

The Prince Who Loved a Peasant

Soren Kierkegaard, the great Danish theologian of another century, tells a story of a prince who wanted to find a maiden suitable to be his queen.

One day, while running an errand in the local village for his father, he passed through a poor section. As he glanced out the windows of the carriage, his eyes fell upon a beautiful peasant girl. During the ensuing days, he often passed by the young lady, and soon fell in love with her.

But he had a problem. How would he seek her hand? He could order her to marry him. But even a prince wants his bride to marry him freely and voluntarily and not through coercion. He could put on his most splendid uniform and drive up to her front door in a carriage drawn by six horses.

But if he did this, he would never be certain that the maiden loved him or was simply overwhelmed with all of the splendor.

As you may have guessed, the prince came up with another solution. He would give up his kingly robe. He moved into the village, entering not with a crown but in the garb of a peasant. He lived among the people, shared their interests and concerns, and talked their language. In time, the maiden grew to love him for who he was and because he had first loved her.

This very simple, almost childlike, story, written by one of the most brilliant minds of our time, explains what Christians mean by the incarnation. God came and lived among us. We can be glad that this happened for two reasons:

1. It shows beyond a shadow of a doubt that God is with us, that He is on our side, and that He truly loves us.
2. It gives us a first-hand view of what the mind of God is really all about. When people ask what God is like, we as Christians can point to the person of Jesus Christ. God Himself is incomprehensible. But in Jesus, we get a glimpse of His glory.

In the person of Jesus, we are told that God – who created the stars and the universe – is willing to go all the way, to be one of us, talk our language, eat our food, share our suffering, die on a cross.

Why? So that every single person – you, me – might be redeemed.

And grow to love Him.

For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life (John 3:16 NKJV).

– Beecher Hunter