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Sermon: December 24, 2009
Beverly ECC, Chicago, IL

“THE KING OF GLORY”
John 1:1-14

{Jn 1:1, 2, 14, NLT} **“In the beginning the Word already existed. He was with God, and he was God. He was in the beginning with God.**

The Word became human and lived on earth among us. He was full of unfailing love and faithfulness. And we have seen his glory, the glory of the only Son of the Father.”

This is why we celebrate the birth of Jesus, the Word made flesh. This is why Christmas is, at its best, an occasion of beauty and wonder.

“And we have seen his glory, the glory of the only Son of the Father.” And what glory!

“We have seen... the glory of the only Son” as the imposing company of angels praised God saying, {Lk 2:14} **“Glory to God in the highest heaven, and on earth peace to those on whom his favor rests.”**

But in becoming one of us, Christ {Php 2:7} **“made himself nothing...taking the very nature of a servant”** – and his self-emptying also reveals his glory!

“We have seen... the glory of the only Son” as the brilliant star guided the Magi to {Mt 2:2} **“the one born king of the Jews.”**

Yet, the Holy Family was compelled to flee to Egypt when Herod ordered the death of every boy two years old and younger in Bethlehem – and his vulnerability also reveals his glory!

“We have seen... the glory of the only Son” as the skies opened, the Holy Spirit descended, and the voice from heaven said, {Mt 4:17} **“This is my Son, whom I love; with him I am well pleased.”**

Immediately afterward Jesus went into the desert where, for 40 days, the devil viciously tempted him – and his testing also reveals his glory!

“We have seen... the glory of the only Son” as He transformed water to wine, fed thousands with a few fish and loaves, calmed the storm, walked on water, healed the sick, lame and blind, cast out evil spirits, and raised the dead.

Still, Christ never used his power to crush notorious sinners, the Roman armies, or his human enemies – and his self-restraint also reveals his glory!

“We have seen... the glory of the only Son” at his transfiguration: He radiated blinding light, {Mk 9:3}

“his [garments] **became dazzling white**” and Elijah and Moses appeared with him.

Even so Jesus broke bread with tax collectors, befriended women, and touched lepers – and his humble relationships also reveal his glory!

Most of all, “**We have seen...the glory of the only Son**” in his magnificent resurrection and ascension, through which God {Php 2:9} “**exalted him to the highest place and gave him the name that is above every name.**”

Yet, before that the Lord was subjected to misunderstanding, rejection, criticism, slander, betrayal, denial, torture, and murder – and these agonies also reveal his glory, perhaps more clearly than anything else!

This, in part, explains why {Jn 1:10-11, NLT} “**the world didn’t recognize him when he came. Even in his own land... he was not,**” for the most part, “**accepted.**”

The people saw Christ’s powerful miracles, *heard* his inspiring preaching, and *witnessed* his incorruptibility – but they could not (or would not) reconcile these attributes with his obvious humility, poverty and self-denial. Hence, they did not receive him as the King of Glory.

The question is, will we? Will we receive Jesus as the King of Glory on his terms, rather than ours?

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The Word of the Lord!