

## “Quirinius”

*“And it came to pass in those days that a decree went out from Cesar Augustus that all the world should be registered.*

*This census first took place while Quirinius was governing Syria.”*

Luke 2: 1,2



In “The Case for Christmas”, Lee Strobel investigates the biblical account dealing with the birth of Jesus of Nazareth. The following interview with John McRay, PHD., author of Archaeology and the New Testament, sheds light on a name read every Christmas for centuries—Quirinius.



“Luke’s narrative claims that Mary and Joseph were required by a census to return to Joseph’s hometown of Bethlehem. ‘Let me be blunt: this seems absurd.’ I said. ‘How could the government possibly force all its citizens to return to their birthplace? Is there any archaeological evidence whatsoever that this kind of census ever took place?’

McRay calmly pulled out a copy of his book. ‘Actually, the discovery of ancient census forms has shed quite a bit of light on this practice,’ he said as he leafed through the pages. Finding the reference he was searching for, he quoted from an official governmental order dated AD 104.

Gaius Vibius Maximus, Prefect of Egypt [says]: Seeing that the time has come for the house to house census, it is necessary to compel all those who for any cause whatsoever are residing out of their provinces to *return to their own homes*, that they may both carry out the regular order of the census and may also attend diligently to the cultivation of their allotments.

‘As you can see,’ he said as he closed the book, ‘that practice is confirmed by this document, even though this particular manner of counting people might seem odd to you. And another papyrus, this one from AD 48, indicates that the entire family was involved in the census.’

This, however, did not entirely dispose of the issue. Luke said the census that

brought Joseph and Mary to Bethlehem was conducted when Quirinius was governing Syria and during the reign of Herod the Great.

‘That poses a significant problem,’ I pointed out, ‘because Herod died in 4 BC, and Quirinius didn’t begin ruling Syria until AD 6, conducting the census soon after that. There’s a big gap there; how can you deal with such a major discrepancy in the dates?’

McRay knew I was raising an issue that archaeologists have wrestled with for years. He responded by saying, ‘An eminent archaeologist named Jerry Vardaman has done a great deal of work in this regard. He has found a coin with the name of Quirinius on it in very small writing, or what we call ‘micrographic’ letters. This places him as proconsul of Syria and Cilicia from 11 BC until after the death of Herod.’

I was confused. ‘What does that mean?’ I asked.

‘It means that there were apparently two Quirinius,’ he replied. ‘It’s not uncommon to have lots of people with the same Roman names, so there’s no reason to doubt that there were two people by the name of Quirinius. The census would have taken place under the reign of the earlier Quirinius. Given the cycle of a census every fourteen years, that would work out quite well.’ “

*Celebrating the birth of  
“her first born Son”,  
Pastor Mason*

# Ladies



## Christmas Brunch

### Saturday, December 4

The annual Ladies Christmas Brunch will be held at 10:00 AM on Saturday, December 4 at *Breezy Point Campground* on Wolf Spring Road in Scio. All ladies and their guests are welcome to join us as we begin the Christmas season focusing on Jesus, the reason for the season. Make reservations and payments by Sunday, November 28. Make checks payable to "Women's Fellowship" and give to Mary Deer.

The Women's Fellowship officers would like to take this opportunity to wish all the ladies and their families a blessed Holiday Season!

*Patty Stalker, President*

*Denise Regan, Vice-President*

*Denise Waasdorp, Secretary*

*Mary Deer, Treasurer*

*Joan Sorensen, Advisor*



Space will be provided on the bulletin board for anyone who would like to post a Christmas greeting to the congregation. Don't forget to send a card to the men and women who are serving in the military.

## Women's Bible Study

The next Women's Bible Study will be a 20 week study from Beth Moore on the apostle Paul. Normally a ten week study, we will be alternating the one hour DVD sessions with the book study. Studies will be at 10:00 a.m. on Wednesdays at the church, beginning January 12. A sign up sheet will be available in the foyer and there will be a study book on display as well. Call Sarah Kornhaus at 593-2324 if you have any questions.



### Sunday, December 19

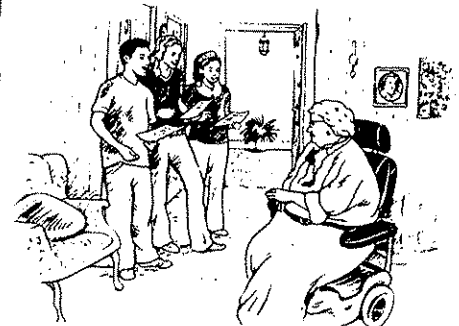
Our annual Christmas Program will be held Sunday, December 19 at 6:00 PM. A time of fellowship with refreshments will follow. Please bring a finger snack to share. This would be a good time to invite family and friends.



*In keeping with the spirit of Christmas, we will be collecting non-perishable food to bless those who could use a little extra help during this time of the year. A box will be provided in the foyer where you may deposit your donations.*

## Nursing Home Ministry

Several times during the year we have the privilege of bringing a Sunday morning service to the local nursing homes. On Sunday, December 19 at 1:30 PM we will meet at the Wellsville Manor and at 2:15 PM at Highland Healthcare to share in worship and the Word. All are welcome to come and experience God's love as we share with those who are unable to get out and attend church. Also, you are encouraged to bring your little ones as they bring a special joy to the residents.



[www.wellsvillefullgospel.org](http://www.wellsvillefullgospel.org)

**Check out our website!** You can listen to the weekly sermon and adult Sunday School classes, read the bulletin, monthly calendar, and much more.