

Christmas Day

Luke 2: 1-20

December 25, 2013

**Merry Christmas!** (Response).....My Fellow Redeemed In Christ,

The World Is Very Impressed With Wealth And Power, With Education And Social Standing. The World Is Not Impressed With The Weak And The Poor, With The Uneducated And The Lowly. And Of Course, It's True That Many Lowly Things Are Not Worthy Of Praise. We Tend To Either Ignore Lowly Things....Or Look Down On Them.....In Downtown Seattle There Might Be People In Lowly Situations Who Might Need To Be Pitied Or Shown Compassion But Who Are Not Worthy Of Praise. And So It's True That The Words "**Lowly**" And "**Praise**" Often Don't Go Together. There Are Rare Exceptions Like **Mother Teresa Of Calcutta, India** Who Founded The Missionaries Of Charity. She And Others Ministered To People With Leprosy And Tuberculosis, And Others Who Were Poor, Homeless And Dying. She Received Much Praise In Her Life Including A Noble Peace Prize In 1979. She Received Such Praise Because Instead Of Living A Normal Life Of Comfort And Ease She Chose Instead To Live A Life Of Poverty With The Sick And Dying. Which Brings Us To Christmas. The Christmas Story Is An Even Greater Story Than Mother Teresa. For The Christmas Story Is The Greatest Story About **Lowly Events Worthy Of Praise.**"

I. By Any Normal Standard There Was Nothing Special Or Exceptional About The Events Leading Up To The Birth Of Jesus Christ.

A. There Was Nothing Special About The Parents Of Jesus. Joseph, Of Course, Was Thought To Be The Father Of Jesus. No One Knew About The Virgin Conception Of Mary By The Holy Spirit. Who Would Believe A Story Like That Anyway! Neither Joseph Nor Mary Had Anything About Them That Would Make Them Stand Out From Other People. They Were Not Famous Or Wealthy. They Had No Power Or Influence. They Were Just Ordinary, Simple Folks Who Blended In With The Masses. Joseph Was A Carpenter And Mary Was Just A Young Mother. They Were People Who Could Easily Be Over Looked In A Crowd With No Traits To Bring Attention To Them. That's Pretty Lowly.

B. And The Location Of Jesus' Birth Certainly Points To It Too Being A Lowly Event. He Was Not Born In The Large, Bustling, World Famous City Of Jerusalem....Which Also Happened To Be The Capital Of Israel. No, He Was Born In A Small Little Village Six Miles West Of The Imposing City Of Jerusalem.....Bethlehem. True, King David Was Born There At One Time...But That Was A Thousand Years Before Jesus' Birth And Bethlehem Was No Longer Special. And He Was Not Born In A Palace.....He Wasn't Even Born In A House.....He Was Born In Stable With Animals And Laid In A Feeding Trough Out Of Which They Ate.....That's What A "**Manger**" Is. The Word Comes

From The French **Manger** (Meaning "To Eat"), And From The Latin **Manducare** (Meaning "To Chew").  
That's Pretty Lowly.

C. It Is Of Course True That Angels Appeared To Shepherds As They Watched Their Flocks By Night. But In Jesus' Day Shepherds Themselves Were Lowly And Looked Down On By The Rest Of Society. They Were Usually Single Men Doing A Job No One Else Wanted To Do. And Because Of Their Responsibilities They Could Not Keep The Jewish Laws The Way They Should Be Kept. And So The Religious Leaders And Common Folks Alike Looked Down On Them As Inferior. So When They Came To Visit The Manger Where Jesus Was Laid It Was A Very Lowly Scene: A Child Of A Lowly Couple, Lying In A Lowly Manger Visited By Lowly Shepherds.

**Transition:** Ah, But What About The Wise Men? Well, Luke Doesn't Mention Them...Only Matthew Does. And Even Though All Manger Scenes, Including Ours On 35th .... Show The Wise Men With The Baby Jesus.....They Were Not There.....They Didn't Come Until Up To Two Years Later And They Came Not To The Manger But To A House.

ii. Ok Then...The Birth Of Jesus Christ Was A Lowly Event. And Yet It Is Worthy Of Praise Why? Because Of Who This Child Is.

