

- *You invaded our space..., David Mitchell*

What's the Connection?

- What has the manger got to do with Mission?
- Two very different images:
 - **on the one hand:** stable, hay, shepherds, Mary & Joseph, cuddly baby, stars glinting overhead...
 - **on the other hand:** maybe David Livingstone or Eric Liddell type missionary?
 - or maybe Billy Graham?
 - or maybe even Holiday Club, or Alpha, or sharing your faith with a friend...
- What's the connection?

A Missionary God!

- First, says things about God.

1. Jesus comes from where God is to where sinners are

- he gives up the glory of heaven...
- he comes as a missionary.
- He reaches out.
- Gives up that which was rightfully his!
- Leaves behind glory etc for sake of task:
 - but not merely a task, a job - driven by love for us, the lost!

- How does he come?

2. Jesus comes as one of us

- Not as distant, great, power, etc
- Light is hidden that we might not be blinded; alongside and with!
- Who were Jesus' friends? Who did he associate with? Where did he go?
 - a stable, prostitutes and sinners, druggies and alcoholics, labourers and ordinary folk...
- He came from where he was to where we are....

3. Jesus brings Good News

- Angels sang!

Reflections on our Mission

- So?

We will become mission minded!

- Our core purpose - as I described it this morning - will shape what we do, who we are, what we spend time and money and priority on

We will reach out incarnationally!

- Jesus with skin on!
- Going to where people are, being one with them
 - raises so many questions!
 - how?!
 - are there limits?

We will bring and bear Good News!

- Not dour!

Conclusion

- Reflections on the manger should lead us out to follow the God who came to share Good News with sinners!

Discussion

- Read the "what is emerging church" quote, especially the critique of a "come to us" mentality...
- Questions
 - what truths do you hear in what Michael Moynagh says?
 - what questions or hesitations do you have?
 - what does the manger (incarnation) have to say about mission?
 - what other Scriptural truths or principles would you want to bring to bear?
 - what might **you** / **we** do differently as a result of thinking tonight?