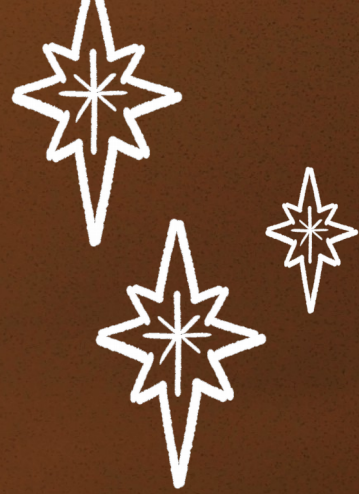


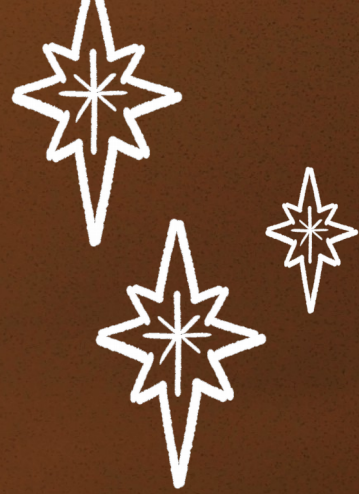
A Christmas message

- *"Mind you ... I've heard it many times"*
- *"It is a superstitious intrusion into an otherwise rational world [evidence-based]"*
- *"Yes ... it's good to get the Christmassy feel (+It's a wonderful life)"*



A Christmas message

- *"Mind you ... I've heard it many times"*
 - *I agree it's sometimes difficult to keep things fresh and urgent*
 - *Value of positive measures e.g. birthdays, anniversaries*
 - *Because an event is in the past does not mean it has no importance in the present*
 - *e.g. Brexit vote, e.g. election of Donald Trump*
 - *The world will never be the same*
 - *"you will find a baby wrapped in cloths and lying in a manger ... Glory to God in the highest and on earth peace to men on whom his favour rests"*



A Christmas message



- *"It is a superstitious intrusion into an otherwise rational world [evidence-based]"*
 - *Without real-world basis*
- *Depends on what is the "real world"!*
 - *Real world of only what can be measured with a ruler, or seen with a microscope*
 - *can't even detect "love", "beauty" let alone "angels", "miracles", unique events in history*
 - *Evidence of changed lives, key that fits the lock of ... life the universe and everything*
 - *Testimony of honest people in the past*
 - *"I've written so that you can know the certainty of these things ..." (1:4)*
 - *God has acted to show, and confirm favour to our needy race*



A Christmas message

- *"Yes ... it's good to get the Christmassy feel (+It's a wonderful life, A Christmas Carol ... Patrick Stewart)"*
 - *Definitely feelings!*
 - *Mary was "greatly troubled " at the angel's arrival*
 - *The shepherds were "terrified"*
 - *Good news of "great joy"*
 - *All the people who heard were "amazed"*
- *Feelings and moods ... response to something true that goes deeper and lasts longer than the feeling or mood itself*
- *I hope you feel Christmassy, but I hope you won't miss the fact that the events of Christmas apply all year round ... till there are no more years*
- *"Love so amazing so divine demands my soul my life my all"*

