



Coming Down to Lift Up

RELATE

How did Sunday's sermon help you?

What is your favorite part of preparing to celebrate Christmas? Least favorite?

What jobs did your parents have when you were little? Did you see your family as poor or privileged?

READ & REFLECT

Isaiah 9:1-7 **Matthew 1:18-25, 2:13-23** **Philippians 2:6-8**

Isaiah describes Galilee as a land humbled by God where people lived in the shadow of death. What does he prophesy will happen in this land? What will this "child" be called? How will his government change their lives?

Matthew describes Jesus' parents as a poor, young couple who escaped from an oppressive government as refugees to Egypt soon after Jesus' birth until it was safe to return home. Why would God design such a childhood for Jesus? How could this prepare Him for His future ministry?

How did Jesus' early life experience mirror the history of the Jewish people? Why is this significant? How did this challenge people's recognition of Him as the Messiah Isaiah described?

How does the life of Jesus redefine what it means to have power, purpose, and privilege? What message is God giving through the life of His Son on earth? Does this make it easier or harder for people to see Him as God?

What other experiences of humbling and subjection did Jesus go through? Which of these is most meaningful to you? Does considering the difficulties Jesus experienced change how you see the difficulty God has allowed you in your life? How?

Jesus is both "wonderful counselor" and "God with us". How has He been these for you? Into what current situation do you need to invite Him to be with you as One who knows what you are facing?

RESPOND

Act Carve out time before Christmas to read the gospel stories of Jesus' birth. Allow yourself to reflect on the truth that God sent His Son to experience our lives, and worship Him.

Reflect "The incarnation means that for whatever reason God chose to let us fall . . . to suffer, to be subject to sorrows and death—he has nonetheless had the honesty and the courage to take his own medicine. . . . He can exact nothing from man that he has not exacted from himself." Dorothy Sayers