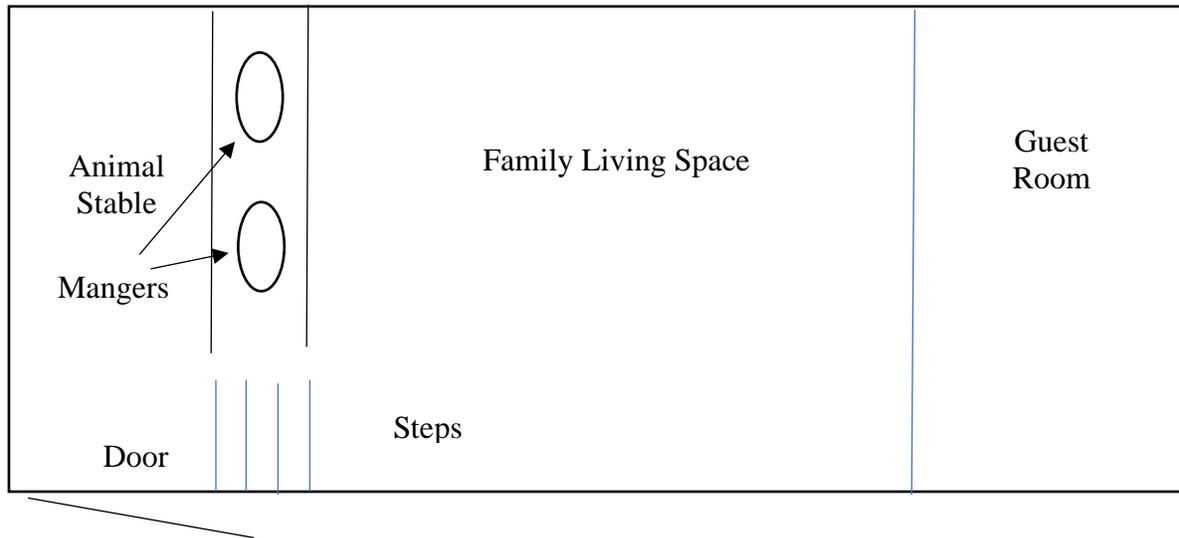


1. Our “Christmas story” exists in our collective consciousness that is a conflation of
  - Luke’s account,
  - Matthew’s account, and
  - an early church document called the *Protoevangelium of James* (Infancy Gospel of James) – ca. 200 AD.

2. Common house from the first century:



3. the **King** is born among the common people –
  - Attended by shepherds.
  - Shepherds were considered one of the unclean professions.
4. Juxtapose to **Herod the Great** -
  - Less than 4 miles from Bethlehem is the Herodium.
  - A worldly king should be born in wealth and status.
  - God’s King is born *from* and *for* all people.

5. **Caesar Augustus** – born Gaius Octavius

- Caesar = king (in German – Kaiser)
- Augustus = worshiped, venerated. It is a **title** rather than a name.
- 7. Established the Imperial Cult
- Pergamum was 1<sup>st</sup> official worship site (26 BCE)
- Called ‘divine,’ ‘Lord,’ ‘savior,’ and ‘son of god!’

6. **Luke 2:1** – opens with Caesar Augustus.

7. **Luke 2:10** – the announcement by the angel

- “good news”
- “for all people”
- “a savior”
- “Christ” – Hebrew Messiah. Messiah is the ‘anointed one.’

8. Priene Calendar Inscription<sup>1</sup>

“Since Providence, which has ordered all things and is deeply interested in our life, has set in most perfect order by giving us Augustus, whom she filled with virtue that he might benefit humankind, sending him as a savior, both for us and for our descendants, that he might end war and arrange all things,

“...and since the birthday of the god Augustus was the **beginning of the good tidings** (*good news*) for the world...”

**Calendrical inscription from Priene, Asia Minor, c. 9 BCE**

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<sup>1</sup> [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Calendar\\_Inscription\\_of\\_Priene](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Calendar_Inscription_of_Priene)

9. Herod the Great erected three temples to Caesar Augustus in Israel:

- Caesarea Maritima
- *Sebastia* (formerly the city of Samaria)
- *Omrit* (northern entrance to Israel from Damascus) – discovered in 1998.

10. **Matthew 16:13** –

- The temple to Caesar Augustus is 4 miles from Caesarea Philippi.
- Why does Peter need to add ‘living’ before God? – v. 16
  - “You are the Messiah, the son of the living God.”

11. Two points:

- Who do you call Lord?
  - Jesus and the New Testament writers force you to pick one of the two.
- What do we mean by ‘King?’ or ‘the Christ?’
- What is the significance that the ‘Christ’ is born of common humanity?
- What does it mean to be a ‘Christian’ – a little Christ?