**December 26, 2021 Luke 2:8-20**

 ***Come and See***

**Scripture:** Luke 2:8-20 NRSV

 *(8)In that region there were shepherds living in the fields, keeping watch over their flock by night. (9)Then an angel of the Lord stood before them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were terrified. (10)But the angel said to them, "Do not be afraid; for see--I am bringing you good news of great joy for all the people: (11)to you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, who is the Messiah, the Lord. (12)This will be a sign for you: you will find a child wrapped in bands of cloth and lying in a manger." (13)And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host, praising God and saying, (14)"Glory to God in the highest heaven, and on earth peace among those whom he favors!" (15)When the angels had left them and gone into heaven, the shepherds said to one another, "Let us go now to Bethlehem and see this thing that has taken place, which the Lord has made known to us." (16)So they went with haste and found Mary and Joseph, and the child lying in the manger. (17)When they saw this, they made known what had been told them about this child; (18)and all who heard it were amazed at what the shepherds told them. (19)But Mary treasured all these words and pondered them in her heart. (20)The shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all they had heard and seen, as it had been told them.*

**Notes:**

1. Come and see the ***gift*** of *Jesus***.**
	1. The shepherds were super ***scared***.
	2. Good news of great joy was even for ***shepherds***.
	3. This gift is for everyone and ***anyone***.
2. Come and see the ***greatness*** of Jesus**.**
	1. Jesus is ***Savior***, the ***Messiah***, and is ***Lord***.
	2. God vividly shows off the ***greatness*** of His Son!
	3. God has shown His ***favor*** to all people.
3. Come and see the ***glories*** of *Jesus*.
	1. The shepherds wanted to see the ***baby***, ***Jesus***!
	2. They wanted to ***GO*** and ***SEE***!
4. What did the shepherds ***do*** as a result of their encounter.
	1. The Shepherds started to ***share*** about their encounter!
	2. The glories of God were on ***full*** ***display*** through the baby.
	3. The shepherds couldn’t help but ***tell*** ***others*** about Jesus.
	4. We can ***praise*** and ***glorify*** God.
5. ***Come*** and ***see*** the gift, the greatness, and glories of Jesus.
	* 1. Come and see the ***wonderful*** ***gift*** of Jesus!
		2. ***Identify*** how coming to *Jesus* has ***changed*** you.
		3. ***Invite*** someone to *come* and *see* *Jesus*.
		4. Go tell ***everyone*** what Jesus has done for you

**Script:**

Have you ever seen a child that is extremely excited for you to “come and see” something? Perhaps they made something, maybe a craft or they discovered how to do something, and they wanted you to come and see. Or, perhaps it’s Christmas morning and they want you to come and see all of the presents under the tree. This Christmas, I want to invite all of you to “Come and See” Jesus.

Rev. Mathew McCraw writes of a field he saw near Bethlehem. It’s close to the town of Bethlehem in Israel called the “Shepherds Field”. If you were to visit it you could stand in the field and imagine what it might have been like for the Shepherds on that evening so many years ago, when the birth of Christ was announced to the shepherds in that field. To stand in that field and read or hear the word of God read aloud would be a very powerful and moving experience.

As I thought of this, I was struck by the idea of the shepherds talking among themselves of what they had just experienced and discussing whether to go and see the Messiah. Today, let us come and see the Messiah. Turn with me to Luke 2:8-20, to reveal three traits of Jesus, that we are to come and see.

 *(8)In that region there were shepherds living in the fields, keeping watch over their flock by night. (9)Then an angel of the Lord stood before them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were terrified. (10)But the angel said to them, "Do not be afraid; for see--I am bringing you good news of great joy for all the people: (11)to you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, who is the Messiah, the Lord. (12)This will be a sign for you: you will find a child wrapped in bands of cloth and lying in a manger." (13)And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host, praising God and saying, (14)"Glory to God in the highest heaven, and on earth peace among those whom he favors!" (15)When the angels had left them and gone into heaven, the shepherds said to one another, "Let us go now to Bethlehem and see this thing that has taken place, which the Lord has made known to us." (16)So they went with haste and found Mary and Joseph, and the child lying in the manger. (17)When they saw this, they made known what had been told them about this child; (18)and all who heard it were amazed at what the shepherds told them. (19)But Mary treasured all these words and pondered them in her heart. (20)The shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all they had heard and seen, as it had been told them. Luke 2:8-20 NRSV*

