

Today, you've seen and heard the gospel lessons for both 4Advent and Christmas Day, except for these bits, which you will recognize as my very own paraphrase:

While Mary and Joseph were in Bethlehem, Mary gave birth to her firstborn son. Because they had no clothes for the baby, they wrapped him in rags. And because this family was homeless, they slept in a barn and put the baby to sleep where the animals were fed. We don't know what they did for food, but we can imagine. And somehow, in THIS setting, the glory of the Lord shone all around them, showering them with such love and grace that later, when this baby had accomplished the purpose for which he had been born, his mother consoled herself with these memories of his birth:



Shepherds came with a story of having been told about the child by angels. The shepherds worshiped this child in the manger and then they told everyone they knew about him. And all who heard the shepherds' story were amazed. The shepherds glorified and praised God for all they had heard and seen, as it had been told them. But did they clothe the baby? Did they feed the baby? And when the King began killing infants, did they and the others who worshiped this child shelter him and the other children and help them escape?

They must have. True worship always seems to lead to helping others in the name of the one we worship. What gifts will you bring to this child in the manger? Where will OUR worship of this child lead us this year? Who will we tell of what God has done for us?