

Christmas Through the Eyes of...
...Jesus
Luke 2: 6-12
Fourth Sunday of Advent
December 22, 2019
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READING THE SCRIPTURE IN THE MESSAGE

In one of my thick files of sermon ideas, I rediscovered and was inspired by Max Lucado's blog called [It Began in a Manger.](#)

When this message first started "gellin'" my ideas were pretty child-like, really. We're looking at Christmas through Jesus' eyes, so what did he see when he looked up from the manger?

Mary, of course, and she's humming. Smiling at him and Joseph, too.

Shabby shepherds in the corner.

And animals doing what animals in a stable do.

But then my ideas got more serious.

This baby, our Savior, Jesus, had stepped out of Heaven!

A stable isn't a throne room.

And THIS isn't a "king-sized" bed!

Lucado's blog jogged me to think about the arrival of Jesus. We can't hear, enough, especially this time of year, the verses from Luke:

Luke 2:6-12 NRSV

⁶ While they were there, the time came for her to deliver her child. ⁷ And she gave birth to her firstborn son and wrapped him in bands of cloth, and laid him in a manger, because there was no place for them in the inn.

The Shepherds and the Angels

⁸ In that region there were shepherds living in the fields, keeping watch over their flock by night. ⁹ Then an angel of the Lord stood before them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were terrified. ¹⁰ But the angel said to them,

“Do not be afraid; for see—I am bringing you good news of great joy for all the people: ¹¹ to you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, who is the Messiah,^[a] the Lord. ¹² This will be a sign for you: you will find a child wrapped in bands of cloth and lying in a manger.”

Do you supposed the breakfast chatter inside the innkeeper’s home was anything more than “normal”? The census had caused a boom in business.

There’s a lot of work to be done. So, would that couple out in the stable raise any questions? It’s doubtful. There were beds and breakfasts that needed to be made!

There wasn’t time to think about Mary’s condition or WHAT had occurred.

God had entered the world as a baby.

If anyone from the inn had been curious, they might have looked in on the stable and realized it stunk and was cold!

If anyone had gotten there early enough they would have seen the shepherds, still amazed about what *they’d* experienced in the night.

They haven’t had any rest either!

They’d see the young mother and a tuckered out daddy.

Now that the excitement has subsided and Mary and the baby are comfortable, boy, he’s tired but still trying to put all the pieces together.

Maybe he nodded off, but Joseph remembered that the angel told him, “you shall name him Jesus.”

Mary, on the other hand, is wide awake!

Childbirth has given way to wonder as she looks at her son.

Her Lord!

Isn’t it a marvel that the person who “gets it”, the one who understands WHO God is and what God is doing...is a young, new mother?

Kinda gives us encouragement that *wherever we are on our faith walk (or how old we are) that we CAN understand some of the mystery of God in our lives. And as we grow, (in faith and age) that understanding grows too.*
Amen?

Somehow Mary knows WHO she is holding.
And she remembers the angel, saying, “His kingdom will never end.”

She has to smile!
This baby looks nothing like a king.
His face is red.
When he cries, it’s strong, but it’s still the cry of a helpless BABY!

Lucado wrote:

“Majesty in the midst of the mundane. Holiness in the filth of sheep manure and sweat. Divinity entered the world on the floor of a stable, through the womb of a teenager and in the presence of a carpenter.”

This baby, the King, was THERE in the moments of the Creation.
And yet, he left the robes of eternity to lay in rags.
And say what you might about what the shepherds were going to tell, it was *nothing* like what the Christ had heard when he listened to heavenly angels worship!

What a journey Jesus has ALREADY made!

And it all happened “in a moment.”
A remarkable moment.

Bethlehem is humming with day-to-day stuff.
People were too busy to consider what was happening *right under their noses* – not because of the hubbub....but because **they weren’t looking**.

Now, as moments go, it *wasn’t* much different.
The blip on the timeline of humanity looked just like the one before.

It happened and was over.

But, Dear Ones, we know this was something different.
God came, and was like **US**.

While the cattle were lowing, The Divine arrived.

One of God's attributes is that God is All-Powerful.

But in an instant, God became breakable.

The One who Created had to depend on a young girl to FEED him.

God, as Jesus, had eyebrows and elbows, kidneys and a bladder!

God had come, and his mama didn't have a manicure, his dad's hands were calloused.

The wise men were coming but shepherds were the first welcome.

Angels watched as Mary changed God's diaper.

And as He learned to walk!

He played in the streets with the other kids.

What if the synagogue leader had *known* who was listening to his sermons??

Jesus may have had pimples.

Maybe he couldn't carry a tune!

Skinned knees, maybe.

The one thing we **can** be sure of is that Jesus, from Heaven, was completely divine and now, on Earth, was completely human.

And when we truly embrace **that** idea we can also hold onto **knowing** that Jesus – the man – felt the things we feel and experienced what we do.

He felt weak, sometimes tired.

Failure was scary.

He got colds and had body odor.

His feelings got hurt. Sometimes his head ached.

Sounds almost disrespectful, doesn't it?

As I read Lucado's blog, I got a little uncomfortable.

'Cause it's a lot easier to keep the "real" things like burping and blisters, to keep what it is to be a HUMAN, out of God the Man.

We try to tidy it up.

Scoop the manure.

Blot the sweat.

Don't think about Jesus, God Among Us, ever snoring or wanting to cuss when he hit his thumb with a hammer.

It's easier for us to handle and keep Him divine if he's "in the box" of our understanding.

But – Dear Ones, we can't do that!

We have to get "outside" the box and let Jesus be as human as he IS.

If we don't let him into the MESS of US, we won't let him pull us out of that MESS.

Jesus walked among humanity and knew our challenges.

He said things like, "Love your neighbor" as one his "neighbors" tried to kill him.

He could dare his disciples to leave their families for the gospel, because he'd already kissed his mother goodbye.

He preached "pray for those who persecute you" knowing he'd soon be begging God to forgive his murderers.

And "I am with you always" are the words of God who, **in one instant**, did the impossible to make it all things possible for US.

Our Lord Jesus walked OUR walk...

...and knows our struggles.

THAT Lord Jesus, CHOSE to step out of Heaven to be with us!

And it all happened in one, remarkable moment.

The Word became flesh and, as Scripture tells us, “dwelled among us.”

The world had an instantaneous transformation because, when God became the man, Jesus, God made it possible for us to see God.

And here’s some really great and awesome news: There will be another remarkable moment.

When Jesus was resurrected and went back to sit in the Throne Room of Heaven, he left the back door open. And The Day is coming when we “will all be changed—in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye.”

In a *moment*, The King’s first arrival went unnoticed by the world.

But the next time he comes it won’t be that way.

“In a moment” – THAT’S ALL IT TAKES TO CHANGE THE WORLD.

Amen!