

Osceola Sermon Christmas Things Found in the Manger
Things Found Inside the Manger:
Pastor Bob Vale (December 11th, 2011)

Introduction: It is Christmas Time. Last week we had the children share with us the Christmas story in a musical and this next week our adult choir will share the Christmas story with a beautiful cantata.

A few weeks ago I set up in front of our house an annual decoration. It is really rather simple. It is a basic manger scene with Mary, Joseph and the baby Jesus in a manger. It reminds me and I hope it reminds those who drive by our home the Christmas story about God becoming one of us.

It is really a wonderful story; Simple yet Profound. I would say that Jesus has touched our lives in many wonderful ways.

Because of Jesus we have:

1. Blessings in our lives.
2. Forgiven of our sins.
3. The Abundant Joy filled life.
4. Eternal Life in Heaven.

I have placed the manger at the front of the church to remind us of the humble beginnings of Christ.

The Bible says Jesus was born and laid in a manger / feeding trough. Today we place our newborn children in a clean, warm and sterile plastic enclosure. We would not think of lay a newborn baby in a place where we fed the cows other barn yard animals.

Why a manger?
Why such a dirty place?

There were other important things that happened that night.

(Reach into the manger to pull out the star.)



“The Star”

There was a star that the wise men followed to find the Baby Jesus. It was a bright light shining towards another bright light.

John 1:4 says, “In him was life, and that life was the light of men. ⁵ The light shines in the darkness, but the darkness has not understood it.”

Into this dark world the baby Jesus came to bring us light.

(A Manger Scene)



I like the manger scene because it illustrates all the major characters of the Christmas story.



Mary and Joseph: Can you imagine all the trouble they went through. Can you imagine telling your parents you were pregnant, but the father was a spirit and not a man. How about Joseph, trying to accept that story as well. (What tremendous Faith they must have had.) (Then again she was highly favored.)



Angels: Then there were the angels in this story: Fortunately an angel spoke to both of them, to help them understand.

An Angel spoke to Mary in Luke 1:26-38

LK 1:26 In the sixth month, God sent the angel Gabriel to Nazareth, a town in Galilee, ²⁷ to a virgin pledged to be married to a man named Joseph, a descendant of David. The virgin's name was Mary. ²⁸ The angel went to her and said, "Greetings, you who are highly favored! The Lord is with you." LK 1:29 Mary was greatly troubled at his words and wondered what kind of greeting this might be. ³⁰ But the angel said to her, "Do not be afraid, Mary, you have found favor with God. ³¹ You will be with child and give birth to a son, and you are to give him the name Jesus. ³² He will be great and will be called the Son of the Most High. The Lord God will give him the throne of his father David, ³³ and he will reign over the house of Jacob forever; his kingdom will never end."

LK 1:34 "How will this be," Mary asked the angel, "since I am a virgin?"

LK 1:35 The angel answered, "The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you. So the holy one to be born will be called the Son of God. ³⁶ Even Elizabeth your relative is going to have a child in her old age, and she who was said to be barren is in her sixth month. ³⁷ For nothing is impossible with God."

LK 1:38 "I am the Lord's servant," Mary answered. "May it be to me as you have said." Then the angel left her.

An Angel spoke to Joseph in Matthew 1:18-24

MT 1:18 This is how the birth of Jesus Christ came about: His mother Mary was pledged to be married to Joseph, but before they came together, she was found to be with child through the Holy Spirit. ¹⁹ Because Joseph her husband was a righteous man and did not want to expose her to public disgrace, he had in mind to divorce her quietly.

MT 1:20 But after he had considered this, an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream and said, "Joseph son of David, do not be afraid to take Mary home as your wife, because what is conceived in her is from the Holy Spirit. ²¹ She will give birth to a son, and you are to give him the name Jesus, because he will save his people from their sins."

MT 1:22 All this took place to fulfill what the Lord had said through the prophet: ²³ "The virgin will be with child and will give birth to a son, and they will call him Immanuel" --which means, "God with us."

MT 1:24 When Joseph woke up, he did what the angel of the Lord had commanded him and took Mary home as his wife. ²⁵ But he had no union with her until she gave birth to a son. And he gave him the name Jesus.

The Shepherds are the ones that fascinate me the most.

