

Describe your Christmas tree. Real or fake? Old or new? Charlie Brown or Clark Griswold? When do you set it up? Who decorates it? Is this a happy experience or a pain? Why?

Have you ever considered how putting a tree inside your house became a Christmas tradition?

Have you ever seen a child attempting to take his/her first step? Describe what you think Jesus was like in the first two years of his life.

Jesus' first step was not after he was born. It was before.

Every step Jesus took was toward the tree. That tree was the cross he would die on. The Christmas tree in the middle of your living room is a reminder to live with the cross at the center of our lives. How much do you think about Jesus' death as you celebrate his birth?

1st Step: Out of Heaven. (v. 6)

Jesus yielded his rights to ultimate comfort, security and control. Are you a control freak? Do you often claim your rights to comfort, security, and control? In what area is it most difficult for you to yield your rights? How can you step out of your comfort zone during this season?

2nd Step: Down to Earth. (v. 7a)

Before Jesus could accomplish his mission he had to empty himself. What did Jesus empty himself of? What is filling your life that is keeping you from accomplishing God's will? Does it seem scary? How will you empty yourself of those things this week?

3rd Step: Toward the need of man. (v. 7b)

Jesus took the role of a servant to those who should be serving him. How have you taken the role of a servant lately? Whose needs are you meeting? Does this seem demeaning to you?

4th Step: Into a human body. (v. 7c)

Jesus became like us so we could become like him. How attached are you to your body? Does it affect your joy when it doesn't work right? Why can Christians live with hope, peace and joy even when our bodies are wearing out?

5th Step: On sin and death. (v. 8)

Jesus obediently accepted the ultimate assignment involving suffering and pain. What is the relation between obedience and humility? What is the relation between disobedience and pride?

6th Step: Up to the place of exaltation. (v. 9)

Because Jesus humbled himself, God exalted him. How often do you bow your knee at the name of Jesus? How often does your tongue confess that Jesus is your Lord? Are you living your life to the glory of God?

My step: Follow His steps. (v. 5, 10-11)

Read verse 5. How can you follow in the humble steps of Jesus? Go back through each of the six steps and mention practical ways you can step outside of yourself into the place of humility like Jesus did.

Read 1Peter 5:6. We all live with a desire to be exalted, applauded, and praised. The problem is that we too often attempt to exalt ourselves. That's when God has to humble us. Has this happened to you? How?

What does God promise to those who humble themselves like Jesus did? How have you seen this principle in your life? (Careful...you might have to turn in your humility card to answer.)

Additional Scripture

- Hebrews 12:1-2
- Galatians 6:14
- Colossians 2:13-14
- Colossians 1:20
- Galatians 5:24