Meaning of Christmas

Matt.

1. Most of us have mixed feelings about Christmas.
   a. Pleasant assns. vacations, friends, families, gifts, beauty
   b. Yet commercial. only vaguely related to stories of birth of Jesus.
      Feel guilty
2. at times make attempts to do something about.
   a. Transform people who get christmas ideas. Has value. Doesn't transform.
   b. Be negative.
   c. Not observe Christmas.
   d. Send cards in July.
   e. Increase charities. We could do well to look at ways N.T. writers interpreted birth of Jesus. Relatively unimportant. No celebration.
3. My own feeling is
4. Matt. one of writers to deal with birth of Jesus.
   a. what mean to him?
   b. He a Jew, a Christian. Relates to O.T.
5. Reflect on nature of Jew. history & see meaning in -
   a. Immanuel - God with us.
   b. Hope - Promise birth of Jew. - "out of Beth. a Messiah."
   c. Suffering & rejection - Herod & flight.
   d. Light to nations - Star of East & others come to Israel.

Luke –

1. Most beautiful of all N.T. Lit[erature].
2. Serves a base for Ch'mas story, insert from Mt. – Wise Men.
3. Just as Matt. saw Jesus a fulfilling of the Israel – Mission + Suffering.
4. Luke sees the coming of Ch. in terms of world's need.
5. Needs in terms of
   - Poor
   - Sinners
   - Have nots
   - Women

   } Hopeless, depressed, lonely, + lonely, degrading.

6. Loves to point to contrasts.
   - peasant girl
   - Stable.
   - 2 Doves
   - Shepherds.

   Read magnificat to illustrate.

   - Chariots of Rome – Baby.
   - Caesar Augustus – Jesus.
   - Empire – Birth of Jesus.
7. Think of Ch. message – cross, Jesus, Palestine, Hebrews, crucified Paul. How unlikely. God ever worked –
8. yet this way. Jesus, small, simple, dead, poor, despised, a stutterer.
9. 2 Lessons – ① Beware of pride ② Look what God can do.