

# miracle in a **M** **NGER**

## **WEEK 4 (CHRISTMAS EVE) - CHRIST IN A MANGER**

### **OVERVIEW**

One of the most central images in the Christian imagination at Christmastime is that of baby Jesus lying in a manger. We picture a tiny infant resting calmly in a clean, cozy, wooden crib while Mary, Joseph, a few angels, some sharply dressed wise men, and some spotless animals look on. What we fail to consider in this beautiful nativity scene is the dirt, the noises, the stench of animal droppings, and the utter humiliation undoubtedly felt by Jesus' parents at this most humble of beginnings for their son. What do we learn about the profound love of God that he chose to be born not in a palace, but in relative squalor and humility?

*She gave birth to her firstborn son. She wrapped him snugly in strips of cloth and laid him in a manger, because there was no lodging available for them.*

**Luke 2:7**

## **WEEK 5 - CHRIST IN AN ATTITUDE OF HUMILITY**

### **OVERVIEW**

As we come to the end of another year and begin looking to the start of 2025, we will conclude this series about the humility of the incarnation by returning to Philippians 2, where the Apostle Paul describes the shocking depths to which Christ was willing to go in his love for humanity. We will reflect on how Christ showed up for us in 2024 even in our lowest moments. We will also be invited to consider our own posture towards the world around us in the new year. Are we willing to "have the same attitude as Christ" by walking in self-giving love?

*Though he was God, he did not think of equality with God as something to cling to. Instead, he gave up his divine privileges; he took the humble position of a slave and was born as a human being.*

**Philippians 2:6-7**

## **DISCUSSION QUESTIONS**

1. What is the first thing that comes to mind when you think of a nativity scene?
2. Read [Luke 2:1-20](#). Barry said that the place Mary and Joseph stayed in was more like a guest room portion of a home, where the animals stayed. Does this change the way you think of Jesus' birthplace? In what way(s)?
3. What new thoughts has God stirred in you this Christmas, as we have looked at the shocking humility of Christ's birth?
4. Read [Luke 2:14](#). Have you ever considered how God is pleased with you? How could this realization bring someone peace?
5. Read [Philippians 2:1-11](#).
  - a. As you read this passage today or during the message, what stood out to you?
  - b. How would you describe your posture towards the world around you?
  - c. Name some new ways you could "have the same attitude as Christ" by walking in self-giving love in the coming year.
6. As you enter a new year, what is God's invitation to you?