Angels spoke to the Shepherds in Luke 2

LK 2:4 So Joseph also went up from the town of Nazareth in Galilee to Judea, to Bethlehem the town of David, because he belonged to the house and line of David. ⁵ He went there to register with Mary, who was pledged to be married to him and was expecting a child. ⁶ While they were there, the time came for the baby to be born, ⁷ and she gave birth to her firstborn, a son. She wrapped him in cloths and placed him in a manger, because there was no room for them in the inn.

LK 2:8 And there were shepherds living out in the fields nearby, keeping watch over their flocks at night. ⁹ An angel of the Lord appeared to them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were terrified. ¹⁰ But the angel said to them, "Do not be afraid. I bring you good news of great joy that will be for all the people. ¹¹ Today in the town of David a Savior has been born to you; he is Christ the Lord. ¹² This will be a sign to you: You will find a baby wrapped in cloths and lying in a manger."

LK 2:13 Suddenly a great company of the heavenly host appeared with the angel, praising God and saying, LK 2:14 "Glory to God in the highest,

and on earth peace to men on whom his favor rests." LK 2:15 When the angels had left them and gone into heaven, the shepherds said to one another, "Let's go to Bethlehem and see this thing that has happened, which the Lord has told us about."

LK 2:16 So they hurried off and found Mary and Joseph, and the baby, who was lying in the manger. 17 When they had seen him, they spread the word concerning what had been told them about this child, 18 and all who heard it were amazed at what the shepherds said to them. 19 But Mary treasured up all these things and pondered them in her heart. 20 The shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all the things they had heard and seen, which were just as they had been told.

Why did the Lord send the message of Jesus birth to Shepherds?

They were on the lowest part of the ladder in their culture.

Perhaps God was sending a message; The Good News of Jesus is for everyone. Poor and Rich alike.

Isn't this a beautiful story: What else is in this manger to help us understand more about the birth of Christ?

Take out from the manger a crown of a king.

Pull out a **crown from the Manger:** This makes sense doesn't it? Jesus is to be the King of King and Lord of Lords.

What does it mean to be a king?

1. Master of all you survey: Land, wealth & People.
2. Military Strength and Might.
3. Feared by the people at times.

Kings of Nations:



King Henry VIII



King Husian from Saudi Arabia



King Tut

Martin Luther King: King of the Civil Rights Movement



Music Kings:



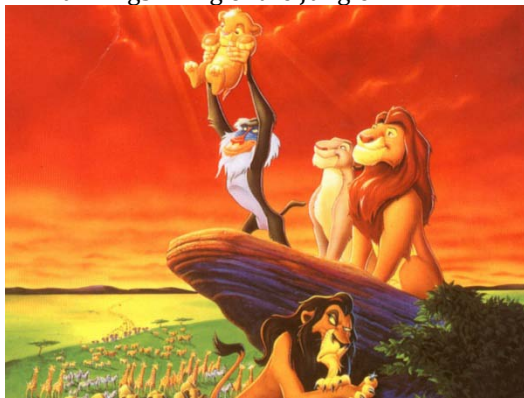
Elvis:
The King of Rock & Roll.



B.B. King
King of Blues



Michael Jackson
King of Pop.



The Lion King

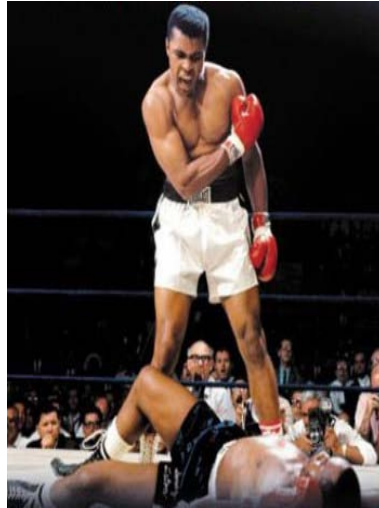


King Kong

Athletic Kings:



King James



Muhammad Ali



Michael Jordan

Business Kings:



Donald Trump:

King of Real Estate

King Me: The mirror;



Bill Gates

Microsoft CEO



Warren Buffett

Mega Rich Guy



1. King of Pride.
2. King of Greed
3. King of Lust (Flesh, Eyes, Mind)

King Jesus:



To be King in this World.

