

Lord Jesus, thank you that you love us more than we can know. Help us to think about what this love means today.  
Amen

- Did anyone wake up really, really early this morning?
  - Were you woken up by anyone else?
  - Did you wake anyone else up?
  - Were they pleased?
- It's quite possible to have quite a lot of power early in the morning!
- Here are some other powerful things!
- S • This is the Roman army in a defensive position
  - Called a tortoise
  - Working together
  - Protecting each other
  - Covering every angle
  - Remarkably successful
  - Brought (and kept) great power to Roman Empire. Rightly feared by all their subjects
- Do powerful things have to be large and strong and fierce?
- S • Of course this is the Corona virus
  - Very tiny;
  - unknown 2 years ago
  - power to change our daily lives greater than almost anything else
- S • Which of these would you say was the more powerful? And in either case, is their power particularly welcome or attractive?
- S • This is another picture of power; electricity pylons carrying the power of electricity
  - Need it to light our homes, cook our food, heat our water and lots more
  - Could we survive without it? (lots of people do and all of us did)
  - But today we rely on it completely and it has great power over us.
  - Remember how helpless you feel when its power fails and there is a powercut?
- S • What about this picture? Is this a powerful picture?
  - If you are a sleep deprived parent then small babies have a very great power indeed
  - And their power is increased by love
  - If your baby is distressed you will clearly do anything for it no matter how exhausted you feel
  - If your baby smiles you will feel a warmth that will be hard to match from any other source of power
  - And yet babies are the most defenceless of human beings. They need protecting and because they need protecting we do it for them. They exert their power over us . They create love and attachment and make us do things for them that we would not do for anyone else
  - Power does not have to be strong at all.
- S • We're here today because of the power of one baby in particular
  - Why do we get so excited about one small baby born 2000 years ago in a stable?
  - How powerful is this baby?
  - Well it's certainly true that Jesus has had more impact on daily lives than anyone else ever
  - It's certainly true that Jesus is God's gift of love to us. What greater gift could God give us than sending his Son
  - And it's certainly true that this baby, so powerful but yet so weak and defenceless, is only the beginning of the powerful story of God transforming the world. And we haven't got to the end of the story yet!

- It's certainly true that he attracts all sorts of people to come and stand at his stable. We heard about the shepherds today. Perhaps before you leave you would like to go and stand at his stable and say a prayer to him as well and maybe light a candle.

- I think if you do that you'll feel his love filling you up this Christmas Day.
- And that means your life will be changed by the power of Jesus just one little bit.
- And if you picture the baby in the manger tomorrow, and say a prayer to him again, your life will be changed just a little bit more.
- That's the power of Jesus' love

S

- So which of these four pictures is the use of power most attractive.
- And which is the most effective.
- And which is going to make the greatest impact on your life?
- Happy Christmas! And thank you God for sharing our lives with your Son, Jesus. Amen

