

**"The Christmas Family" Sample Pages #04**  
**Written by Frederick Passmore**

(The Christmas carol comes to an end, as the LIGHTS FADE OUT on the Orphanage side. The lights FADE UP on the Stable side as the shepherds draw near it.)

Grandpa: I sure do love that old Christmas carol. In case you are just joining us, I'm the storyteller, Grandpa, and we're learning about the birth of Jesus. Well, the shepherds had heard the announcement of the birth of the King right from the angels of heaven. They sure didn't mess around and put it off, either... they ran right then to find Him. Now, if Jesus had come into this world in a fine mansion, the shepherds would have never been allowed in to see him. But nobody paid any attention to them as they went from one cattle stall to the next, looking for Jesus.

(Actions during the next part of narrative: The shepherds have come up from the back of the audience, looking at one area and the next as they work their way toward the front. You can have them encounter several extras, whom they ask questions, but no-one knows anything. Finally they come upon the innkeeper from before, and he directs them toward the direction of the stable where Mary and Joseph are.)

Now, no-one would have believed it, if you had told them, that the creator of the universe would choose to come into this world in a dirty, smelly old animal stable, and be laid where they eat the hay from. But Jesus was born in humble surroundings to show his kinship and sympathy for poor people everywhere. And even the greatest men must humble themselves to come to him and acknowledge Him as their savior and King.

(Actions during the next part of narrative: The shepherds find the stable area, and one gingerly peeks through the curtain. He then excitedly motions the others over, and they run to him, beginning to crowd in the opening to see. Joseph does as described in the following paragraph.)

Well, they looked til they found it, and there they saw Joseph kneeling beside Mary, who had given birth only a short time before. Joseph must have been a little concerned at first when they approached; I think he might have thought this band of shepherds was looking for a place to stay too, and the small stable didn't have enough room for all of them and their sheep. So he herded them quickly back outside the entrance to find out what they wanted, and to protect the privacy of the resting Mary and the baby. I can just hear him saying in a hushed voice, "Wait just a minute! What do you want here? I have my wife and a newborn baby in here, you can't come in!"

Well, they really got them excited. They began to tell Joseph about it all at once, and he had to calm them down and be quieter, and get one of them to explain. So he described to Joseph what they had seen and heard. Joseph was amazed, and seeing as how the angel had not only confirmed what they knew, but told the shepherds to come, he could only let them in.

The shepherds were humbled and filled with wonder as they neared the manger where Jesus was laying. Mary, tired though she was, graciously leaned forward and pulled back the swaddling clothes a little so they could see his face more clearly, as Joseph held up the oil lamp. On their knees, they gathered around the manger and beheld the face of the promised one. Oh, what a sweet sight it was. This wasn't just another cute baby. Here was the King of all creation, God in the flesh, saviour of the world, right before their wondering eyes. And that's what made Him so beautiful. There wasn't anything about his physically that would clue you in that here was God incarnate. He looked like a regular baby. But they had been told who He was. They believed. And they saw Him through eyes of faith.

It kinda makes sense that shepherds would be the first to come greet him, because he would be the Good Shepherd, who would lay down His life for his sheep.

When you come into the presence of Jesus, the most natural thing in the world is to worship Him. And that's just what these poor shepherds did. Of course they had been to worship God in the temple;

every year they took a lamb from their flock and went to the temple with it on the Passover, where it would be sacrificed for their sins. But here, here was the very Lamb of God, who would be slain for their sins once and for all. The one that was represented by the lambs offered, the sinless and spotless lamb. Now they were looking into His face, and worshiping Him according to spirit and truth, not merely to fulfill a requirement of the law.

(Actions during the next part of narrative: After worshiping him, some praying with clasped hands before them, some on their faces, some with lifted hands, they slowly begin to collect themselves and gather at the front to talk together about it. They are hugging one another in joy as they weep at the glory of it.)