

“WHEN STEPPING DOWN IS THE WAY UP”

WHEN RIGHT SEEMS WRONG

- Christmas is a time when we can see most clearly that God’s ways seem wrong to our human understanding (Is. 55:8-9).
 - Adam and Eve are given the option of tree of the knowledge of good and evil.
 - Abraham is asked to sacrifice the son that God promised him.
 - David is anointed king and spends the next 10-15 years running for his life.
 - Jesus, the Son of God, the King of kings, the Lord of lords becomes a human being, born into a poor family, lives a life serving the needs of humanity, and dies a criminal’s death. Not exactly what we would consider the right way to save the world.

JESUS STEPPED DOWN

- In God’s Kingdom, like Jesus, stepping down is the way up (Mt. 10:39; 20:26-27; 23:12).
- Jesus embraced the way of humility ... God’s way! (Phil. 2:6-8)
 - He stepped down from His throne in Heaven.
 - Jesus was willing to empty himself and give up His divine privileges.
 - Though He was God, Jesus was willing to become human being, even a helpless baby.
 - Jesus was willing to serve instead of being served.
 - Jesus was willing to die an unjust, criminal’s death at the hands of His enemy, Satan.
 - The result was that God’s exalted Jesus and gave Him the greatest victory of all time!

FOLLOW JESUS’ EXAMPLE

- In God’s Kingdom, stepping down is the way up. Humility wins!

- We, like Jesus, must step down from the throne of our lives.
 - How do we know if we have done this?
 - We don't keep a record of wrongs. We forgive.
 - We don't get angry when things don't go our way. We look to see what God is doing.
 - We don't get defensive when we are criticized or falsely accused. We rest in being right before Him.
 - We don't try to be in control of our lives or the lives of others. We trust God to be in control.
 - We don't seek the approval and praise of other people. We live to please God and gain His approval.
 - We don't seek our own success. We seek God's success and the success of others.

STAYING OFF THE THRONE

- Humility is a daily practice. Jesus was tempted every day to reclaim His throne. So are we.
- The more we humble ourselves, the more God will shine through our lives.
 - God's promise is that He will exalt us when we live humbly before Him.