

December 20, 2022

The Lord wants you to experience real and abundant life:

John 1:14 *The Word became flesh and made His dwelling among us. We have seen His glory, the glory of the one and only Son, Who came from the Father, full of grace and truth. (NIV)*

Jesus put on flesh and came to dwell in our midst. What an amazing act of love. He put a face on the physically invisible God so that we could understand Him more. I've stated this before, but many people say, "well I'll believe it when I see it." But for us, we must live by faith which says, "I will see it because I believe it." **1 Cor. 13:12** *For now we see only a reflection as in a mirror; then we shall see face to face. Now I know in part; then I shall know fully, even as I am fully known. (NIV)*

He came down to our level when we couldn't get up to His. He allowed us to see His glory. This story was told by Paul Harvey, author is unknown. The man I'm going to tell you about was not a scrooge, he was a kind decent, mostly good man. Generous to his family and upright in his dealings with other men. But he just didn't believe in all of that incarnation stuff that the churches proclaim at Christmas time. It just didn't make sense and he was too honest to pretend otherwise. He just couldn't swallow the Jesus story, about God coming to Earth as a man. He told his wife I'm truly sorry to distress you, but I'm not going with you to church this Christmas Eve. He said he would feel like a hypocrite and that he would much rather just stay at home, but that he would wait up for them. So he stayed and they went to the midnight service. Shortly after the family drove away in the car, snow began to fall. He went to the window to watch the flurries getting heavier and heavier and then he went back to his fireside chair and began to read his newspaper. Minutes later he was startled by a thudding sound. Then another ... and then another. At first he thought someone must be throwing snowballs against the living room window. But when he went to the front door to investigate, he found a flock of birds huddled outside miserably in the snow. They'd been caught in the storm and in a desperate search for shelter they had tried to fly through his large landscape window. That is what had been making the sound. Well, he couldn't let the poor creatures just lie there and freeze, so he remembered the barn where his children stabled their pony. That would provide a warm shelter. All he would have to do is to direct the birds into the shelter. Quickly, he put on a coat and galoshes, and he tramped through the deepening snow to the barn. He opened the doors wide and turned on a light so the birds would know the way in. But the birds did not come in. So, he figured that food would entice them. He hurried back to the house and fetched some breadcrumbs. He sprinkled them on the snow, making a trail of breadcrumbs to the yellow-lighted wide-open doorway of the stable. But to his dismay, the birds ignored the breadcrumbs. The birds continued to flap around helplessly in the snow. He tried catching them but could not. He tried shooing them into the barn by walking around and waving his arms. Instead, they scattered in every direction ... every direction except into the warm lighted barn. And that's when he realized they were afraid of him. To them, he reasoned, I am a strange and terrifying creature. If only I could think of some way to let them know that they can trust me. That I am not trying to hurt them, but to help them. But how? Any move he made tended to frighten them and confuse them. They just would not follow. They would not be led or shooed because they feared him. He thought to himself, if only I could be a bird and mingle with them and speak their language. Then I could tell them not to be afraid.

Then I could show them the way to the safe warm ... to the safe warm barn. But I would have to be one of them so they could see ... and hear ... and understand. At that moment the church bells began to ring. The sound reached his ears above the sounds of the wind. He stood there listening to the bells, *Adeste Fidelis-O Come All Ye Faithful*, listening to the bells pealing the glad tidings of Christmas. And he sank to his knees in the snow ...

Dear LORD, thank You for becoming flesh so that we could see You and hear You. Thank You for coming to dwell among us. In Jesus Name, Amen