There are three traits about Jesus I want you to come and see. To make it easier for you, they all start with the letter *G*. So, lets get started. The first is to **Come and see the *gift* of *Jesus*.** These shepherds were just minding their own business, taking care of their sheep out in that field. Some scholars point out that shepherds didn’t usually tend their flocks near the end of the year, so this couldn’t be around December 25. The Bible doesn’t really tell us exactly when Jesus was born. Whether it is in April, or June, or September, the date is not what matters; what matters is that Jesus really was born! It’s perfectly acceptable for us to remember the birth of Jesus and celebrate the gift of Jesus on December 25.

Anyways, the shepherds were tending their flocks in a field, probably somewhere near Bethlehem. And, this angel appears to the shepherds, with seemingly no warning. Keep in mind that the shepherds didn’t have a star that subtly appeared, as the wise men. They were all of sudden, in the dead of night, face to face with an angel of the Lord!

Verse 9 says, ***(9)… and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were terrified****.*I would say so. Have you ever had a bright light shined in your face in the dead of night? It’s alarming, especially when you were not expecting it. The Bible says the glory of the Lord shone around them. You talk about a bright light, the glory of the Lord is bright, I would say as bright as it can get. The Greek word for *terrified* here means, “they feared a great fear.” In other words, “they were super scared,” and rightly so.

So, as angels often do, the angel said, “Don’t be afraid.” The angel wasn’t there to harm them. The angel was there to tell them something significant. The angel was there to tell them about the greatest gift the world would ever receive. And after the angel tried to calm their fear and get their attention this is what he said, “***Do not be afraid; for see--I am bringing you good news of great joy for all the people (verse 10)”***

This statement is proclamation of the gift. This message is good news of great joy. This term *good news* is the same root that we use for the word *gospel*. The angel is proclaiming the Gospel to these shepherds. This good news of great joy will be for ***“all people.”***

There’s something to be said that God chose first to reveal Jesus to shepherds. Shepherds were lowly people, not very well thought of in their culture. They were often dirty, ceremonially unclean, and not the most respected people in the world. Yet, good news of great joy was even for shepherds.

This gift will be available for **all** **people**. Every people, every tribe, every nation, every ethnicity, every economic class, every age, every man, every woman, every region, every language, every position, every talent, every lack of talent, every athlete, every band member, every academic, every simple-minded person, every student, every teacher, every criminal, every judge, every pacifist, every soldier, every terrorist, every sinner, every saint, every preacher, every prostitute, every gossiper, every generous person, every greedy person, every church member, every atheist, every king, and every shepherd. This gift is for everyone and anyone. All people! Everyone come and see this great gift. Come and see the gift of Jesus. Have you seen Jesus for the gift that He is?

As we see the gift of Jesus, let us also, **Come and see the *greatness* of *Jesus*.**The shepherds hear specifically about how great this child is. In verse 11, ***“(11)to you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, who is the Messiah, the Lord.”*** There’s so much in verse 11 regarding the greatness of Jesus. First, the angel says, ***“…in the city of David.”*** The city of David is Bethlehem. This is significant because this is a fulfillment of the Old Testament prophecies that the Messiah would come out of Bethlehem. Second, the angel uses three descriptors of Jesus: *Savior*, *Messiah*, and *Lord*. Any one of these titles given to anyone is great in and of itself, yet the angel ascribes all of these titles to a baby. Jesus is Savior, He is the Messiah or the Christ, and He is Lord.

However, God is not done showing the greatness of Jesus with this one angel. Look at verses 13 and 14, **“*(13)And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host, praising God and saying, (14)"Glory to God in the highest heaven, and on earth peace among those whom he favors!”*** In this humble setting, with the humble birth of a baby, in front of humble shepherds, God vividly shows off the greatness of His Son! A multitude of angels appear and praise God and give glory to God at the birth of the Messiah, the Savior, the Lord. They proclaim peace on earth to those who will receive the favor of God. God has shown His favor to all people by giving us this great gift of Jesus. We can be saved by the Savior. We can be changed by the Christ. We can be loved by the Lord. Peace on earth indeed came, and it came in a great way. Sin would bring brokenness to the earth, but God would bring peace. Have you seen the greatness of Jesus? Have you received the peace that He brings? Come and See. Come and see the greatness of Jesus. He is Savior. He is Messiah. He is Lord.

