

What Kind of Baby Jesus

Narrator plus 2 Characters: person setting up nativity scene, and a person selling baby Jesus's.

Narrator (N): It was Christmas Eve, and Geoff was doing a last minute check over the nativity scene before the worship time started.

P1: Ok, there's the light, the inn, the straw, the sheep, Mary, Joseph, the manger

N: Just then Geoff had a sudden awful realization:

P1: There's no baby Jesus!

N: Geoff felt flooded by a deep level anxiety.

P1: Where am I going to get a baby Jesus at this time of the night?

N: Right at that moment an 'Ahem' rang out.

P2: Ahem. *(Baby Jesus seller sitting at his stall – "Get your baby Jesus here" [on screen])*

N: Geoff looked up and saw a baby Jesus shop. This time relief flooded over him. He walked over to the shop, and the shopkeeper.

P1: Am I relieved to see you. Could I have a baby Jesus please.

P2: What kind of baby Jesus?

P1: What do you mean, what kind? I just want a baby Jesus to put in the manger of my nativity scene.

P2: Well, I have lots of different baby Jesus's. You'll just have to have a look in the catalogue.

P1: *(starts flicking through the catalogue)* This must be a printing error. You have a baby Jesus whose face is black on one side, white on the other side, and shades of brown in between. Wouldn't Jesus have been middle eastern looking, light brown in colour?

P2: Yeah, he was probably light brown. But showing Jesus with all the shades of human colour makes the important statement that Jesus came for all the peoples of the world, every last one of them, covering every shade there is.

P1: Ok. Good point. *(flicks further through catalogue)* Hey, this baby Jesus looks a bit silly as well. Those arms on him are ridiculously long.

P2: Yeah, I don't sell many of them, but this baby Jesus points to an amazing truth. Jesus was just a little human baby, but he's also the Son of God through whom all things were made, whose arms embrace, not just this world with all its people, but the whole cosmos.

P1: That is an amazing truth. But, ... Let's see what else you have.

P1: Is this for real? You have a baby Jesus with a dirty, smelly nappy. What's that about?

P2: Actually, this baby Jesus has a lot to tell us. First of all, there was a heresy in the early church where people said that Jesus the divine Son of God was not human, he only seemed to be human. A dirty, smelly nappy tells the truth that Jesus

was not just fully God but also a fully functioning human. Secondly, a dirty smelly nappy reminds us that Jesus came to take our dirty, smelly sin onto himself, so that we might be forgiven.

P1: Ok, I get you. Sin really is a dirty smelly business. I am just not sure people in the congregation are going to cope with the smell very well. If you don't mind, I'm going to keep looking. Oh wow! Oh wow! The face on this baby Jesus, ... it's just showing so much love. That look captures me. It feels like it would melt my heart.

P2: That's what Jesus' love is meant to do. It's sad that people can struggle so much to see the loving face of Jesus. Instead of a loving face they see a false angry face, or they don't even see a face because God seems so distant from them.

P1: Well, talking about an angry face, this next baby Jesus is looking full on angry. He's looking scarily angry. Maybe that's why people can struggle to see the loving face of Jesus, because Jesus is showing them his angry face.

P2: Jesus is angry, there's no doubt about it. He's angry at the devil and his minions. He's angry at sin. He's angry at death. He's angry at how the powers of darkness have corrupted his good creation. He's angry at how those powers have robbed, stolen and taken away life from us, his image bearers. Jesus was born a baby into this world to take on those powers of darkness head on and destroy them, and he's not going to stop until he does destroy them, so that we can have life in all its fullness with him for ever, because he loves us so much. (P2 gets quite elevated and passionate in the telling)

P1: Y'know, now that I look again, I can actually see the love behind his anger. Oh, I do wish I would stop indulging the darkness that still sits within me.

This next baby Jesus, he has a big tear running down his face. He looks so sad.

P2: Jesus came into the world to draw all people to himself and give them life. But so many people reject him, hate him, push him away. They prefer the darkness to the light. And that pains greatly the heart of God. The tear rolling down the baby Jesus' face also says that Jesus feels for us in all our pains and sorrows. But even as the tear rolls down, Jesus also knows that one day he will wipe away every tear from our eyes, and then we will be fully enveloped in joy, even as, even now Jesus has put his joy within us.

P1: Yes, I see the last baby Jesus in your catalogue – There's a huge smile on his face, and his eyes just sparkle and dance with an amazing joy.

P2: When all is said and done, God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit share together in an eternal joy. God in his being is joyful. And this is a joy that Jesus has already, even now, drawn us into. We only experience that joy now in part, but when Jesus comes again his joy will just blow us away.

N: That night, for the first time ever in the Christmas Eve worship, 7 baby Jesus-es peered out at them over the lip of the crib. Even as they smelt the humanness of Jesus, they also experienced the enveloping arms of the cosmic Son of God. They saw his anger at evil and felt convicted in Spirit over the sin they still held onto, but they were also very glad that God was holy, did not tolerate evil, and was doing away with evil. Even though their hearts were yet too small to fully grasp the greatness of who was before them, they saw in the baby Jesus the love and joy of God, and they knew everything was going to be ok, and more than ok - astoundingly good.