

## **Why did Jesus come to us as a human infant dependent on us for his safety and development?**

Before I begin, my reader needs to understand that I believe that it is impossible to comprehend God's mind, motivation, and style fully. As finite human beings, we struggle to express our understanding of God primarily through metaphor, illustrations, analogies, stories, etc.

Consequently, my attempt to answer the question will be flawed and incomplete. My point of view is the result of this Advent's Christmas preparation and some Divine inspiration and insights. By no means am I creating dogma. Instead, I am trying to illustrate God's gentleness and mercy as He interacts with His creation.

I will be using Prochaska's six stages of change\* to aid in our journey\*. To avoid unnecessarily cluttering my presentation, I will give further explanations and definitions in the asterisks below. It is important to remember that our journey toward change is seldom fixed. Generally, change is fluid, changing, ebb and flow with frequent reversals. Nonetheless, God's defined outcome always prevails. For simplicity's sake, I will hold my presentation to a simpler model with only forward motion and do so in an outline fashion.

I will be doing some stage setting, so hang in there. I will answer the question.

***Precontemplation***

***Contemplation***

***Preparation***

***Action***

***Maintenance***

***Termination***

God has inspired and directed His peoples' development into a nation from the beginning of creation through their resistance, doubt, rebellion, and external forces. He led them through the use of separation from captivities, forty years in the desert, prophets, angels, and the development of kingdoms, including building the city of Jerusalem. Throughout Salvation History (the Old Testament), there is an abiding message of the arrival of a Savior. Essentially the stage is set for the Annunciation\*.

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Mary was prepared via her miraculous sinless birth\*, her family of origin, and Jewish culture. The selection of Joseph as her husband is thought to be by Divine intervention. The Angel Gabriel announced God's intent. Mary asked some thoughtful questions and agreed. Shortly after she brought the news to Joseph, who had some difficulty processing, Joseph was enlightened and accepted the situation during a dream. They soon traveled to Joseph's hometown of Bethlehem to register for taxation. Difficulties and stresses arose in finding housing, giving birth, visits by shepherds, kings, etc. After some time, they had to escape to Egypt.

Now that we have seen the process of Precontemplation to Termination, I can answer the question. **Why did Jesus come to us as a human infant dependent on us for his safety and development?**

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Mary and Joseph had some understanding of their mission and had given their consent. They developed their confidence together on the journey to Bethlehem and overcame various trials and stresses. Both Mary and Joseph committed themselves to Jesus by protecting his life, providing love, security, cultural and religious education. After Joseph's death, Mary continued to live with family and supported Jesus in His growth, although not yet knowing the eventual outcome. Jesus surrounded himself with apostles and disciples, and they overcome many challenges. Eventually, Jesus gave authority to His disciples to continue His mission after His death and resurrection. Finally, the Holy Spirit empowered those same apostles, and the church was formed.

To sum up, God gave His Son to us as an infant because this is how we process and understand life events. This is the process of how we change through understanding. In His love and gentle mercy, God, our creator, worked in harmony with His creation.

Now let me explain my mystical understanding and vision.

***Precontemplation***

***Contemplation***

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Typically, before the birth of a child, the parents prepare themselves and their circumstances for the child. Sometimes they have to overcome fear, anxiety, and lack of social and environmental support.

Frequently the birth event itself is filled with mystery and awe. Parents often "adore, reverence, hold in awe their inspiring creation." They often commit themselves to that child pledging safety and opportunity. From those and many large and small acts of love, they grow in their love not only for the child but toward themselves and often toward God. Over the years, together as a family, they battle doubts, fears, lack, and sinfulness but remain faithful to and grow in their love of each other. Those acts of love give empowerment and solid commitment to each other.

In my vision, I saw the Holy Spirit seamlessly directing each step. I saw the parents' commitment to the infant returning to the parents, thus empowering them to sustain themselves and continue their original act of creation in that child.

I saw this and more as an act of God's grace upon all of His creation so that it might thrive and return to Himself and live in the fruits of the Holy Spirit.

The yearly celebration of Christmas is our opportunity to hold the infant Jesus and give Him our love and commitment, thus allowing Him to grace us with the faith and ongoing devotion to make our changes.

