

The Birth of Jesus Christ

– A Story of Humility

When the birth of Jesus is portrayed by Christian churches it seems that people attend to see the pageantry and enjoy the music rather than to focus on Jesus.

Luke 2:7 [NIV] *“and she gave birth to her firstborn, a son. She wrapped him in cloths and placed him in a manger, because there was no room for them in the inn.”*

The truth is that Jesus’ birth involved more humility than glory.

The Son of God who had lived in glory, saw humanity in the slime pit of sin and loved us so much that He gave up His glory to live in humble circumstances.

Philippians 2:5-7 [NIV] *“Your attitude should be the same as that of Christ Jesus: Who, being in very nature God, did not consider equality with God something to be grasped, but made himself nothing, taking the very nature of a servant, being made in human likeness.”*

Jesus didn’t deserve any shame but He lived in it until we murdered Him.

That is the example that God has given to us.

It shows what God is like.

John 14:9 [NIV] *“Jesus answered: “Don’t you know me, Philip, even after I have been among you such a long time? Anyone who has seen me has seen the Father. How can you say, ‘Show us the Father’?”*

Jesus wasn’t talking about appearance, but about love and humility.

When Jesus Christ became human, it was **not** some strange change in character.

No, Jesus shows us what God is like all the time.

God is always willing to put His own comfort and glory aside so He can rescue us from our slavery to sin.

This is true greatness.

Luke 22:24-27 [NIV] *“Also a dispute arose among them as to which of them was considered to be greatest. Jesus said to them, “The kings of the Gentiles lord it over them; and those who exercise authority over them call themselves Benefactors. But you are **not** to be like that. Instead, **the greatest among you should be like the youngest, and the one who rules like the one who serves. For who is greater, the one who is at the table or the one who serves? Is it not the one who is at the table? But I am among you as one who serves.”***

Glory is **not** about power and bright lights.

True greatness is **not** in strength or wealth.

True greatness is humility and service, and that is just as true about God as it is for us.

God’s greatness is seen in His love, in His willingness to serve.

The birth of Jesus shows that.

God's greatness is seen in how much He is willing to give up for love of others, **not** in how much He has now.

John 3:16-18 [NIV] *“For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life. For God did not send his Son into the world to condemn the world, but to save the world through him. Whoever believes in him is not condemned, but whoever does not believe stands condemned already because he has not believed in the name of God's one and only Son.”*

God so loved humanity that He sacrificed His only Son but they did **not** want Him.

Society only worships the God who has power and wealth **not** the God of love and humility.

Romans 5:6, 8, 10 [NIV] *“You see, at just the right time, when we were still powerless, Christ died for the ungodly.” ... “But God demonstrates his own love for us in this: While we were still sinners, Christ died for us.” ... “For if, when we were God's enemies, we were reconciled to him through the death of his Son, how much more, having been reconciled, shall we be saved through his life!”*

Society does **not** want Jesus Christ in their lives, but God still loves them.

This is what God is like.

The birth of Jesus Christ reminds us of this fact.

A touch of glory was shown at Christ's birth, but this appeared outside the birthplace town and seen by shepherds who were the lowest level of society in that day.

Shepherds were so despised by society at that time that they were **not** even allowed to testify in court.

No-one trusted them because they moved from one area to another grazing their animals.

But God sent His angels to shepherds **not** to priests, kings or the wealthy.

Matthew 2:13-15 [NIV] *“When they had gone, an angel of the Lord appeared to Joseph in a dream. “Get up,” he said, “take the child and his mother and escape to Egypt. Stay there until I tell you, for Herod is going to search for the child to kill him.” So he got up, took the child and his mother during the night and left for Egypt, where he stayed until the death of Herod. And so was fulfilled what the Lord had said through the prophet: “Out of Egypt I called my son.”*

The Christ child became a refugee in the land the Jews had left, the land of slavery, the land of outcast sinners. Jesus started His life as a human poor, persecuted, rejected by the people He had come to save from sin.

This is **not** the way we usually think of Godly glory, but this is God's kind of glory, the glory of love and self-sacrifice.

Matthew 21:33-39 [NIV] *“Listen to another parable: There was a landowner who planted a vineyard. He put a wall around it, dug a winepress in it and built a watchtower. Then he rented the vineyard to some farmers and went away on a journey. When the harvest time approached, he sent his servants to the tenants to collect his fruit. “The tenants seized his servants; they beat one, killed another, and stoned a third. Then he sent other servants to them, more than the first time, and the tenants treated them in the same way. Last of all, he sent his son to them. ‘They will respect my son,’ he said. “But when the tenants saw the son, they said to each other, ‘This is the heir. Come, let's kill him and take his inheritance.’ So they took him and threw him out of the vineyard and killed him.”*

God is the Creator King who sent His Son to His people even though He knows they will kill Him.

God is like Jesus all the time.

Jesus loves children, touches lepers and socialised with the outcasts of society, cheating tax collectors and prostitutes.

God lets people hate Him and beat Him up, not because He is a fool, but because He knows the best way for us sinners to come to our senses is to see what selfishness leads to, the murder of the One who loves us most of all.

God knows that the best way to overcome evil is **not** by force but by persistent love.

Sacrificial love is the most powerful force in the whole universe.

1 John 4:8-12 [NIV] *“Whoever does not love does not know God, because God is love. This is how God showed his love among us: He sent his one and only Son into the world that we might live through him. This is love: not that we loved God, but that he loved us and sent his Son as an atoning sacrifice for our sins. Dear friends, since God so loved us, we also ought to love one another. No one has ever seen God; but if we love one another, God lives in us and his love is made complete in us.”*

God is **not** hurt by our failings.

God does **not** get depressed when we reject Him.

God does **not** get vindictive when we insult Him.

God is much bigger than that, so He can be patient with us.

God can be a helpless baby, He can be a crucified criminal, He can stoop that low because He loves us.

God is so glorious that He left His glory behind and came down into the human slum-pit in order to save us from ourselves, our nature.

A lesson for us.

Genesis 1:26 [NIV] *“Then God said let us make humans in our image and in our likeness...”*

God created human beings in His “*image*”, with the ability to plan, create [in measure] and make decisions, choices.

God is now in the process of making us in His “likeness” and He is doing this by loving us unconditionally with a humble sacrificial love.

Romans 12:1-2 [NIV] *“Therefore, I urge you, brothers, in view of God’s mercy, to offer your bodies as living sacrifices, holy and pleasing to God, this is your spiritual act of worship. Do not conform any longer to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you will be able to test and approve what God’s will is — his good, pleasing and perfect will.”*

God has shown us His character in that of His Son Jesus Christ.

The desired response to this merciful love is for us to be willing to sacrifice our lives for others that they may also come to know the love that their God has for them.

Matthew 16:24-25 [NIV] *“Then Jesus said to his disciples, “If anyone would come after me, he must deny himself and take up his cross and follow me. For whoever wants to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for me will find it.”*

Following Jesus Christ, becoming a Christian, demands a life of sacrifice, a giving up of our will, our desires in life to find a God-like life, a life of eternal love.

This is the message that the birth of Jesus Christ the Son of God and Son of Man brings to us.