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## **“The Rest of the Story”**

### **PHILIPPIANS 2:5-11**

#### **Introduction**

1. It is at this time of the year that the focus of attention for so many has been turned to the birth of our Savior.
2. The airwaves have been filled with a multitude of songs which proclaim this miraculous occasion, while television stations have pulled at our heart strings with a number of Christmas themed movies.
3. Manger scenes were set up on various lawns to remind us of His humble beginning.
4. Madison Avenue with all of its advertising power even joined in convincing us that the reason we bought and gave to others was because of God’s gift to us.
5. Even the very name “Christmas” has His name stamped upon it.
6. History teaches us that for the first three centuries of its existence the church did not observe the birth of Jesus.
7. It wasn’t until the middle of the fourth century that the church in Rome selected December 25<sup>th</sup> as the day to be recognized, even while others were arguing for a date in the spring.
8. The church in the area of west Asia known as Armenia held onto January 6<sup>th</sup> as the date they recognized.
9. But are we missing the total message? Is there more to the story?
10. I believe there is, and it is this “Rest of the Story” that I would like for us to consider today.

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### **I. God Became Flesh**

**A. OUR LORD LEFT THE SPLENDOR OF HEAVEN**

1. Since before time He, the Father and the Spirit were one.
2. In Jesus' prayer to His Father, which the apostle John recorded for us in chapter 17 of his gospel, our Lord prayed that His Father would reinstate Him with the glory which He had with His Father before the world existed.

“Now, Father, glorify Me together with Yourself, with the glory which I had with You before the world was.” (John 17:5)

3. In Hebrews 1:3 you and I are told that “He is the radiance of His [God's] glory and the exact representation of His nature.”
4. Even though Jesus existed in the majestic “form of God, [He] did not regard equality with God a thing to be grasped” (v. 6b).
5. He did not hold on to His equality with God as something to use for His own advantage.

**Slide 3****B. JESUS LEFT HEAVEN FOR A HUMBLE BIRTH IN THIS WORLD OF SIN**

1. In verse 7 of our text, Paul tells us that the Son of God, “emptied Himself, taking the form of a bond-servant, being made in the likeness of men” (Philippians 2:7).
2. Luke, in his gospel, shares with us the details leading up to and including the birth of our Lord (cf. Luke 2:1-20).
3. In Luke 2:7, he records the following: “And she [Mary] brought forth her firstborn son, and wrapped Him in swaddling cloths, and laid Him in a manger, because there was no room for them in the inn.”
4. Notice where Mary laid the one who we know to be the King of kings and Lord of lords — in a manger.
  - a. A manger is a feeding trough for farm animals.
  - b. No mother today, would even consider putting her newborn in a feed trough.

- c. The One who came as the Savior of the world did not know what so many of us take for granted:
  - 1) Hospitals were non-existent.
  - 2) There are some mothers today who opt for giving birth at home with a mid-wife present, but Mary didn't even have that option.
  - 3) Her delivery room was frequented by farm animals — cattle, sheep, donkeys, etc.

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## II. He Lived The Life Of A Homeless Man

### A. THE FIRST THIRTY YEARS OF HIS LIFE WERE SPENT AT HOME

1. You may remember that Joseph and Mary were instructed by the angel to take their son and flee to Egypt to escape Herod's slaughter of the male children under the age of two in the vicinity of Bethlehem (Matthew 2:16).
2. After Herod's death, Joseph, Mary and Jesus returned to Nazareth, where they would raise their son (Matthew 2:22, 23).
3. Every year they made the journey to Jerusalem for Passover, as the Law required (cf. Luke 2:41), but they always came back to Nazareth (Luke 2:51).
4. It was in this village about 15 miles southwest of the Sea of Galilee that Jesus grew up around His father, mother, brothers and sisters.
5. When He was about 30 years old, He was baptized by John the Baptist in the Jordan River (Matthew 3:13-17; Mark 1:9-11; Luke 3:21,22; John 1:31-34).
6. Following this, His life changed — He became an itinerant preacher.

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[Something else also changed in Jesus' life.]