1. Powerful.
2. Wealth.
3. Land Owner.
4. Athletic / Strong

Jesus Was:

1. Humble & Meek (A baby in the world.)
2. Poor
3. Never owned anything
4. Nothing in his appearance to stand out.



(Pull out from under the Manger a shovel and a broom.)

What does a shovel and a broom have to do with the birth of Christ?

Jesus was born in a barn or a cave where animals were kept. The king of kings came to earth in the humblest of beginnings.

Why would God have his son, our messiah born in a dirty barn?

Is there a message here for us?

I have worked on a farm and took care of animals. There are messes to be cleaned up with a broom and shovel.

Perhaps our lives are at times a messy stable. A place that needs to be cleaned up from time to time.

A place where Jesus feels comfortable being with us in our mess. Trust me, as a minister of 20 plus years, our lives can get very messy.

Perhaps Jesus is born in such a lowly place to feel comfortable with everyone. (And I mean everyone!) The homeless, the law breaker, the sinner, the saint who thinks they are a saint, but really does not see the mess they are in spiritually.

I have a video I want you to see. I think it helps me state my point.

[Christmas Messy Christmas \(Skit Guys\)](#)

Three Nails: Pull out three nails from the manger.



Why would we find three nails in the manger?

This is why he came. He came to save humanity from separation from God. He knew the entire time he would eventually die on a Roman Cross.

These days man seems to fix everything with a roll of grey duct tape. (God used three nails.)

The Baby Jesus as bread.

(Take the baby out of the manger wrapped in a white cloth. The baby is actually a loaf of bread to be used for Communion.)

*I am
the Bread
of Life*

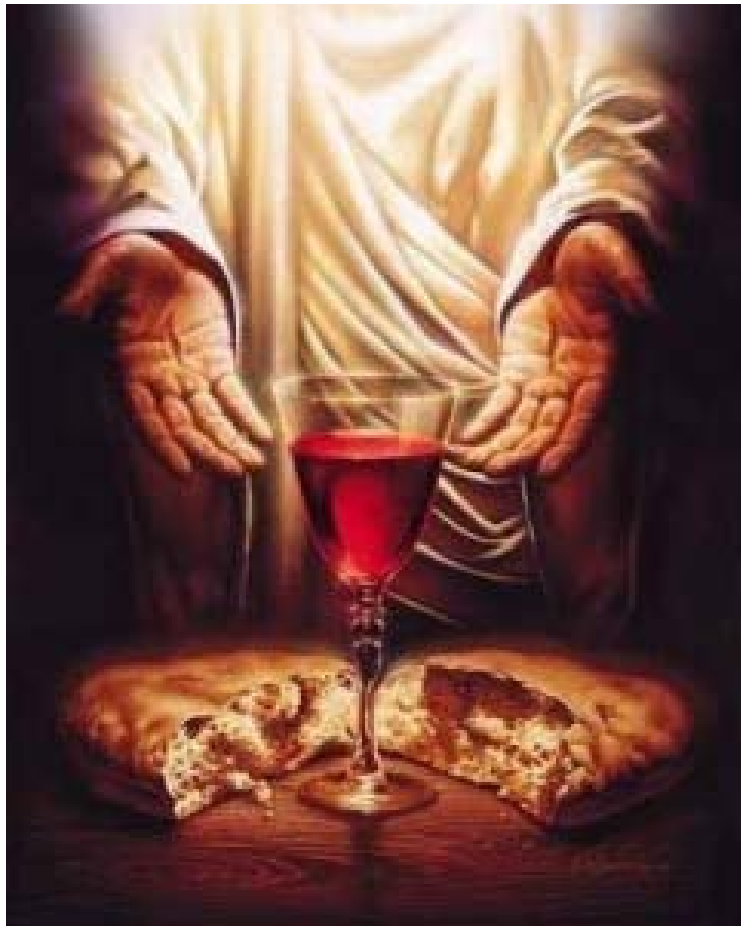
John 6:35



Jesus came to the earth and became the bread of life.

Jesus was born in a town called Bethlehem: which means house of bread.

Jesus told his disciples at the last supper that when we partake of Holy Communion to remember his broken body as we eat the bread.



Go into Communion