

## GRACE CAME DOWN

(Luke 2:1-20)

Intro: First thing I do.

-When I go to my granddaughter's house.

#To play with Sophia.

-After I take off my coat.

#Get down on the floor.

\*I don't sit on the floor.

\*I lie on the floor.

If I want to play with her.

-I can't stand there.

#Towering over her.

#Waiting for her to climb up to my level.

\*She can't do that.

#We had our family Christmas celebration on Thursday evening.

\*They went to Nashville yesterday for Christmas.

+To see:

=Aunt Sowe.

=Uncle Sajeev.

=New baby Priyanka.

\*I had put out a bowl of candy.

+For everyone to enjoy

\*First thing Sophia was attracted to.

+Christmas tree.

\*Second thing she was attracted to.

+Bowl of candy.

\*She wanted to have a piece before dinner.

+So her daddy let her have one taste.

+Candy dish got put up on the counter.

\*After dinner.

+Sophia wanted more candy.

+She knew where the dish was.

+She tried to climb up.

=But she couldn't do it.

\*She cannot climb up to my level.

-I can't even sit in a chair to play with her.

#There are some things I can do with her from a chair.

\*Like reading a book.

#But if I really want to play with her.

\*I've got to get down on the floor.

This is the message of Christmas.  
-We can't climb up to God.  
#God had to come down to us.  
\*To meet us on our level.

On Christmas.  
-God came down.  
-Grace came down.

## I. Grace Came Down To Bethlehem.

### A. Not:

1. Jerusalem.
  - a. Capital of Judea.
  - b. Where the Judean king lived.
2. Rome.
  - a. Capital of the Roman Empire.
  - b. Where Caesar lived.  
-Roman emperor.
3. Washington, D.C.
4. New York City.
5. Chicago.
6. Los Angeles.
7. Tulsa, Oklahoma.

### B. But Bethlehem.

1. Ancient hometown of David.
2. Town whose name means:
  - a. House of Bread.
  - b. Where is born the Bread of Life.
3. Little Bethlehem.
  - a. "But you, O Bethlehem of Ephratha,"  
"Who are one of the little clans of Judah,"  
"From you shall come forth for me"  
"One who is to rule in Israel."
  - b. Micah 5:2.  
-Matthew 2:6.
4. God came down to Bethlehem.
5. Grace came down.

## II. Grace Came Down To Mary And Joseph.

### A. Not:

1. Herod.
  - a. Judean king.
  - b. Who would slaughter innocent babies.
    - To eliminate any potential rivals to his throne.
    - #Matthew 2:16-18.
2. Caesar Augustus.
  - a. Roman Emperor.
  - b. Named Octavian.
    - Great-nephew of Julius Caesar.
  - c. Given the august name of Augustus.
    - By the Roman Senate.
  - d. Who claimed for himself titles like:
    - Son of God.
    - Savior of the Whole World.
3. Barack Obama.
4. John Boehner.

### B. But Mary And Joseph.

1. Not powerful political players.
  - a. On the world's stage.
2. But little Mary and Joseph.
  - a. From Nazareth.
  - b. In Galilee.
3. Obedient to the political powers.
  - a. Who decreed that each citizen.
    - Should travel to his or her ancestral home.
    - #To be registered for the census.
  - b. Mary and Joseph went.
    - Loyal citizens.
4. Faithful to God.
  - a. Young and inexperienced in the realm of parenthood.
  - b. Yet responsive to God's call.
    - To be the earthly parents of the Christ child.
5. For Christmas.
  - a. I gave Sophia a Fisher-Price nativity set.
    - Stable.
    - #Plays two songs.
    - \**Silent Night.*
    - \**Away in a Manger.*
    - Angel on the roof.

- Baby Jesus.
  - #Lights up.
- Mary and Joseph.
- Animals.
  - #Sheep.
  - #Cow.
  - #Goat.
  - #Donkey.
    - \*Pulls a cart.
- b. But Sophia won't let the donkey pull the cart.
  - She's turned the cart into a baby stroller.
  - #Baby Jesus goes in the back.
    - \*Not:
      - +Bale of hay.
      - +Sack of grain.
    - #It's Mary's job to push:
      - \*Stroller.
      - \*Baby.
- 6. God came down to Mary and Joseph.
- 7. Grace came down.

### III. Grace Came Down To The Shepherds.

- A. Not:
  1. Movie stars.
    - a. George Clooney.
    - b. Julia Roberts.
    - c. Meryl Streep.
  2. Not film producers or directors.
    - a. George Lucas.
    - b. Steven Spielberg.
  3. Not newscasters.
    - a. Brian Williams.
    - b. Katie Couric.
    - c. Barbara Walters.
  4. People who could tell the story of Jesus' birth.
    - a. Powerfully.
    - b. Eloquently.
    - c. Globally.

B. But Shepherds.

1. Low-life's of ancient society.

- a. Uneducated.
- b. Rude.
- c. Crude.
- d. Vulgar.
- e. Immoral.
- f. Dishonest.

-Grazed their sheep on other people's property.

-Not allowed to be witnesses in a court of law.

#So the early rabbis decreed.

2. But God came down to the shepherds.

a. Announcing:

-“To you is born this day in the City of David,”

-“A savior, who is Christ, the Lord.”

#Luke 2:11.

b. They responded.

-Going straight to Bethlehem.

#Not passing “Go.”

#Not collecting \$200.

-Making known what had been told to them about the child.

#Luke 2:17.

3. Grace came down to the shepherds.

IV. Grace Comes Down To Us.

A. Yes, To Us.

1. We could never climb our way up to God.

- a. Folks at the Tower of Babel tried that.

-Genesis 11:1-9.

- b. They didn't get very far.

2. God comes down to us.

- a. Bethlehem baby.
- b. Water and Word.
- c. Bread and wine.

3. Grace comes down.

B. How Do We Respond?

1. When I get down on the floor to play with Sophia.

- a. Sometimes she scampers right past me.

-Her eye on one toy or another.

- b. Sometimes she plays hide 'n' seek with me.

-Pretending that I can't see her.

- c. But when I "find" her.
    - She crawls into my arms.
    - I lift her up.
    - I spin her around.
    - I hug her to my chest.
    - I put her on her feet.
    - I let her go.
  - d. Again she crawls off.
    - Pretending I can't see her.
    - Then scampering back again and again.
    - #For another:
      - \*Cuddle.
      - \*Hug.
2. Isn't that how we often are with God?
- a. Grace comes down to us.
  - b. We might be more interested in our toys.
    - Crawling right past our gracious God.
    - #As if God isn't even there.
  - c. Or we play hide 'n' seek.
    - Pretending that God can't see us.
    - #Whatever we think we can keep hidden.
  - d. But whenever we are ready to be found.
    - God is always there.
    - #With arms full of:
      - \*Love.
      - +Mercy.
      - \*Faith.
      - +Forgiveness.

Concl: Grace has come down.  
 -In Bethlehem.  
 -In this place.

You can hear it.  
 You can feel it.  
 You can even taste it.

Come.  
 -Grace has come down.