



The Planter

"The seed is the word of God", Luke 8:11



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The Danger of Reading From 30,000 Feet

Todd Clippard

If you've ever flown on a clear day over a familiar landscape, towns that are miles away are clearly visible, and the altitude allows one to see the whole journey in just a few moments.

There are many Bible texts in which a problem is presented, played out, and resolved in just a few minutes of reading. The account of Job immediately comes to mind. All the financial and familial calamities Job endured in chapter 1 are covered in just a minute's time. How long he suffered before Satan came calling again in chapter 2 is unknown, as is the amount of time he suffered before the arrival and seven days of seated silence by his friends at the end of the chapter.

The events surrounding the birth of Jesus fall in this category. Matthew 1:18-25 is a less-than-60-second summary of what was certainly one of the most difficult periods in the lives of Jesus' parents. Even if we were to include Luke's more chronologically detailed record, this whole account can be read in well under five minutes. Like a 1970s or 80s TV sitcom, a problem is presented with the pain and the resolution coming in less than 30 minutes.

And therein lies the danger for us as Bible readers. If we aren't careful, we miss the struggle, the implied accusations and disbelief, and the pain that were no doubt a vital storyline through this entire narrative.

Try to consider this story as it unfolded in real time. Mary is engaged to Joseph, and by engagement we mean a legally binding relationship that required a formal dissolution, not just "giving back the ring" (Matt 1:18).

At some point in verse 18 are the events of Luke 1:26-56, where Gabriel informs Mary of her selection to be the mother of Jesus, Immanuel, i.e., "God with us." Moreover, in Luke's account we see Mary leaving town to visit Elizabeth in the third trimester of her own pregnancy, staying with her three months, then returning home... herself now with child.

Think about Mary and her return home. What was going through her mind? Did she think Joseph's love would cause him to accept her testimony? How many scenarios played out in her head? Did she think Joseph's acceptance would clear her name (John 8:41)?

Try putting yourself in Joseph's shoes. If you were living in Nazareth when Mary returned after three months away with her "baby bump," what would you think? The exact same thing Joseph did! How would you respond to her story about the appearance and message of an angel? Again, the exact same response as Joseph! But, because we get to read the entire account from start to finish in just a couple of minutes, any real tension and pain of this narrative, (none of which is detailed in Luke), is glossed over by a "quick" happy ending.

This should serve to encourage us to slow down and be more deliberate and contemplative of the biblical texts as we read going forward.

July 5, 2026

Sunday Morning

Opening Prayer Steve Fletcher

Closing Prayer Carter Logan

Scripture Reading Jeff Duncan

Sunday Evening

Opening Prayer Dallas York

Closing Prayer Rhyan Dishroom

Remember in prayer:

Steve Fletcher, Mike Short, Rick Davison, Amanda Fletcher, Sammy Wyers, Joan and Steve Henry, Ayla Alexander, Kenleigh Bailey, Luke Keller, Jill Spears, Wally Booker, Norene O'Kelly, Don Duncan, Joe Chambers, Bill and Billie Nolen, Stefan Hoglund.

Oak View Nursing Home: Betty Floyd.

We will have our **Fellowship Meal** today after our morning services, then our 1:00 pm Kids Sing and Singing and Devotional.

Our Summer Series speaker this Wednesday night will be **Rod Selman** speaking on the subject of "David- The Rejected King."

Men's Fellowship Breakfast; this Saturday, July 11 at 9:00 am. A video by Kris Emerson "Justified by Grace" You need this!!!

Adam Cordell will preach next Sunday evening.

Be sure to mark your calendar for July 31st, for our 20th annual singing; 7:00 – 8:30 pm; refreshments to follow.

Worship Assignments for July

Announcements: Dan Logan

Lord's Table:

Adam Cordell WK 1 & 2

Steve Fletcher WK 3 & 4

Rhyan Dishroom, Payton Payne,

Record for the week of June 28, 2026

10 am	11 am	5 pm	Wed	Contribution
75	71	70	90	\$3289.00

God of the Little Things

When the hard times come, most Christians ramp up their time spent in prayer—and understandably so. A scary diagnosis, a job loss, and other major upheavals send us seeking God's aid, as He is a present help in our troubles (Psalm 46:1).

However, it can be easy to forget that He's there for us in the little challenges, too.

A car accident might send us before God's throne seeking help in a way that the stress of a busy week, or the anxiety from a difficult boss, or the pain of occasional marital strains might not. But God still sees our pain in those struggles. He still cares, even when we feel our concerns might be a bit trivial for Him.

In the context of discussing our various trials, James told us to ask God for wisdom, with the faith that He will give it to us (James 1:5-8). Notice what James didn't do: he didn't put a size limit on the trials we're allowed to ask about. Elsewhere, when the Bible speaks of God's comfort, there is no footnote that says He'll comfort us in the death of a loved one, but not when we feel overwhelmed with our daily duties.

It is only our arbitrary standards that decide what constitutes a big trial and a little trial. God has not put such limitations on Himself, so we should not feel embarrassed to take our burdens before Him—even if they are lighter than other burdens.

As you go about your week, notice the little things that put you on edge or nag at you. Don't hesitate to lay them at the Father's feet and ask for wisdom and peace so you can have a clear head and glorify Him by your attitude and response.

What a blessing it is to have a Father who cares about us and our stresses, no matter the size.

Elders:

Steve Fletcher, Hugh Glaze, Dan Logan, Tim York

Deacons: Justin Glaze, Carter Logan, Adam Morgan, Jerry Reaves

Minister: Hugh Glaze

Song Leader: Adam Morgan