

Celebrate the greatest gift to humanity

Lesson Scripture: Luke 2:1; 4-20

her days are accomplished. Joseph finds a stable for their shelter. There the Child is on all the things that have happened.

Lesson Aims: to recognize that God rewards faithfulness, to understand that this birth exceeds all others, and to examine one's response to God's call.

Lesson: Our second look at Mary takes us on the journey from Nazareth to Bethlehem.

Joseph and Mary are residents of Nazareth when Roman emperor Caesar Augustus calls for a census to tax the people. Everyone has to return to the family's home city to be counted. Joseph and his espoused wife, who is great with child (ninth month), make the 70-mile, four-day journey to Bethlehem. She rides the donkey while he walks.

Shortly after their arrival

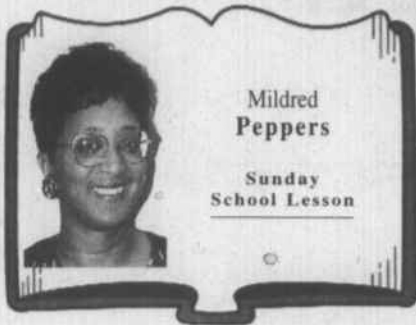
born. An angel of the Lord announces the Good News to some shepherds in a field. They are afraid. Suddenly great company of the heavenly host appeared with the angel, praising God. The shepherds decide to seek the Messiah. Once they find Him they go out and spread the news as they return to their flocks. Mary remains calm and thinks

What does that mean? It is no accident that you are here. No matter the circumstances under which you were conceived, God has a calling on your life. Our status in society isn't important. God cares nothing for our portfolios, our residences or titles. He examines the soul. As we live in this world we must always remember this.

Application: Careful examination of all the texts thus far in this quarter reveals individuals' faithfulness and willingness to turn their lives over to God completely. He (God) chooses each of them for this purpose. The Scriptures don't say that they are perfect; instead the record describes them as upright, the Lord's servants and righteous.

This magnificent birth impacts all of humanity because He will redeem us to the Father. He is always there if we just let Him into our lives today. Like the shepherds, we glorify Him and return to our places in society forever changed. Rejoice for He came for all. Mary's demeanor is poised and thoughtful considering what has happened in the last nine months! She symbolizes confidence in the Almighty God no matter the situations. As young mothers, some of us have or have had moments of reflection about our children's futures. It can be frightening but hold on to your faith and depend on God. He will see you through. As we celebrate the greatest gift to humanity, let's not overlook the significance of all births because God has a calling on each life.

May your Christmas be full of joy, peace, and an appreciation for all that God has done, is doing, and will do!!



Mildred Peppers

Sunday School Lesson

Hundreds support Ten Commandments

BY BOB JOHNSON
THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

MONTGOMERY, Ala. — About 400 people came from as far away as Texas to rally Monday in support of Alabama Chief Justice Roy Moore and the Ten Commandments monument he moved into the state courts building.

The demonstrators who carried signs reading "Judge Moore for President" and "Standing for Jesus and the Ten Commandments" vented their anger at U.S. District Judge Myron Thompson, who ruled last month that the 5,300-pound monument goes too far in promoting religion in a governmental building.

"We're fed up with the way our judicial system is running roughshod over the American people and, in fact, is aiding and abetting those who would destroy our religious heritage," said Jim Cabaniss, a rally organizer from Houston.

"If you believe in God, you need to stand behind Judge Moore because we can't let them take our Ten Commandments out of that building," added Teresa Atchley of Jemison.

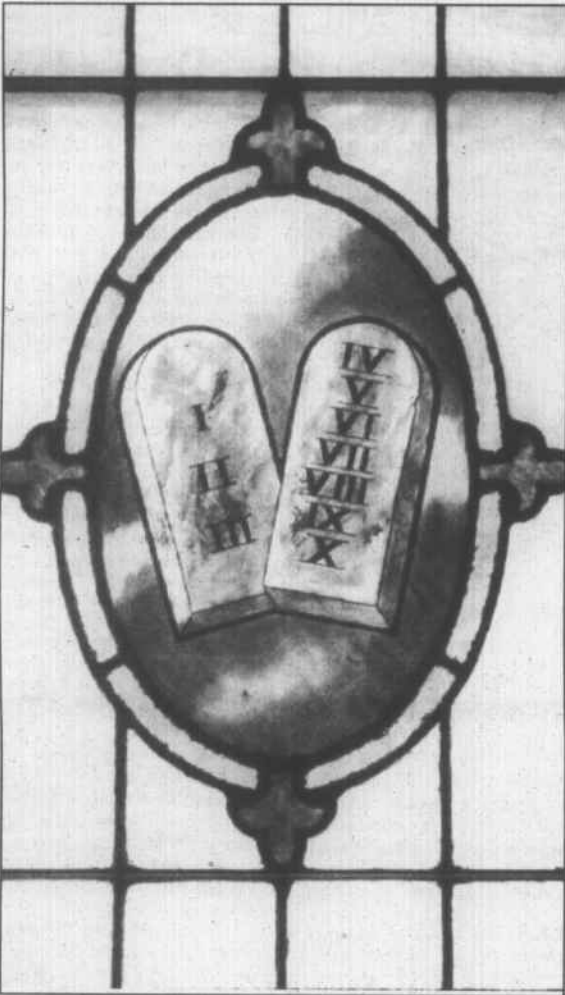
During the rally, about 10 counterprotesters, mostly members of atheist groups, stood quietly and held signs praising Thompson and urging Moore to remove the monument.

"I'm offended that Judge Moore has made religion a part of politics, as if we need an invisible power to back us up," said Olga Cornelius of Montgomery.

Moore has filed notice to appeal Thompson's ruling. Thompson has scheduled a hearing for Thursday on whether he should issue an injunction requiring the monument be removed in 15 days.

Moore moved the monument into the judicial building rotunda in the middle of the night on July 31, 2001. The Southern Poverty Law Center, Americans United for Separation of Church and State, and the American Civil Liberties Union filed a lawsuit on behalf of three Alabama attorneys who said they were offended by the washing machine-size monument.

The rally in support of the Ten Commandments often resembled a prayer meeting, with speakers quoting from the



Bible and people shouting "amen brother".

Bill Anthony of Tallassee made some of the signs waving at the rally. He said he believes Thompson's ruling goes against the intention of the nation's founding fathers.

"I don't go to church, but I believe this nation was founded on the rule of law and that can be traced back to the Ten Commandments," Anthony said.

Several speakers urged the protesters to continue the fight as long as Moore is appealing Thompson's ruling.

"I say the time has come to take back our country, starting right here today with a strong defense of the moral foundation of America," said Ken Freeman of Huntsville, chairman of the Alliance for Citizens Rights.

While the pro-Thompson demonstrators stood on one corner across from the Capitol,

See **Commandments** on B7

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