

hristmas for Sinners



By Joseph Tkach

When the Magi finally met Jesus, the King of the Jews, after being led to him by a special star, they did not find him in a king's palace. They found Mary, Joseph, and the babe in a manger.

Who would have expected it—the promised King, the Anointed One—born in a stable? What more unlikely place to look for the prophesied Prince of Peace—in a cattle stall. But Jesus came to real people in the real world. He came to stand in for and represent every person in every age, from the first man to the last, from the greatest to the least, the rich, the poor, the middle class, every race and every tribe—and every one of them a sinner. Jesus came to save sinners, not to bask in the fineries of human royalty.

The Christmas stable reminds us that whatever life throws at us, whatever trials we might face, whatever our lot in life, Jesus is with us. Jesus is there beside us. God knows our plight and stands alongside us in undying love.

At the Messiah's stable the world's pride has no place. In that lowly place he came to dwell with us in our deepest sin, weakness, need, sorrow, and pain. Here in a corner of a barn is Emmanuel, God with us.

Throughout Jesus' life, in lowliness and humility, he served sinning, broken, and desperate people. He showed even the lowliest and loneliest of men, women, and children that they really matter to God, and that true life does not consist in what people possess, or what their station in society is, or how much the world respects them.

Jesus shows us that God loves us and that we count; he loves us completely even at our very worst, even at our most sinful and our very weakest.

The message of the stable leads us to seek what really matters, the joy of receiving and giving faithful love. It calls us to trust in the One who loves us so much he will never let us go, and to stop wasting our lives on all the empty and meaningless things that cannot bring us real satisfaction, peace, hope, and joy.

In our Saviour Jesus Christ born in the common surroundings of common people, we find our deepest fulfillment in the shared love of God and our relationships with one another that alone make life worth living.

This is a transcript of the weekly 'Speaking of Life' radio programme by Joseph Tkach, president of Grace Communion International. For more information visit www.gci.org.