

A Better Story

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They that know God will be humble; they that know themselves cannot be proud.
– John Flavel, 1680

An infant. From a working-class family. Out of a backwater province. With an unwed mother. Swaddled and laid in a feeding trough...

Such humble origins.

The God who, as David said, set the moon and stars in place chose this for His story. Why?

In a word, humility. At least that's how I see it. That we might learn humility by His ultimate example.

St. Augustine famously wrote that "almost the whole of Christian teaching is humility." It's a virtue in far too short supply, in my (humble) opinion. Humility: the simple, yet profound recognition that we don't have all the answers.

How often do we come to a situation having already made up our mind? How often do we engage in conversation not to listen and to learn, but to lecture and to convince? If we are listening only to prepare a response, is that really listening? If we enter a dialogue unwilling to change our mind, is that really a dialogue? If we come to a conflict incapable of changing our perspective, what hope is there?

Humility tells us that no matter what we think we know, there is always more to learn. It tells us that our point of view is not the only one that matters. It asks us to take stock of ourselves, to consider our own missteps, to reevaluate our thinking, and if necessary, to grow. How different would our lives be if we could all walk more humbly? How different would our families be? Our communities? Our world?

If the God whose word set the universe in motion could walk humbly among us, how can we be proud?