

**The Paradox of Christmas**  
**Christ, Rich yet Poor**  
**2 Cor. 8:9**

9 For you know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that though He was rich, yet for your sakes He became poor, that you through His poverty might become rich.

Did you see it in the news that the king of Thailand just celebrated his 82<sup>nd</sup> birthday on Friday. He has been king there for over 63 years. He also is the richest king in the world. I got on the computer to look him up. He sits on a throne of gold, his chairs appear to be made of gold. And even though he does not have the power that kings of Siam once had, yet he is no less a king. With an estimated net worth of 35 billion dollars. I am sure that he does not want for too many things. Except he is 82 and his health is failing and he has been in the hospital for the last two months. People bow before him, they practically worship him. And don't get caught defacing a picture of him or saying something slanderous about him. There are laws against that in Thailand. I read of one man who defaced a picture of the king and was sentenced to 10 years in prison. Born in the United States and educated here and in Switzerland to be an engineer he has been a very good king to the nation. And although he has done very much for the people of Thailand, yet he never became poor for their sakes, that they might become rich. But that is the story of Jesus.

Never has a transformation taken place like the one that took place in the birth of Jesus. He came into the world with nothing, with parents that had nothing. Not only that but the place that God had chosen for His birth was hardly a suitable place to be born. Yet He chose that, so that He might do something good for us.

I.     Though He was rich

A.     How can you describe the richness the greatness of God.

1.     Colossians 1:15-20 (NKJV) 15 He is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn over all creation. 16 For by Him all things were created that are in heaven and that are on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or principalities or powers. All things were created through Him and for Him. 17 And He is before all things, and in Him all things consist. 18 And He is the head of the body, the church, who is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead, that in all things He may have the preeminence. 19 For it pleased the Father that in Him all the fullness should dwell, 20 and by Him to reconcile all things to Himself, by Him, whether things on earth or things in heaven, having made peace through the blood of His cross.
2.     Ac 17:24 "God, who made the world and everything in it, since He is Lord of heaven and earth, does not dwell in temples made with hands.
3.     Heb 11:3 By faith we understand that the worlds were framed by the word of God, so that the things which are seen were not made of things which are visible.

4. Ne 9:6 You alone are the LORD; You have made heaven, The heaven of heavens, with all their host, The earth and everything on it, The seas and all that is in them, And You preserve them all. The host of heaven worships You.
5. Job 26:7 He stretches out the north over empty space; He hangs the earth on nothing.
6. Ps 33:6 By the word of the LORD the heavens were made, And all the host of them by the breath of His mouth.
7. Isa 45:12 I have made the earth, And created man on it. I—My hands—stretched out the heavens, And all their host I have commanded.
8. Isa 48:13 Indeed My hand has laid the foundation of the earth, And My right hand has stretched out the heavens; When I call to them, They stand up together.

B. He claims possession of everything.

1. Job 41:11 Who has preceded Me, that I should pay him? Everything under heaven is Mine.
2. Ps 50:10 For every beast of the forest is Mine, And the cattle on a thousand hills.
3. Ps 50:11 I know all the birds of the mountains, And the wild beasts of the field are Mine.
4. Ps 50:12 "If I were hungry, I would not tell you; For the world is Mine, and all its fullness.
5. Ps 60:7 Gilead is Mine, and Manasseh is Mine; Ephraim also is the helmet for My head; Judah is My lawgiver.

C. Look at His majesty

1. Rev 4:1 After these things I looked, and behold, a door standing open in heaven. And the first voice which I heard was like a trumpet speaking with me, saying, "Come up here, and I will show you things which must take place after this." 2 Immediately I was in the Spirit; and behold, a throne set in heaven, and One sat on the throne. 3 And He who sat there was like a jasper and a sardius stone in appearance; and there was a rainbow around the throne, in appearance like an emerald. 4 Around the throne were twenty-four thrones, and on the thrones I saw twenty-four elders sitting, clothed in white robes; and they had crowns of gold on their heads. 5 And from the throne proceeded lightnings, thunderings, and voices. Seven lamps of fire were burning before the throne, which are the seven Spirits of God. 6 Before the throne there was a sea of glass, like crystal. And in the midst of the throne, and around the throne, were four living creatures full of eyes in front and in back. 7 The first living creature was like a lion, the

second living creature like a calf, the third living creature had a face like a man, and the fourth living creature was like a flying eagle. 8 The four living creatures, each having six wings, were full of eyes around and within. And they do not rest day or night, saying: "Holy, holy, holy, Lord God Almighty, Who was and is and is to come!" 9 Whenever the living creatures give glory and honor and thanks to Him who sits on the throne, who lives forever and ever, 10 the twenty-four elders fall down before Him who sits on the throne and worship Him who lives forever and ever, and cast their crowns before the throne, saying: 11 "You are worthy, O Lord, To receive glory and honor and power; For You created all things, And by Your will they exist and were created."

- II. Yet for your sakes He became poor
  - A. For our sakes, not that we deserved it but that we needed His sacrifice for our sins.
  - B. We looked at the poverty of His birth last week.
- III. That through His poverty you might become rich.
  - A. Not rich in this world's goods
  - B. But in the spiritual riches God has for His children
- IV. It is all of grace.
  - A. This world did not deserve to be saved.
  - B. This world had not claims on God.
  - C. But God willing gave His Own Son to come to earth in the humility of a baby born in a stable, and to eventually give His life for all those who will claim Him as Lord and Savior.

I need to also put this passage in context. Paul is here trying to stir the Corinthians to give what they had committed to give to the poor saints back in Judea. Paul was taking up a collection to deliver to the church at Jerusalem.

He has used the poor Christians at Macedonia who have given beyond their means, as a good example to encourage the wealthy Corinthians to give.

But now in our text he uses the example of Jesus, who though He was rich, yet He laid it all aside to give us true riches. He became poor so that we might become rich.

I like the cartoon I put in the bulletin. If it is Jesus' birthday, why do we get all the presents. I do not say this to increase the morning offering. Maybe it is not money that God wants from you but your life. Have you surrendered to Him? Have you said to Him, all that I have is yours, use it, use me.

Maybe at this Christmas season we all should recommit ourselves to Jesus, who though He was rich, yet for your sakes, He became poor. He suffered on the cross to give us eternal life.