

Published based on [Revisiting Christmas](#)

Revisiting Christmas

It began in a stable...

The smell of hay and animals filled the air.

Mary, just a young girl, must have been afraid.

Miles from home

Away from mom and dad

Birthing a child

In front a man she had not been intimate with yet

Joseph, himself a young man,

In all likelihood his first time to help birth a child

Wondering how to take care of this woman and this child

The responsibility of raising the child of God

What was it like to hold this baby?

Scary, overwhelming, confusing

The emotions of being chosen as a part of this purpose of God-

Not all pleasant emotions

Beginning life together in a backwards sort of way

Childbirth first

Relationships later

Angels pronouncing "Peace on Earth"

But where was that peace?

It was not to be found yet

There was not complete peace in that stable

If we are real about what was happening...

Two young people probably more terrified than peaceful

Wondering if God was going to use them to birth His child

Couldn't He have given them a room in the inn?

Being introduced to God

In skin

After 400 years of prophetic silence

Perhaps He had seemed a distant God before

Now His plan came – in a stable

A second phase of confusion for Joseph and Mary

After dreams, angelic visitations,

Trying to explain the plans of God

To others who were not privy to the experiences

The wonderful plan of God's peace

Eventually ended on a cross

With Mary's heart again experiencing the greatest confusion...

Had she carried this plan of God for these many years to watch it die?

Had God abandoned her?

The ways of God are unexplainable

And we make that sound so beautiful

And almost magical

Yet the plans of God are more often

Confusing, perplexing,

Not our ways

Not our thoughts

Plans more complex than we can understand

Peace on earth will eventually be a reality

But for now it can only be peace in our hearts

And like Mary and Joseph

Sometimes the peace is crowded out by

Fear, confusion, and ambivalence

As we wrestle to understand this God we serve

And now celebrating "Peace on Earth"

By rushing, pushing, stressing about money and gifts and schedules,

Feeling of failure in our ability to find the right gift that expresses love

And finally just needing to find some gift that will allow us to check a person off our list of responsibilities

Yet as at the first Christmas,

Perhaps we would better find God

in a stable of sorts

the stable of our hearts

As He births His plans in us in the most unexpected places

in the most unexpected ways

ways that we would not choose

discomforting, confusing ways

Ways to bring us peace

In our inner places

Ways that take us to our cross

Our place of death

While He waits as we die

Knowing that He is able to resurrect us and His plans for us

And knowing the scars we will carry

Will remind us

That the power of God

And the plans of God

Eventually do bring peace

But knowing that we are never able in our humanness to choose with joy

His plans for us to birth a dream and kill the dream

And resurrect the dream

Because it cost us too much

To revisit Christmas

Maybe we should

Look for the scared people

Who need to find God with skin on-

Our skin.

You can also find this article published on [Revisiting Christmas](#), and on the tag pages [Christmas](#), [confusion](#), [peace](#), [plans of God](#).