

Esther and Emmett and the Nativity – Dec 20, 2020

(Emmett pretending to cradle a baby and singing “The wheels on the bus go round and round, round and round...”. Esther enters)

Emmett: (whispering) Hi Esther. Shh!

Esther: What are you doing Emmett?

Emmett: I’m practicing for the role of Joseph for nativity play. Shh. I’m trying to sing Jesus to sleep.

Esther: That’s so sweet...although, I don’t think there were any buses when Jesus was born.

Emmett: No wonder the kid’s looking at me so strangely...say, Esther, you should try out for the role of Mary in the story.

Esther: Oh...I don’t know....

Emmett: No, you’d be a great Mary, and you know, it’s the starring role...Mary is the main character in this story...she’s Jesus’ mom, she gets to wrap some cloths around Jesus and lay him in the manger.

Esther: Isn’t Jesus the star of the story?

Emmett: Oh, well, ya, but he’s just a baby in this story – not much of a speaking role – you don’t find many wanting to try out for the role of baby Jesus in the nativity play.

Esther: Well... there is another character who is maybe the most important of all...

Emmett: There is? And it’s not Mary?

Esther: Not Mary.

Emmett: (excited) You mean...it’s actually Joseph!! Now I really want to get that part.

Esther: No, I wasn’t thinking of Joseph.

Emmett: No, well, then...you can’t mean the shepherds! Did you ever notice how in most church Christmas pageants the shepherds are wearing housecoats or bathrobes? Makes me think they must sleep a lot!

Esther: No, it’s not the shepherds. It’s God!

Emmett: God? God! I don't remember seeing God in the stable.

Esther: You have to look in a special way to see God. Some people call that special way of looking 'faith.'

Emmett: Neat. Can you help me see in that special way?

Esther: I can try. Imagine the usual nativity scene – there's a stable, some straw, maybe some animals...

Emmett: I can imagine that (takes a deep breath), kinda smells like a barn, don't it?

Esther: It is a barn – it's not a palace or a castle. Jesus is born in in a place that looks and smells like a barn. When you look in the special way of faith, you see that God is present in places that aren't always thought of as special – places where people live, and work and go to school all the time.

Emmett: Hey, I think it's working. I think I can 'see' God in a barn.

Esther: Now, see if you can see God in the shepherds.

Emmett: I don't know. In those outfits they look like they just got out of bed!

Esther: The shepherds were out in the fields looking after the sheep, but then they heard angels singing about how this baby being born in a manger would change the world, would share God's love with the world.

Emmett: Hey, they saw the manger in a special way!!

Esther: Right...then imagine that you can see God in Mary and Joseph...

Emmett: Yes...Mary wrapping baby Jesus in some blankets and laying him down, and Joseph trying to sing him to sleep...

Esther: See God in Mary and Joseph who trusted that this baby Jesus was so special that, even if there was no room for them in the inn, a barn was just fine.

Emmett: I think they had this faith way of seeing too!

Esther: Then imagine seeing God in Jesus, a little baby depending on his parent's love to care for him, a little tiny baby, probably cute and not very powerful or mighty.

Emmett: I see God in the little baby Jesus...wait a minute...I'm seeing God in everyone in this story, in everything, everywhere...

Esther: That's faith – a special way of seeing. The story of the birth of Jesus is a special story to help us see that God so loves this world that God is everywhere, with everyone, in everyone, loving everyone...and that, like Jesus, we can help people see God by the way we love and help and care for everyone.

Emmett: Wow! That is special...but I still have to figure out how Joseph is going to get Jesus to sleep.

Esther: How about this...(sings) 'The love of God is all around, all around, all around...'

Emmett: Catchy. Thanks.

Esther: And you can finish the song by saying 'AMEN'

Emmett: Amen