### B. HE HAD NO PLACE TO OFFICIALLY CALL HIS HOME

1. In the early days of Jesus' ministry, a scribe came to Him and committed to follow Him wherever He went — "Teacher, I will follow You wherever You go" (Matthew 8:19).

2. However, Jesus said to this would be disciple, “The foxes have holes and the birds of the air have nests, but the Son of Man has nowhere to lay his head” (Matthew 8:20).
  - a. He owned no property, no home, no furnishings, no bed.
  - b. He had no place to call his home — he was dependent upon the goodness of others.
  - c. He was constantly on the move preaching the good news about the “kingdom of heaven.”
  - d. Today, we might even call Him a homeless person.
3. The One whose praises we sing, who was God in the Flesh, the creator of heaven and earth, was living a life the majority of us would never consider.
4. Why? Because He came “to seek and save that which was lost” (Luke 19:10).

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### **III. He Died A Pauper’s Death**

#### **A. WHAT DID HE OWN AT HIS DEATH? (JOHN 19:23-24)**

“Then the soldiers, when they had crucified Jesus, took His outer garments and made four parts, a part to every soldier and also the tunic; now the tunic was seamless, woven in one piece.” (John 19:23, NASB95)

1. It was the custom of Roman soldiers in charge of executions to take the garments of the condemned either for their own, or to later sell as a “fringe benefit” of their responsibility.
2. The soldiers at Jesus’ crucifixion divided His outer garments into four parts so that each soldier would have a part (John 19:23).
3. However, His “tunic was seamless.” It had been “woven in one piece” (John 19:23).
4. For this, they “cast lots” (rolled the dice) so that it would not be torn apart.
5. Don’t miss the importance of these two verses — at Jesus death, this was

all He owned.

6. He had no other property, no money, no estate to be divided among His family — there was nothing else, just the clothes on his back.

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## **B. WHO PAID JESUS' BURIAL EXPENSES? (JOHN 19:38-42; MATTHEW 27:59,60)**

“After these things Joseph of Arimathea . . . came and took away His body. Nicodemus, who had first come to Him by night, also came, bringing a mixture of myrrh and aloes, about a hundred pounds weight. So they took the body of Jesus and bound it in linen wrappings with the spices, as is the burial custom of the Jews. Now in the place where He was crucified there was a garden, and in the garden a new tomb in which no one had yet been laid.” (John 19:38–41, NASB95)

1. Did Jesus' estate pay for the linen cloth to wrap His body? No.
2. Did Jesus' estate pay for the spices used in His burial? No.
3. Was Jesus buried in a tomb that He or His family owned? No.
4. Did the family take care of the burial expenses? No.
5. Remember, when Jesus died, He had almost no material possessions.
6. So who took care of all these things.
7. Everything necessary for Jesus' burial including the tomb in which He was laid, was provided by Joseph of Arimathea and Nicodemus.

## **Conclusion**

1. You and I have sung the lyrics to a particular hymn many times, but I want you to think about them once more, as I share the first stanza with you today:

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He left the splendor of heaven,  
Knowing His destiny

**Was the lonely hill of Golgatha  
There to lay down His life for me.**

2. Over 2,000 years ago Jesus left His place at His Father's side to come to this earth.
3. This past week, many have rejoiced in His birth, and it is fitting for us to rejoice in His birth, for without His birth, we would have no hope of salvation.
4. But know this, that unlike all of us, Jesus knew what awaited Him at the end of His time here — a lonely crucifixion on a hill outside Jerusalem.
5. There, He laid down His life to save us.

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6. Go with me now, back to the last three verses of our reading this morning, Philippians 2:9-11:

“For this reason also, God highly exalted Him, and bestowed on Him the name which is above every name, so that at the name of Jesus every knee will bow, of those who are in heaven and on earth and under the earth, and that every tongue will confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.” (Philippians 2:9–11)
7. Notice what Paul wrote, “for this reason” — because all that Jesus did on our behalf, God highly exalted Him — He “bestowed on Him the name with is above every name.”
8. One day, at the end of time as we know it, every one of us will bow in His presence and each one will confess “that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.”
9. Many will do so in deep admiration for our Lord and King.
10. All others will do so either in great shame or out of the realization that He alone rules over all creation.
11. In which group will you be?