A. And Who Is This Child? God. God In Human Form. The Creator Of This Planet Earth And The Vast Expanse Of Space Became One Of Us. Amazing. But Why? Why Would The Creator Do Such A Thing? Why? One Simple Reason: For Us. That's What The Angel Told The Shepherds: **"Fear Not, For Behold, I Bring You Good News Of Great Joy That Will Be For All The People. For Unto You Is Born This Day In The City Of David A Savior, Who Is Christ The Lord"** (Vv. 10, 11, Esv). Here Are The Key Words That Need To Ring In Your Ears And Go Right To Your Heart: **"Unto You....A Savior"**. Is This Not Worthy Of Praise? God Came Into Our World As Jesus In Order To Save Us. Save Us From What? God's Wrath. Sadly, Many Christian Churches Don't Preach And Teach About The Wrath Of God. But When Jesus Returns At The End Of The World To Judge The Living And The Dead All Who Have Not Trusted In Him As Their Savior From God's Wrath.....Will Spend Eternity In Hell. Some People Say That Such Language Sounds So Harsh, Negative And Unloving. But It's Not. It's The Natural Language Of Urgency In Warning People About Something That Will Hurt Them. If There Is A Hell...And There Is....Shouldn't People Be Warned? Think About How You Would Speak To People In A Large Crowded Room That Didn't Know That A Large Fire Had Just Broken Out In The Room Next Door.. Would It Be Harsh Or Judgmental To Warn Them In Strong Language That They Needed To Leave Now And Quickly....You Would Use The Language Of Urgency. And That Would Be The Language Of Love. And So People Need To Hear About God's Wrath Against Our Sin So That The Message Of Jesus As Savior Will Be Comforting And Joyous And The Angel Said: **"Fear Not, For Behold, I Bring You**

**Good News Of Great Joy That Will Be For All The People.** On The Judgment Day Can You Imagine Someone Who Is Going To Hell Looking At You And Saying: **"Why Didn't You Warn Me?"**

**B.** Yes, Good News Of Great Joy. A Savior From God's Wrath. Is This Not Worthy Of Praise? But Think Of This. Who Is Jesus? God. God In Human Form. And How Would God Save Us From His Wrath? By Dying For Us On Cross. In Jesus Christ We Have God's Forgiveness, Victory Over Death And Freedom From The Fear Of God's Wrath.....Because On The Cross He Would Be Punished And Die For The Sins Of The Whole World.....For Our Sins. When Jesus Died On The Cross Yes A Man Died. But More Than A Man. When Jesus Died On The Cross God Himself Was Punished For The Sins That We Had Committed Against Him. Think About That. In Jesus Christ God Punished Himself With The Punishment That We Deserved For Sinning Against Him. Is This Not Worthy Of Praise? Would You Be Willing To Take The Punishment For A Crime That Was Committed Against You? And Yet.....That's What God Did For Us. As One Day This Baby Would Die On That Cross. At Christmas God Became One Of Us. And On Good Friday He Died On The Cross For Us. And He Did This Not Because He Had To..... He Did It Because He Wanted To Do It. And He Wanted To Do It Because.. He Loved Us.....**"For Good So Loved The World That He Gave His Only Son.....(John 3: 16, Esv).** Even Though We Have Sinned Against Him Countless Times.....Yet He Loved Us So Much To Die For Us...What Could Be More Worthy Of Praise?

**Conclusion:** It Is True That Without Any Explanation Whatsoever The Birth Of Jesus Christ Is A Lowly Event. Born Of Lowly Parents And In A Lowly Town And Visited By Lowly Shepherds. But This Is A Lowly Event Worthy Of Praise.....Because Of Who He Is And What He Has Done. And That Is Why We Are Here This Morning...To Give Him Praise. **Merry Christmas..(Response) Amen.**