

Humility; Our Example!



#2906 1220 20P Advent
VIRTUAL

Our great *example* is our great *Savior*! God is saying *much* by providing His Son with *little* as He began life on earth. Jesus is John 14:6 “*The way, the truth, and the life,*” so His *example* of *humility* is the way to enter His kingdom—“*No man cometh unto the Father, but by me.*”

We must not miss the message of His humble beginning on earth in a very unpretentious manner with no luxuries or expensive surroundings to speak of. Jesus was *God* so He could be a *Savior* for everyone. It all began in a very lowly manner that did not attract any attention or interest from the world.

Most people try to obtain *better* circumstances; *improved* surroundings; or a *higher* position with their employment, but thirty-three years after that humble beginning in Bethlehem, the lowly life, the unpretentious surroundings, and the submissive attitude of Jesus remained the same. *That is our example.*

Jesus told the man who wanted to follow Him Matthew 8:20 “*The foxes have holes, and the birds of the air have nests; but the Son of man hath not where to lay his head.*” The Creator of the universe chose a very humble beginning to set the example of a true Christian life. His *humility*, *mekness*, and *unpretentious* lifestyle never changed during His entire time on earth.

The apostle wrote 1 Corinthians 1:26 “*Brothers, think of what you were when you were called. Not many of you were wise by human standards; not*

many were influential; not many were of noble birth. 27 *But God chose the foolish things of the world to shame the wise; God chose the weak things of the world to shame the strong.* 28 *He chose the lowly things of this world and the despised things—and the things that are not—to nullify the things that are,* 29 *so that no one may boast before him.*

When Jesus selected the twelve, He chose humble individuals who were part of the working class. They had no wealth, no college degrees, or positions of importance. God looks at the *heart*; the world looks at *titles*. They were not selected because of their education or financial standing—they had neither. Their *humility* made them *teachable*—that was the qualification!

The King of kings and the Savior of all began life in humble surroundings because *that* is the message God wanted to give. His Son would show the *way*, give the *truth*, and live a *life* that would be an example for everyone. After the apostle’s conviction on the Damascus road Acts 9, he said 1 Corinthians 11:1 “*Be ye followers of me, even as I also am of Christ.*”

If we will *commit* our life to God, we can be *used by* God to be a witness for Him—at work; with friends, around the home, and at school—we can shine a light for Jesus and be the peacemaker, but we need to first give our life totally to God in *humility* and *submission*.

The humble birth at Bethlehem says volumes about what the Christian life should be, and what *our* attitude should be, in a world filled with pride, arrogance, and selfies! The world’s most important birth is recorded—Luke 2:1 “*And it came to pass in those days, that there went out a decree from Caesar Augustus, that all the world should be taxed.* 2 *(And this taxing was first made when Cyrenius was governor of Syria.)* 3 *And all went to be taxed, every one into his own city.*

4 *And Joseph also went up from Galilee, out of the city of Nazareth, into Judaea, unto the city of David, which is called Bethlehem; (because he was of the house and lineage of David:)* 5 *To be taxed with Mary his espoused wife, being great with child.* 6 *And so it was, that, while they were there, the days were accomplished that she should be delivered.* 7 *And she brought forth her firstborn son, and wrapped him in swaddling clothes, and laid him in a manger; because there was no room for them in the inn.”*

Humility is seen in the swaddling clothes and coarse cloth for the baby’s first outfit; a feed trough for a bed; and a stable for a room. That was the *example* Jesus gave to those He came to save. Later He said Matthew 11:29 “*Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls.*”

Anyone can *learn* from His example if they choose to *follow* it—asking Him into their heart in *humility* of spirit and being willing to learn lessons of faith and trust. Matthew 19:21 “*Come and follow me,*” but *following* Him means giving our *life* to Him first.

Not many people would believe a news report that the greatest King ever born, would not begin life in an elegant palace nor live in a governor’s mansion surrounded with servants but would be in a stable and a manger. Most would scoff at the humble beginning of our Lord, but that is how He began His life on earth—and He never allowed it to change Him for over thirty-three years!

A Jewish person of that day would know all about a Messiah who was predicted to appear someday. It was a Bible *promise* they believed would be fulfilled exactly as *written* in Scripture. They *knew* He would come from the line of David, and that He would reign over Israel from Jerusalem.

They would all be familiar with the prophecy Micah 5:2 “*But you, Bethlehem Ephrathah, Though*

you are little among the thousands of Judah, Yet out of you shall come forth to Me The One to be Ruler in Israel, Whose goings forth are from of old, From everlasting.”

