



Why Jesus Was Born in a Stable

(For children ages 6-10)

By Sally Painter

Merry Christmas! It's so wonderful to see each of you here today [tonight]. It's good for us to come together on this holiday to celebrate.

Christmas is a special time for us as Christians because we celebrate the birth of the baby Jesus. Since Jesus was the son of God, most of us would think he should have been born in a palace or castle because after all, he was God's son. But he wasn't born in a stately castle, was he?

No. Jesus was born in a stable, a type of barn for farm animals, like sheep, cows and chickens. Instead of having a brand-new beautiful crib to sleep in, Jesus had to sleep in a manger. Does anyone know what a manger is? (wait for children to respond) A manger is like a slanted box with legs. It's where hay is placed for the animals to eat.

Imagine not being born in a hospital, but a barn and your crib is a dirty bin where animals are fed. It's difficult for us to understand why God would allow his only son whom he loved very much to be born in a barn with smelly farm animals. But the way Jesus was born is a very important part of the Christmas story. Do you know why? (allow children to answer.)

God allowed his only son to be born in a barn because he wanted the world to know his son was a gift to everyone, not just the rich and powerful people of the world. God wanted the average person who worked in fields, who tended sheep, who worked in shops, and who prepared meals, to know that Jesus was their savior as much as he was for a king or queen.

Jesus Christ was born for everyone because in God's eyes, all of us are equals. No one is better than anyone else. And so, God wanted his son to be born in a place that was common to the average person.

That's why our Christmas Church plays are about how Jesus was born. We retell the story of how Mary and Joseph traveled to Bethlehem. Mary was about to give birth to Jesus. They needed a nice room with a bed but all the rooms in the inn were rented. Instead, they had to stay in a stable, a barn for animals.

This is an unusual and humble beginning for the son of God, but it was important that Jesus be born as a common person so he could fulfill God's plan to save the world, to save each of us from sin.

When we sing Christmas hymns, we're singing about our joy and happiness that God loved us so much that he sent Jesus to save our souls and give us eternal life. We're also singing thanks to Jesus for the difficult burden he took upon himself to come into our world and ultimately give up his life for each of us – for each of you.

And there were three wise men who understood this. These kings traveled a very long distance to bring priceless gifts to Jesus because they knew he was the son of God. They wanted to pay their respects to Jesus and thank him for coming into the world to save them. And so, we give each other gifts in that tradition of gratitude.

While these kings were kneeling before Jesus and bestowing him with priceless gifts, shepherds in the fields saw an angel in the night sky singing and announcing the birth of the Christ child. The shepherds hurried to the stable to also pay their respects and give thanks. And, soon people were coming from all over to see Jesus.

This is the scene we call the nativity. It's a snapshot of Jesus's birth, that shepherds, villagers and kings all kneeled before him and sang songs of thanksgiving. So, let us give thanks as we sing our Christmas hymns and keep Christmas in our hearts every day.