Finally, **Come and see the *glories* of *Jesus*.**We’ve read of the multitude of the heavenly host present before the shepherds. There were perhaps thousands of angels present, there is no way to know how many, but I would venture to guess it was more than a man could count in a matter of minutes, or however long they were present with the shepherds. What a magnificent sight this must have been. Yet, this was not enough for the shepherds. They wanted to see the baby. They wanted to see Jesus! And who wouldn’t want to go and see? Look at verse 15, ***“(15)When the angels had left them and gone into heaven, the shepherds said to one another, "Let us go now to Bethlehem and see this thing that has taken place, which the Lord has made known to us.’”***

They wanted to **GO** and **SEE!** So, they go looking for Jesus. Thankfully, the angel gave them instructions in verse 12, ***“(12)This will be a sign for you: you will find a child wrapped in bands of cloth and lying in a manger.”***They knew the child would be in Bethlehem and they knew he would be in a manger. Now, Bethlehem is not a very large city, particularly at that time. It was more like a village. There were probably not very many places to keep animals in the village, and far fewer would have had babies present in them. So, the shepherds would be able to find Jesus pretty easily based on the information that they had.

The shepherds found the family just as the angel described. Look at verse 16, ***“(16)So they went with haste and found Mary and Joseph, and the child lying in the manger.”*** Can you imagine how awesome this must have been? The angel, the heavenly host, the journey, and then finding this baby with his parents just as it was described.

I love to see what the shepherds did as a result of their encounter. In verses 17-18. ***“(17)When they saw this, they made known what had been told them about this child; (18)and all who heard it were amazed at what the shepherds told them.”*** Isn’t this what all of us should do after we experience Jesus? As a result of their experience with the angels and with Jesus Himself they started to share about their encounter with Jesus! After the shepherds came and saw, they reported the glories of Jesus to others! First, the **angels** are giving glory to God and then the **shepherds** are giving glory to God!

We find in verse 20: ***“(20)The shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all they had heard and seen, as it had been told them.”*** Everything that was prophesied concerning Jesus was starting to come to be, and specifically, everything that the angels had just told the shepherds came to be true.

The glories of God were on full display through the baby, Jesus Christ. The shepherds came and saw the glories of Jesus and they couldn’t help but glorify and praise God and tell others about their experience. Have you come to Jesus? Have you seen His glories? And, if so, how has it changed your life? Who have you told about your experience with Jesus?

This is not just a baby, this is not just a man that would give His life, this is the Son of God and God Himself! He is the greatest gift the world has ever seen! He is worthy of all glory and all praise! Imagine this experience. The Bible tells us a bit about this experience for Mary in verse 19, ***“(19)But Mary treasured all these words and pondered them in her heart.”*** This is probably the understatement of the millennium, right? Mary was probably completely shaken by all of this. Imagine also the experience of the shepherds as they came and saw Jesus. What a miracle! The angels praised and glorified God, the shepherds praised and glorified God, and now we can praise and glorify God because of His miraculous work displayed in Jesus, the Savior, the Messiah, the Lord.

 Come and see the gift, the greatness, and the glories of Jesus. Come and see the wonderful gift of Jesus! That’s our bottom line today. **Come and see the *wonderful* *gift* of Jesus!**

This Christmas, come to Jesus and see Him for all that He is. Challenge yourself this Christmas to **Identify how coming to *Jesus* has *changed* you.** How is your life different because of your experience with Jesus? Write about it, journal about it, post on social media about it, share about it with someone else. **Invite someone to *come* and *see* *Jesus*.** As the shepherds did, tell someone else about Jesus. Invite someone else to come and see Jesus. Have you come to Jesus? Have you seen Jesus? Have you been changed by the good news that the angels proclaimed? Have you experienced the peace that Jesus brought to the earth? The apostle Paul, someone who was radically changed by the gift of Jesus, said in the Romans 5:1, “***Therefore, since we have been declared righteous by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ.”*** Go tell everyone what Jesus has done for you. Tell it to those who are closest to you. Tell it to those you happen to bump into. Tell it in the cities, tell it in the country. Tell it to those in the valleys, and go tell it on the mountains