



REFLECTIONS

December 25, 2022

And she brought forth her firstborn son, and wrapped him in swaddling clothes, and laid him in a manger; because there was no room for them in the inn.

Luke 2:7 KJV

Gift from God

It may have been the first story I ever heard. Of course, I was too young to remember my first Christmas, but I suspect Mema told me the Christmas story for the first time that year.

It was the first Christmas after I became a father, but also the first Christmas after Mema became a great grandmother. It was a special occasion for her, and she had a special gift for her great grandson. You guessed it—the Christmas story, only told in her own special way.

Mema had taken an old stocking from her wardrobe and darned little pictures of the story on it, piece by piece, from the angel's appearance to Mary through the scene of baby Jesus *wrapped in swaddling clothes, and laid in a manger*. Now, if her Christmas gift to her great grandson was the Christmas story, might she have held me in her arms that year to share a similar gift with me? Besides, I remember her telling me the story many times through the years. That's just what she did.

The story of Jesus is not a fairytale. It is true. God came into the world one clear and shining night in a manner never imagined for a king. He came as a common man...

Who, being in very nature God, did not consider equality with God something to be grasped, but made himself nothing, taking the very nature of a servant, being made in human likeness. And being found in appearance as a man, he humbled himself and became obedient to death — even death on a cross!

Therefore God exalted him to the highest place and gave him the name that is above every name, that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father. (Philippians 2:6-11)

Mema was one of many to tell me Bible stories, and she was one of many who made a difference in the world by the way she lived. Our lives make a difference in the world too. Christ lived through my grandmother; and He lives through you and me. The difference we make is not in wealth attained, positions held, or trophies earned. The difference is in the way we allow the love of Jesus flow through our lives. It's the same gift God has given us.

“For God so loved the world that He gave his only begotten son.”

Merry Christmas

Richard +

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