## \*"Prochaska's six stages of change.

Six key stages: from **Precontemplation** to **Contemplation**, then to **Preparation** and **Action**. But that's only the beginning, and we can easily coast right back into preparation or contemplation if we lose our nerve, focus or steam. For our behavior change to prove sustainable, it must enter a **Maintenance** phase until it finally becomes ingrained as a stable habit. This final, ongoing phase is known as **Termination**, which implies that the change is now a permanent part of our lifestyle."

### **Precontemplation**

Cultures, nations, or "people in this stage" may wish to change, but for the immediate future have no plans to do so. Why? They may not be fully aware of all the potential benefits, or they may feel disinclined to try because of past failed attempts, or a lack of available energy.

**Moving from Precontemplation to Contemplation:** Frequently change may be motivated by some difficult or intolerable events which causes thoughts of creating something better."

### **Stage 2: Contemplation**

Cultures, nations, or "people in the Contemplation stage are thinking about taking action but aren't quite ready or don't know how to get started. While not actively making changes they are no longer apposed. And may even listen if new information comes along."

### **Stage 3: Preparation**

Cultures, nations, or "people in the Preparation stage are getting **ready to take action**. They are more decisive, confident, and committed; they're developing a plan and may have already taken small steps. At this point, the pros of making the change clearly outweigh the cons — but there's some work to be done before meaningful action can take place.

The Preparation stage is all about building confidence — and troubleshooting against the obstacles or weaknesses that stand the greatest chance of undermining it.

**You're in the Preparation stage if:** You're actively gathering information, support, maybe even gear and supplies — and feel nearly ready to take your first steps. You're feeling motivated to learn the skills that will help you be successful in making this change"

**Moving from Preparation to Action:** Cultures, nations, or "people are inclined to accept appropriate support, and you welcome invitations and incentives to participate in activities that will move you forward.

### **Stage 4: Action**

Beyond just thinking about it or preparing to act," a culture, nations, or "people in this phase has actually begun doing something (or a lot of things) differently, and may be experimenting with expanding his or her efforts. Even if the changes are small so far, he or she is building momentum, knowledge and confidence, all of which encourage continued action.

**You're in the Action stage if:** You're implementing your action plan.

**Moving from Action to Maintenance:** Prochaska's model specifies your transition into Maintenance. Getting to that point mostly involves doing whatever keeps you strong, motivated and focused. Finding ways to integrate your chosen behavior into your social life and sense of identity can be a big help."

### **Stage 5: Maintenance**

culture, nations, and "individuals in the Maintenance stage have managed to stay in Action mode for at least six months. That means they've successfully avoided or overcome the obstacles that could have caused them to slip back into old behaviors. Through practice, they've attained a greater level of confidence and capacity. Their new behaviors have started to become a more integrated part of their lifestyle and identity, and their risk of relapse is much lower than when they began.

**You're in the Maintenance stage if:** you've been diligent and consistent in performing the actions you committed to as part of your desired behavior to change. They now seem fairly routine.

**Moving from Maintenance to Termination:** Treat obstacles and unanticipated challenges as opportunities to develop new strengths. Ward off boredom by taking on new challenges and expanding your skills. Stay on the maintenance path for two years or more, rallying even through stresses and setbacks, and you'll reach a point where you can't really imagine ever going back to the way things were before."

### **Stage 6: Termination**

When culture, nations, or "people in the Maintenance stage continue their healthier behavior for at least two years, they enter into Termination (sometimes also referred to as "Adoption"). In Termination, the behavior change is completely integrated, and the temptation to revert to the former behavior is entirely gone. This element of behavior change is no longer something you have to "do" — it's just who you are."

<https://experiencelife.lifetime.life/article/the-stages-of-change/>

\*When I say our journey, I include changes in culture, nations, and individuals."

\* Annunciation is when the Angel announced to Mary that she would be the Mother of the Christ, Savior.

\*Mary was prepared via her own miraculous and sinless birth. Mary's parents, High Priest Joachim and Mother Anna, were aged beyond the standard childbearing years, yet Mary was conceived through prayer and divine intervention. The church teaches that Mary did not suffer from Original Sin, Immaculate Conception. She was raised "in the temple" with a solid Jewish heritage