



### 3: LOVE Came Down (Advent)

*Christmas isn't just about a baby in a manger—it's about LOVE that stepped into our broken world and changed everything. Come discover how Love Came Down and why His first coming gives us hope as we await His return.*

## beourguest

Thanks so much for joining us today! Please register with our **CONNECT CARD**.

- Use our **WI-FI: Worship Center Guest**

## getourapp

Download our **CHURCH APP** for sermons & notes, ways to connect, upcoming events, online giving, & more.



APP & NOTES



CONNECT CARD



GIVE

## teachingnotes

\* All Scripture is from the Christian Standard Bible (CSB) unless otherwise noted.

The term **ADVENT** is derived from the Latin word *ADVENTUS* meaning “coming” or “arrival.” Early Christians used this term in appreciation of the 1st coming of Jesus and anticipation of the 2nd coming of Jesus - His birth & His future RETURN.

The Advent Season is usually remembered in 4 key words:

- **HOPE** for the Jews and for the Gentiles.
- **PEACE** that God extends to those who were formerly His enemies.
- **JOY** in the waiting, as Joseph and Mary anticipated all those promises to be fulfilled.
- **LOVE** came down, when God put on skin and came to live with us.

### Luke 2:1-5

In those days a decree went out from Caesar Augustus that the whole empire should be registered. This first registration took place while Quirinius was governing Syria. So everyone went to be registered, each to his own town. Joseph also went up from the town of Nazareth in Galilee, to Judea, to the city of David, which is called **Bethlehem**, because he was of the house and family line of David, to be registered along with Mary, who was engaged to him and was pregnant.

Joseph returns to the town of his ancestors. Luke the historian had the topography correct when he says, “Joseph also **went up**.” Bethlehem (south of Nazareth) is 2,564 feet above sea level while Nazareth is 1,830 feet above sea level.

Bethlehem was the prophesied place the Messiah would come from, according to the prophecy of Micah (700 years before the birth of Jesus).

**Micah 5:2 Bethlehem** Ephrathah, you are small among the clans of Judah; **one will come from you to be ruler over Israel for Me**. His origin is from antiquity, from ancient times.

### Luke 2:6-7

While they were there, the time came for her to give birth. Then **she gave birth to her firstborn son**, and she wrapped him tightly in cloth and laid him in a manger, because there was no guest room available for them.

The focus is on the baby - a **son**. There is reference to cloths and a **manger** - a feed trough. That's not the normal spot to lay an infant. This likely took place on the lower floor of a relative's home - where the animals slept at night OR in cave near a home - where animals were protected at night. Joseph was likely expecting to find refuge at a relative's home, but the guest rooms were already filled. So, Mary & Joseph make the best of it, but it's certainly not the place where the King of Israel would be expected be birthed.

### Luke 2:8-12

In the same region, shepherds were staying out in the fields and keeping watch at night over their flock. Then an **angel of the Lord** stood before them, and the **glory of the Lord shone around them**, and they were terrified. But the angel said to them, “Don't be afraid, for look, I proclaim to you good news of great joy that will be for all the people: Today in the city of David a Savior was born for you, who is the Messiah, the Lord. This will be the sign for you: You will find a baby wrapped tightly in cloth and lying in a manger.”

**Shepherds** are the least likely audience to announce the birth of a king, yet these shepherds of Bethlehem (where King David had once been a shepherd) were the first that God chose to tell about the birth of the GOOD SHEPHERD. The angel has come to bring good news which will bring joy for all the people who are humble enough to receive it.

The manger was a signpost to the **Savior** - the long awaited **Messiah, the Lord** (a specific reference for God).

For centuries those who believe the New Testament Scriptures have recognized that answering **'Who is Jesus?'** is the most important question one could answer.

### **Codex Bezae Cantabrigiae**

Dan Wallace, professor of New Testament Studies at Dallas Theological Seminary - an expert in New Testament Greek manuscripts, tells us of a 6th century (500s) hand-written Greek copy of the Gospel of Matthew, found on parchment dyed purple reserved for the Gospels. Every word on this parchment has been carefully written in silver...except for **God, Jesus, Christ** [Messiah], **Lord**, and **Son** - all in GOLD.

🌟 **Dr. Dan Wallace** "What does this tell you about what the Christians thought about Jesus Christ? He is God. He is Lord. It's remarkable how just the form of the text itself is telling us something of their theology."

These 6th century Christians believed what the 1st century shepherds believed, what Mary & Joseph believed...what WE should believe...that LOVE came down - God in skin. Jesus would not be just another prophet who speaks for God. Jesus IS the **Savior, Messiah, & Lord - God** who speaks.

### **Luke 2:13-19**

Suddenly there was a multitude of the heavenly host with the angel, praising God and saying: **Glory to God** in the highest heaven, and **peace on earth to people** He favors! When the angels had left them and returned to heaven, the shepherds said to one another, "Let's go straight to Bethlehem and see what has happened, which the Lord has made known to us." They hurried off and found both Mary and Joseph, and **the baby** who was **lying in the manger**. After seeing them, they reported the message they were told about **this child**, and all who heard it were amazed at what the shepherds said to them. But Mary was treasuring up all these things in her heart and meditating on them.

This is NOT the end of the story, because this child born to us, this **child** named Yeshua - Yahweh saves - will grow into the God/man who will do just that.

One of Jesus' closest disciples encapsulates when his pen bleeds onto papyrus with these precious words.

### **1 John 4:9-10**

**God's love** was revealed among us in this way: **God sent his one and only Son** into the world so that we might live through him. Love consists in this: not that we loved God, but that **he loved us and sent his Son to be the atoning sacrifice for our sins**.

**LOVE Came Down!** God made the 1st move in our lives because...**He loved us!** God's love didn't hit the brakes at the cradle - His mission continued all the way to the CROSS.

### **Philippians 2:5-8**

Adopt the same attitude as that of Christ Jesus...assuming the form of a servant, **taking on the likeness of humanity**. And when he had come as a man, **he humbled himself** by becoming obedient to the point of death— even to **death on a cross**.

But Paul doesn't conclude everything there. Paul reminds us of **ADVENT** - not just appreciating His birth, but anticipating His return.

### **Philippians 2:10-11**

so that **at the name of Jesus every knee will bow**— in heaven and on earth and under the earth— and **every tongue will confess that Jesus Christ is Lord**, to the glory of God the Father.

- ❓ If *THAT day* were *TOday*...what regrets would you have - regrets that you could CHOOSE to do something about?
- ❓ What are some ways you can serve others & share you faith during this ADVENT season - as you appreciate Jesus' birth and anticipate His return?

## **heretoserveyou**

Have questions and need some help? ...real soon...how about now? Please **call** or **text** us soon!

- \* Contact **Jackie** (850-673-1582), **Christy** (850-673-9764), **Caleb** (864-315-8015), **Gary** (850-673-2507), **Betty** (850-973-3266), or another follower of Jesus soon!
- \* Or call our **deacons & wives: Alan & Christy Androski** (850-464-1428), **Steve & Debbie Bass** (850-673-7952), **Noel & Patricia Barnes** (813-767-2881), **Derek & Emily Beaty** (813-763-4421), or **Tim & Joni Hughey** (850-464-1156).