

The Christmas Story: Adoration
December 18, 2016
Lynn Haven UMC

Introduction

The shepherds went back to their flocks, glorifying and praising God for all they had heard and seen. (Luke 2:20a NLT)

[The wise men] entered the house and saw the child with his mother, Mary, and they bowed down and worshiped him. Then they opened their treasure chests and gave him gifts. (Matthew 2:11 NLT)

Adore. Have you ever stopped to think about the deeper meaning of that one small word? To say you love, respect (someone) deeply, that you worship them and revere them. This is probably not a term to use lightly, or often. But it is never more appropriately used than when we are speaking of Jesus Christ. This Christmas season remember this word often and think of Him. O come, let us adore Him.

Digging Deeper

Adoration: “intense worship, profound devotion, reverent love”. Adoration puts Jesus in His rightful place at Christmas - at the center of attention.

- What is the first thing that comes to mind when you hear the word adoration?
- “Fall on your knees, Oh hear the angel voices. Oh night divine, Oh night when Christ was born.” (O Holy Night). We don’t see a lot of people falling on their knees in adoration these days. Why do you think that is? If there were no fear of embarrassment or awkwardness, would you feel compelled to unabashedly worship the Lord in this way? Why or why not?
- As we read in Matthew 2:11, wise men followed a rising star bearing gifts for the newborn Messiah. We can also honor Christ with our gifts. Think of something (material or otherwise) that you or your family/small group could do for a stranger in Jesus’ name this Christmas.
- Talk about some fun, practical ways that you and your family/friends can adjust your Christmas celebrations to make them more Christ-centered.

A “leg lamp” is an **idol**.

- In the movie “A Christmas Story”, Mr. Parker proclaimed the leg lamp to be a major award and it became his idol. In THE Christmas Story of course we know the real major award is the birth of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. Whatever you allow to take center stage in your heart instead of Jesus is your idol. What (or who) would you identify as your idol(s)?
- Do you think it will be a challenge to replace it (or them) with Jesus?
- Once you have set aside the things that distract you from Him, your focus becomes singular and you might even discover an increased capacity to discern the needs of those around you. We all know that Christmas can be a very difficult time of year for those who are suffering (for whatever reason). What is something you can do for someone who is struggling this week that will bless them and bring glory to Him?

- Looking forward, will you make a New Year's resolution to put Jesus first? What is something you can do each day that will help you turn this goal into more than a feeling that comes in December and disappears somewhere in January?

Conclusion

[Jesus] gave up his divine privileges; he took the humble position of a slave and was born as a human being. When he appeared in human form, he humbled himself in obedience to God and died on a cross. Therefore, God elevated him to the place of highest honor and gave him the name above all other names, 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. (Philippians 2:7-11 NLT)

Do you adore Christ? Make a conscious effort this Christmas to express that adoration in such a way that your actions inspire others to do whatever they can to walk in step with the Spirit and expand His Kingdom, all for the glory of our heavenly Father.

O come, all ye faithful, joyful and triumphant! Come, let us adore Him, Christ the Lord.