

“We’re All ‘the star’ of the Christmas Story”

A sermon by *The Skit Guys* organization
as part of their series, **The Glory of Christmas**.

Their sermon modified by

Pastor Steve Easterday-McPadden for FUMC Grand Junction,
7 PM Chr. Eve, Thurs., Dec. 24, 2020

(*Set up the sermon by summarizing the series so far:

- Christmas play being put on by a local church
- Cast of characters leading up to this evening: the closing thoughts of the Director
- Ordinary people called by God to do extraordinary things; Jesus being the exception. And while His rightful place in the story is at the center, we can all be...*)

...the star in the Christmas story, not “THE Star”, but “the star”. How’s that? By doing what the star in the Christmas story did: Shining bright in a dark setting and pointing people to the manger, in which lay Immanuel, God with Us, our Savior.

(**Skit Guys* “Joel, the Director” video clip, 1:57 to 3:11*)

The director – any director – of a play, movie, musical, drama, TV show, whatever...guides the cast and support team in such a way that everyone knows their place in pointing the audience to the central theme of the story.

As far as the Christmas story is concerned, once Joel has fulfilled that role and called, “Action!”, all that’s left, as he said, is for “God to do what God does”.

When you think about it, the star in the sky is like Joel; they’re both directors of the Christmas play. Joel did just what the Christmas star did back when Jesus was born. He did what he could to put everything and everybody in the story in their places, so that the focus of the audience was on Jesus.

That is what a director is supposed to do: make sure the lights shine on the true star at the center of the story. Jesus is the center of **the glory of Christmas**, but we can all be “the star”. Hence, the spelling of the sermon title.

It is worth noting that playing the role of *this* star means continuing to shine and guide those seeking the Savior all the way until they find Him. The star in the story did not stop shining and guiding the Magi in verse 2. It continued shining the way to Jesus, even when the Magi got disoriented and waylaid in Jerusalem for a time. You know how the story goes:

“After...[conferring with Herod], ...[the Magi] went on their way. And behold, the star that they had seen when it rose went before them until it came to rest over the place where the child was. When they saw the star, they rejoiced exceedingly with great joy. And going into the house they saw the child with Mary his mother, and they fell down and worshiped him. Then, opening their treasures, they offered him gifts, gold and frankincense and myrrh.” Matthew 2:9-11 (emphasis mine)

People seek the Savior at different paces in life. Being “the star” of the Christmas story means not giving up on guiding others to Jesus until their paths cross His.

How do we do that? By consistently loving and blessing others from a heart overflowing with love for God and neighbor. Barbara Brown Taylor in her latest book, Holy Envy: Finding God in the Faith of Others, said what she loves about Jesus is that He didn't say we were to love our religion. He said we were to love God and our neighbor. Period. [Taylor, *Holy Envy* (HarperCollins, 2019), Chapter 12, The Final Exam] And that can be really messy. It can be frustrating. It can be challenging. It can feel impossible at times. But it is what Jesus said would be the way people would know we were His followers: How we loved the folks around us.

Our love, grounded in the love of Jesus, is a light in a dark world that helps dispel darkness and point people to the hope, peace, joy, and love found in Him and Him alone as the Savior of the world.

The glory of Christmas is that you and I get to be “His” star that does just that. We have a role in this story. Ordinary, everyday people like you and me have a leading role in this story! We aren't consigned to being “extras” in the story of Christmas. We get to be “the star” that points to THE STAR!

Many times, it's the lives we live, the words we say, the experiences we share with others that God uses to shine a light on what is missing in someone else's life. “God often does what God does” when we make our lives available to burn bright for His glory and as a result, draw people to the One whom we worship, adore, and follow as Savior and Lord.

May our lives and our words, our works and worship, all point people to Jesus. If we will be faithful to shine, Jesus will be faithful to save.

TRANSITION to Karen Ray & Jim Werner and “O Holy Night”