



The Servant Love of Jesus
Luke 2:1-7; Philippians 2:1-11

John 3:16 states God showed his love to the world by giving his Son, Jesus. Jesus expressed that love by humbling himself. We must follow his example and humble ourselves before others and serve them.

Jesus' Humble Birth (Luke 2:1-7)

Just about everything about Jesus' birth was unexpected. The virgin conception. The journey and birth in Bethlehem were probably unexpected to Mary and Joseph since they were from Nazareth, but vitally important to fulfill the Scripture that the Messiah would be born in Bethlehem (Micah 5:2). Jesus was King yet he was unexpectedly born in humble circumstances. He was born to humble parents. He was born in a barn and laid in a feeding trough for animals. The first to hear the announcement of his birth and to visit him were humble shepherds. These humble circumstances showed the type of life Jesus would live. Jesus came not to be served, but to serve and give his life as a ransom for many (Mark 10:45). *What are ways that we see unexpected or unexplained things happen in our lives?*

Jesus' Humble Attitude (Phil 2:5-11)

The incarnation (God becoming man) is impossible to fully comprehend. But why God became a man is clear. Jesus humbled himself to become a man to die on the cross. What it was like for Jesus to be the God-man is also impossible to comprehend. But we do know this: he experienced what we experience, so we know he's walked the path before us and knows what we're going through. He felt the warmth of a mother's love and comfort of a father's protection. He experienced human emotions. He experienced hunger, thirst, and fatigue. He experienced the death of a friend, the betrayal of his disciples, and the misunderstanding of his family. *What about Jesus' humble life and ministry are you grateful for? Why?*

Jesus' Humble Death (Phil 2:8)

Parallels between Jesus' birth and death: (1) rejected (Luke 2:7; Mark 15:15). (2) His mother Mary was at both. (3) Myrrh was present (Matt 2:11; John 19:39). (4) darkness (Matt 2:10, 14; Matt 27:45). (5) Jesus' body was wrapped in clothes (Luke 2:7, 12; Mark 15:46). (6) A Herod becomes involved; Herod the Great at Jesus' birth & Herod Antipas, his son, at Jesus' death (Matt 2:7; Luke 23:7) (7) Jesus is worshiped, though at his death mockingly (Matt 2:11; Luke 2:13-14; Mark 15:19). (8) Wise men recognized his deity (Matt 2:1; Mark 15:39; Luke 23:41). (9) Jesus was hailed as King, though at his death mockingly (Matt 2:2; Mark 15:26,32). (10) An honorable man named Joseph was present (Matt 1:19; Luke 2:16; Mark 15:43). (11) The chief priests and scribes were involved (Matt 2:4-6; Matt 27:1). *What connections between Jesus' birth and death do you find interesting? Why?* We are commanded to follow Jesus' example as we relate to others. To live out the true spirit of Christmas is to consider others more important than ourselves and serve them.