

Highway to the Manger Zone Part 2: Away in A Manger

Objective: To challenge us to embrace humility this Christmas season.

Read together:

While they were there, the time came for the baby to be born, 7 and she gave birth to her firstborn, a son. She wrapped him in cloths and placed him in a manger, because there was no guest room available for them.

Luke 2:6-7

"Today in the town of David a Savior has been born to you; he is the Messiah, the Lord. 12 This will be a sign to you: You will find a baby wrapped in cloths and lying in a manger."

Luke 2:11-12

In your relationships with one another, have the same mindset as Christ Jesus: Who, being in very nature God, did not consider equality with God something to be used to his own advantage; 7 rather, he made himself nothing by taking the very nature of a servant, being made in human likeness. 8 And being found in appearance as a man, he humbled himself by becoming obedient to death—even death on a cross!

Philippians 2:6-8

Jesus knew that the Father had put all things under his power, and that he had come from God and was returning to God; 4 so he got up from the meal, took off his outer clothing, and wrapped a towel around his waist. 5 After that, he poured water into a basin and began to wash his disciples' feet, drying them with the towel that was wrapped around him.

Now that I, your Lord and Teacher, have washed your feet, you also should wash one another's feet. 15 I have set you an example that you should do as I have done for you.

John 13:3-5, 14-15

- When you think of Christmas, what words or descriptions come to your mind?
- How often do you think of "Humility" when you think of Christmas?
- How do you respond when you give someone a gift and they don't seem to like or appreciate it? What does your response tell you about your focus?
- Whether we realize it or not, we tend to make Christmas about ourselves. What are some ways you've seen that done (or done it yourself)?
- Luke 2:12 says, "*This will be a sign to you: You will find a baby wrapped in cloths and lying in a manger.*" The fact that the baby was wrapped in swaddling cloths was not special or unique. All babies were. The sign was that the baby was lying in a manger. What was it about the manger that was so special that it was a sign of the Messiah?
- Have you ever thought about the fact that the humble manger was a part of God's plan from the beginning? How does that change the way you view the Christmas story?
- When faced with corrupt power structures, we tend to want to push back. We want to bring our own power of "goodness" against the powers of evil. But the only way to push back against corrupt power is to be humble. Why is that such a difficult concept for most of us? How does humble service undermine and overthrow corrupt power structures?

Final Thought: Through the manger, Jesus invites us to join him in humbling serving our world. Who, in your life, do you need to humbly serve this week? What is one thing you can do to serve them?