Jesus, the Messiah, had to be born in Bethlehem, and God would see to it that it was a *humble* beginning and birth. God worked in amazing ways to have the Lord’s birth occur at the right *time* and in the right *place*. God’s own words through the prophet Micah would be fulfilled!

God planned for Joseph and Mary’s visit to occur during the reign of Caesar Augustus, who had no knowledge of Scripture. The Jews were strongly against Roman occupation, as they brought images of their idols, including Caesar, into Israel on flags, military armor, and shields. Even coins were engraved with Caesar’s image.

Augustus, often called Octavian, demonstrated military and political skills in ending wars and extending Roman boundaries. These leadership skills gave the Roman Empire a time of peace—called Pax Romana. Octavian was just an instrument of God’s providence and had no idea that he was preparing the way for the Advent of the Messiah.

Roman peace enabled the building of many roads that resulted in easy access to any part of the Empire—*this* led to the rapid spread of the gospel—Galatians 4:4 “*When the fullness of the time had come, God sent forth His Son, born of a woman, born under the law, to redeem those who were under the law, that we might receive the adoption as sons.*” Everything in the world was perfectly timed for the arrival of the Messiah—including a humble place to stay.

This *humble beginning* was the divine *plan* and *message* to all who would choose to follow Jesus. *Humility* is woven all through Scripture as the *right* and *scriptural* attitude to have. Philippians 2:3

“Do nothing out of selfish ambition or vain conceit [pride], but in humility [and lowliness of mind] consider others better than yourselves.”

Luke 2:1 “*And it came to pass in those days, that there went out a decree from Caesar Augustus, that all the world should be taxed.*” Rome required such registration, and due to various delays, Caesar’s census was not carried out in Palestine until three years after it was announced. Finally a deadline for compliance was issued, which was all in God’s plan for Jesus’ parents to travel to Bethlehem at the proper time Micah 5:2.

The journey from Nazareth to Bethlehem was an arduous trip that took Joseph and Mary through many places of the Old Testament—*Shiloh*, where Hannah asked God for a child 1 Samuel 1:9-11; *Gilgal*, where Hannah’s son, Samuel, was the judge and prophet of Israel; *Ramah*, where Rachel wept for her children Jeremiah 31:15; and *Mount Gibon*, where Solomon worshiped God.

The journey continued through *Jerusalem*; *Mount Moriah*; and across the plateau of *Zion* on which Jerusalem is built. Mary and Joseph would arrive at *Bethlehem*, the home of Boaz and Ruth 4:9-11, and on Luke 2:4 “*from Galilee, out of the city of Nazareth, into Judea, to the city of David, which is called Bethlehem*”—the very *center* of the Nativity story.

Luke continues Luke 2:6 “*And so it was, that, while they were there, the days were accomplished that she should be delivered. 7 And she brought forth her firstborn son, and wrapped him in swaddling clothes, and laid him in a manger; because there was no room for them in the inn.*”

The King of all kings and Lord of all lords would have the most *humble* of accommodations. Mary and Joseph were not staying in a three-story hotel, but the Greek word used for *inn* denotes a rough shelter—more like a *loft* in a barn that was cold, dark, and unpleasant.

The Roman decree made Bethlehem very crowded, with the best rooms taken. When Christ was born, a *No Vacancy* sign greeted Him, so they stayed with the animals in a shelter for many days. The couple would not have comprehended the magnitude of what had taken place, even though an angel had informed them of this extraordinary birth.

When the Son of God came all the way from heaven, He had the most humble of accommodations, and was willing to set aside any equality with God—taking the role of a servant. He not only *chose* the humble position of a servant, but He Philippians 2:8 “*Became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross.*”

Jesus came to earth for *all* people of *all* races, cultures, and nations, so He could tell them about His Truth, and then finish the atoning work at Calvary. Every step the Baby took, brought Him closer to the cross to make salvation a reality for all who would follow Him in faith.

That *plan* and that *offer* has never changed all of these thousands of years. *Where meek souls will, receive Him still, the dear Christ enters in.* Jesus promised John 6:37 “*Him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out.*”

Jesus came specifically to *do* the Father’s will and *provide* a salvation plan for all faithful followers. Philippians 2:9 “*Wherefore God also hath highly exalted him, and given him a name which is above every name.*”

It is a story worth telling over and over because everyone must *begin with humility*. *Pride must be removed, and we must* 1 Peter 5:5 “*Be clothed with humility, for ‘God resists the proud, But gives grace to the humble.’” Grace gives entrance to the Kingdom!*



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