



STUDY GUIDE: December 21, 2025

Message Series: The Stories are True
Message Title: The Humility of Christ
Teaching Pastor: Brian Hughes

Warm-up/Icebreaker: (10 min.)

If money, responsibility, and expectations were no issue for one year, how would you *choose* to live differently—more comfort, more simplicity, or a mix of both? Why?

Pray:

God, thank You for meeting us here and for the gift of Your presence among us. As we open Scripture, help us see Jesus more clearly—not just how He came, but why He came. Open our hearts to understand the humility and grace on display in the Incarnation. Shape us by what we see and hear. In Jesus' name, Amen.

Get Started: (30 min.)

Read John 1:14.

- How does the phrase “*made his dwelling among us*” change the way you think about God’s closeness?
- In what ways do we sometimes celebrate the *story* of Christmas without living in the *presence* of Christ?

Read Philippians 2:6–8.

- How does this passage reshape your understanding of grace—not just what we receive, but what Jesus surrendered?
- When you hear the word *humility*, what comes to mind? How would you define it in your own words? What is *humility not*?
- Where might God be inviting you to choose *humility* over entitlement in your own life?

“Jesus knew that to elevate humanity he would have to humble himself. This is what we sometimes call the Incarnation. God became one of us to restore the relationship with us so that we could be at home with him. That’s why John skips Christmas. Because for John, the more important reality of Jesus coming was not the How, but the Why. And the why. It was John who recorded the words, “for God so loved the world that he sent his one and only son, that whoever believes in him will not perish but will have eternal life” It was only John who wrote down Jesus’ words, “I am the way, the truth and the life, no one comes to the father except through me.” It was only John who recounted Jesus’ powerful word picture about our access to his power when he said, “I am the vine you are the branches. If you remain in me you will bear much fruit. Without me, you can do nothing.” John was far more interested in the why of Jesus coming than the how he came. Why had to do with you and me. Our salvation. Our effectiveness. Our mission. Our access to God.” -Pastor Brian Hughes

- How does the idea that “Jesus humbled Himself to elevate humanity” reshape the way you understand Christmas?

Reflect and Commit: (40 min.)

Read John 13:4–5.

- Why is it significant that Jesus performed a task reserved for the lowest servant?
- Who has God placed in your life that you are called to serve in unseen or uncomfortable ways?

“The Word became flesh, God would no longer be absent or distant. He is now with us, among us, not just for a day or a season, but for our lives. That’s John’s Christmas message. And for John, the Incarnation superseded the biological delivery. Incarnation outranked the manger. God’s presence eclipsed the pageant. The word became flesh surpassed the star, magi, shepherds, angels, Mary, Joseph. He didn’t care about any of that - he doesn’t care about the birth of Jesus. But he is consumed with the presence of Jesus. And this is not judgment on the things we do surrounding this day - we do them every year. They don’t dishonor God. They’re not bad. It’s just that they’re...lacking. Without the presence of Jesus in your life, what difference does it make that he was born.” -Pastor Brian Hughes

- Pastor Brian says that without Jesus’ presence, the birth of Jesus doesn’t make much difference. Do you agree? Why or why not?

“The true story of Christmas is embedded deeply in humility. Grace - the undeserved favor of God on us, the undeserved elevation of our status as children of God, the undeserved forgiveness of our sins by God, the undeserved access to the presence of God - all that we have as the undeserved gift from God is wrapped up in the undeserved humility that Jesus put on display for us. That humility is supposed to be displayed by his followers, too.” -Pastor Brian Hughes

Gather prayer requests. (5-10 min.)

Pray:

Jesus, thank You for choosing humility for our sake. Help us reflect Your grace through how we live, serve, and love others. Shape our hearts to look more like Yours each day. In Jesus’ name, Amen.