

## THE GLORY OF THE STORY (The Paradoxes of Christmas) Luke 2:1- 20

Jesus descended from the peak of glory to the lowly position of birth in a manger in order that He might raise us from our lowly position to His glory. **This is a paradox.** (Paradox - a statement that seems contrary to common sense and yet is perhaps true. A paradox is an apparent contradiction).

**Let's look at five (5) contrasts which illustrate this central paradox.**

1. Human Birth and Heavenly Birth.

**First** there is a contrast between Luke 2:11 and John 1:12. Both deal with birth; **Human birth** and **Heavenly birth**.

**The point is that Jesus underwent a human birth so that we who believe in Him might have a heavenly birth.** Jesus became a man, was born below, that we might be **born above**. Jesus was born a baby in a shepherd's pen that we might have the glory of a spiritual heavenly birth.

Have you become a child of God?

*"If anyone is in Christ, he is a new creature; the old things passed away; behold, new things have come" (2 Corinthians 5:17).*

**2. A Manger and a Mansion**

**Second**, there is the contrast between Luke 2:7 and John 14:3. A **manger** on earth and a **mansion** in heaven.

**As Christians, we are just pilgrims here, our true home is in heaven.**

How do we get to our mansion? Through a door to heaven. Jesus said, "I am the door."

John 14:6, *"I am the way, the truth and the life; no one comes to the father but through me."*

**3. The Contrast between a Human Family and God's Family.**

**Thirdly**, there is a contrast between a **Human Family** and **God's Family**. We take **Matthew 2: 11** and place it alongside **Galatians 3 :26**

Here we see that **Jesus became a member of a human family** so that **we** might become **members of God's family**.

Are you a member of God's family?

We become members of God's family through faith/trust in the Lord Jesus Christ. This is the **Good News**.

### **What is the Good News (the Gospel)?**

The way to be saved by Him **is not works of merit**, but **faith in the God who justifies the ungodly** (Romans 4:5, 5:1; Ephesians 2:8-9; 1Corinthians 2:9).

The angel delivered, *"The good news for all people, a Savior has been born to you."*

### **4. Poverty and Riches.**

**Fourthly**, the contrasts of **Poverty** and **Riches**. Matthew 8:20 says that during the days of His earthly ministry the Lord was so poor that He had *"no place to lay His head."*

We have been made rich with salvation; rich with forgiveness of sins, rich with the fullness of God the Spirit, rich with a life planned and protected by God, rich with a life of serving the living God, rich with a home in glory, rich with an abundance of brothers and sisters in Christ! **Yes, through His poverty we have been made very rich!**

Now that we are rich in Christ, are we generous like Christ? God gave His all - His Son. Christ gave His life.

*"It is more blessed to give than to receive."* (Acts 20:35b)

### **5. Humble Shepherds and Heavenly Angels.**

In the **fifth contrast, Shepherds and Angels**, is found between **Luke 2:16** and **Luke 15: 10**.

**Jesus was welcomed by poor, humble shepherds at His birth, and we in contrast at our new birth are welcomed by angels.**

### **Conclusion.**

These are the great contrasts of the Christmas story. It is that which makes **Christmas irresistibly attractive**. It is the reversal of roles at God's cost for our benefit: (1) Jesus endured a **human birth** to give us a **new spiritual birth**. (2) He occupied a stable (a **manger**) that we might occupy a **mansion**. (3) Jesus had an **earthly mother** so that we might have a **heavenly Father**. (4) He **left His home in glory to give us glory**. (5) He became **poor** that we might be **rich**. (6) He was **welcomed by shepherds** at His birth whereas we at our new birth are **welcomed by angels**.

Jesus was "laid in a manger" A wooden manger (feeding trough; feeding box) and died on a wooden cross.

**Christmas, from the Cradle to the Cross...** "Glory to God in the Highest! "