American Decency Association PO Box 202, Fremont, MI 49412 231-924-4050 www.americandecency.org

Encouraging Christians to guard their hearts December 2014

ger, magi, shepherds,

What Kind of Sweet Little Christmas **Picture Is This?**



It doesn't matter if the how wonderful I am. picture was taken with the rest of your family Then, for a brief mothe first thing you see is world you.

a star, and the Christchild on them. What do our Christmas cards look like now? You guessed it: they are photographs of the family standing in front of the Grand Canyon (and yes, I actually sent out one of those) or with our favorite pet or in front of our new car or house. Like Have you ever noticed with everything else, that when you look at we've made ourselves a picture with you in the center of the Christit, you always check to mas story, and we're see how you look first? using it to trumpet our Do thoughts like, *Is my* own story . . . a story nose really that big or about our family and is that just a bad angle? how wonderful we are or Wow, I am actually . . . actually, the story pretty good looking, I'm most interested in run through your head? is the one mostly about blanket, that is noth-

standing in front of nat- ment, something else ural beauty as glorious starts to take center as the Grand Canyon, stage, and the whole begins talking and singing about Someone else . . . at I'm old enough to re- least for a few moments, ity becoming an infant, member when Christ- because the Christmas mas cards actually had story is the one story a picture of the man- we can't find ourselves

in. It is the one story strong enough to pull us out of our story and into it. And even though we keep trying to find ourselves there, I am pretty sure that none of us has any prenatal photos of angels trumpeting our birth to a group of shepherds in the Middle East. And although I am fairly certain that I was pretty much a perfect baby, I'm also certain that I was conceived in the normal way. No world ruler set out to kill me because he felt threatened by my birth, and although my grandma did bring my mom a handmade ing compared to gold, frankincense, and myrrh offered by magi to foreshadow my destiny on a bloody cross.

The story of the Nativity, the story of the second person of the Trin-

[Continued on page 2]

American Decency Association

PO Box 202, Fremont, MI 49412 231-924-4050 www.americandecency.org Encouraging Christians to guard their hearts December 2014

What Kind of Sweet Little Christmas **Picture Is This?**



Have you ever noticed that when you look at we've made ourselves perfect baby, I'm also a picture with you in the center of the Christ- certain that I was conit, you always check to mas story, and we're ceived in the normal see how you look first? using it to trumpet our Do thoughts like, *Is mv* own story . . . a story nose really that big or about our family and he felt threatened by is that just a bad angle? how wonderful we are my birth, and although or *Wow, I am actually* . . . actually, the story pretty good looking, I'm most interested in my mom a handmade run through your head? is the one mostly about It doesn't matter if the how wonderful I am. picture was taken with the rest of your family Then, for a brief mothe first thing you see is world you.

a picture of the man- we can't find ourselves

standing in front of nat- ment, something else ural beauty as glorious starts to take center bloody cross. as the Grand Canyon, stage, and the whole begins talking and singing about Someone else . . . at I'm old enough to re- least for a few moments, ity becoming an infant, member when Christ- because the Christmas mas cards actually had story is the one story

ger, magi, shepherds. in. It is the one story a star, and the Christ- strong enough to pull child on them. What us out of our story and do our Christmas cards into it. And even though look like now? You we keep trying to find guessed it: they are pho- ourselves there, I am tographs of the family pretty sure that none of standing in front of the us has any prenatal pho-Grand Canyon (and yes, tos of angels trumpeting I actually sent out one of our birth to a group of those) or with our favor- shepherds in the Midite pet or in front of our dle East. And although new car or house. Like I am fairly certain that with everything else, I was pretty much a way. No world ruler set out to kill me because my grandma did bring blanket, that is nothing compared to gold, frankincense, and myrrh offered by magi to foreshadow my destiny on a

> The story of the Nativity, the story of the second person of the Trin-

[Continued on page 2]

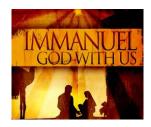
American Decency Update

December 2014

Lр

Ъ

[continued from page 1]



wet with amniotic fluid, wrapped in coarse rags, seeking sustetrembling little body, is meant to shock us, to his birth. This birth is a glorious picture of scanlove would make him rounded by smelly and

we? Where is the portrayal of our family standing in front of the Grand Canyon looking

all put together in our cool (or uncool) Christmas sweaters?

Even though this is what we say we believe, and our hearts say "ves" and "thank you, Lord" when we hear this story, we still want Christmas to be about us and our delicious cookies and nance from his mother's our mad present buying skills. We keep inwardly yelling, Look force us to look away at me! while there he from ourselves for just lies, first in this manone moment, to him, to ger, then in a cold stone tomb. And he says:

dalous humility and ter- No, you look to me. I'm rifying love beating in a the only one who will little baby's heart. Who bring you peace. I'm the could imagine that his only one strong enough to take center stage and serve us like this? Why hold it . . . and I love is the one whom the you even though you're angels worshiped ly- always trying to take my ing there in a cold stone place. I'm here to save feeding trough sur- you from your self-focus and all your sins and I warm cattle manure? will do it. You can believe because I've done What kind of sweet this, I'm lying here like little Christmas picture this. My name is Jesus, is this? And where are and I'm your Savior.

> [by: Elyse Fitzpatrick & Jessica Thompson - The Gospel Coalition]

Have this mind among yourselves, which is yours in Christ Jesus, who, though he was in the form of God, did not count equality with God a thing to be grasped, but emptied himself, by taking the form of a servant, being born in the likeness of men. And being found in human form, he humbled himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross. Therefore God has highly exalted him and bestowed on him the name that is above every name, so that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord. to the glory of God

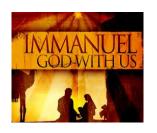
the Father.

Philippians 2:5-11

њ

American Decency Update

[continued from page 1]



wet with amniotic fluid, wrapped in coarse rags, seeking sustenance from his mother's our mad present buytrembling little body, is ing skills. We keep inmeant to shock us, to wardly yelling, Look force us to look away at me! while there he from ourselves for just lies, first in this manone moment, to him, to ger, then in a cold stone his birth. This birth is a tomb. And he says: glorious picture of scandalous humility and ter- No, you look to me. I'm rifying love beating in a the only one who will little baby's heart. Who bring you peace. I'm the could imagine that his only one strong enough love would make him to take center stage and serve us like this? Why hold it . . . and I love is the one whom the you even though you're angels worshiped ly- always trying to take my ing there in a cold stone place. I'm here to save feeding trough sur- you from your self-focus rounded by smelly and and all your sins and I

little Christmas picture this. My name is Jesus, is this? And where are and I'm your Savior. we? Where is the portraval of our family standing in front of the Grand Canyon looking

all put together in our cool (or uncool) Christmas sweaters?

Even though this is what we say we believe, and our hearts say "ves" and "thank you, Lord" when we hear this story, we still want Christmas to be about us and our delicious cookies and

warm cattle manure? will do it. You can believe because I've done What kind of sweet this, I'm lying here like

> [by: Elyse Fitzpatrick & Jessica Thompson - The Gospel Coalition]

Ъ Have this mind among yourselves, which is yours in Christ Jesus, who, though he was in the form of God, did not count equality with God a thing to be grasped, but emptied himself, by taking the form of a servant, being born in the likeness

of men. And being found in human form, he humbled himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross. Therefore God has highly exalted him and bestowed on him the name that is above every name, so that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father. Philippians 2:5-11

њ