

3. A story about the reason for the Incarnation

The Simple Truth

It was Christmas Eve and Fiona knelt down at the side of her bed to say her prayers. After she said her normal prayers, she added one of her own. "Please God, make Christmas come for Daddy this year."

Fiona was eight years old. She loved her father very much, because he was such a good man. However, she found it very sad that he refused to believe in Christmas. He was a very successful businessman who treated all those who worked for him very well indeed. He was used to dealing with money and things he could buy and sell. He had no faith in all that nonsense which Christians celebrate at Christmas: the idea of God becoming human was too far fetched to be seriously considered by any thinking person.

He kissed his wife on the cheek as she headed out to Church for the midnight service. As she drove off in the car, snowflakes began to fall, timidly at first, then gathering momentum as the shyness appeared to wear off them.

At that moment, he heard a strange sound coming from the side of the house. Three little birds had been frightened by the sudden heavy snowfall and in their panic sought to find shelter by flying through the sitting room window. "It wouldn't be right to leave these poor little creatures out here in the freezing cold" he thought. He decided that he would put them into the bicycle shed at the bottom of the garden, where they would be dry and warm. He put on his coat and his big boots and marched through the deafening snow to the shed. He opened the door wide and turned on the light. But he could not persuade them to come into the shed.

Then he got a brain-wave. "Food will tempt them in", he thought. He rushed back to the house, stumbling a few times on the way in the blanket of snow. In the kitchen he got a few slices of bread and chopped them up into tiny pieces, which he sprinkled on the snow to make a trail into the barn. However, the birds paid no attention to the crumbs and remained in the exact spot. He tried to direct them into the shed by walking around and waving his arms and shouting at the top of his voice. They scattered in every direction except into the lighted shed. "They must find me a weird and frightening creature; there is no way I can make them trust me," he said to himself. "If only I could become a bird myself for a few minutes, then I could lead them to safety."

At that very moment, the church bells began ringing. He raised up his hands to heaven. "Now I know why", he whispered. "Now I realise why You had to do it." The following morning, Fiona listened attentively as the preacher gave his Christmas sermon. He said: "The simple truth of Christmas is that God sent his only son to become human like us, so that we might be saved." Fiona looked up at her father who was sitting beside her. He winked back at her. Fiona smiled to herself and thanked God for answering her Christmas prayer.