

**PLAYING WITH FIRE**  
**Christmas Eve Luke 2**  
**Rev Thomas Parrish**

**Around the world tonight millions of candles will be lit in honor of the baby Jesus being born in Bethlehem.**



**The message of that first Christmas in Bethlehem is simple: Don't play with fire!**

Christmas Eve cannot truly be celebrated unless you have at least a tiny tingle of fear running up your spine, unless you're standing alongside those shepherds that night on the hillside, unless you realize that the King of the Universe came looking for you personally and has invited you to be his child.

*"And there were shepherds living out in the fields nearby, keeping watch over their flocks at night. An angel of the Lord appeared to them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were terrified. But the angel said to them, 'Do not be afraid. I bring you good news that will cause great joy for all the people. Today in the town of David a Savior has been born to you; He is the Messiah, the Lord. This will be a sign to you: You will find a baby wrapped in cloths and lying in a manger.*

*"Suddenly a great company of the heavenly host appeared with the angel, praising God and saying, 'Glory to God in the highest heaven, and on earth peace to those on whom his favor rests.'*

*"When the angels had left them and gone into heaven, the shepherds said to one another, 'Let's go to Bethlehem and see this thing that has happened, which the Lord has told us about.' So they hurried off..."*

**FIRST TRUTH** in that flame, better known as the Light of the World—is JESUS.

To come into the presence of this baby Jesus should give us a feeling over being overwhelmed with **AWE** and **WONDER**.

Tonight he desire is to make us more alive than we have ever been before.

**SECOND WAY** to play with fire.

**This Baby Jesus is the Light of the world that Reveals the Truth**

The Bible calls *Jesus the light of the world*.

Light reveals. Light helps us see. Light is powerful.

Jesus sees us both before and after the bright flame of his light shines on and **AND STILL LOVES US**.

**Have you ever had an "Ah Ha" moment?**

**Donald Driver** starred for the Green Bay Packers for 14 years though he was not always at the top of his game.



The shepherds were fine in the dark, and when the lights came on they **flipped out**. This was the biggest "Ah Ha" moment of their life.

**When Jesus comes close to you and me, that light in our hearts comes on and we are struck with AWE.**

WHEN JESUS light comes on in our lives we have two choices: Run and hide. Or fall to our knees and cry out, "Lord, have mercy on me!" I strongly recommend number two: ***Lord, have mercy on me!***

Then, I noticed this week that four times they use the word **YOU**.

<sup>10</sup> *And the angel said to them, "Fear not, for behold, I bring YOU good news of great joy that will be for all the people. <sup>11</sup> For unto YOU is born this day in the city of David a Savior, who is Christ the Lord.*

<sup>12</sup> *And this will be a sign for YOU: YOU will find a baby wrapped in swaddling cloths and lying in a manger*

THESE LOWLY shepherds were ON THE INVITATION LIST AND SO ARE YOU AND ME.

SO LETS NOT FORGET THAT: **Fire burns. Fire reveals. There's a third thing fire and light does: It draws us in.**

Until this night long ago, God's presence on earth had been **the eternal flame within the Holy of Holies inside the temple.**

<https://www.google.com/search?q=holy+of+holies+free+picture>



**Tonight, you have been invited inside the Holy of Holies.**

We are gazing upon the *eternal flame*.

God is speaking to us from the flames of our candles, and He's saying, ***"Draw near, draw near, I know everything about you. Come in; draw near; draw near."***



No words capture Christmas better than ***Hebrews 4:16, "Let us then approach the throne of grace with confidence."***

Then in verse 22, ***"Let us draw near to God with a sincere heart in full assurance of faith."***

**Tonight Jesus Is Seeking You**

Whatever road you are on or however lost you may be he is calling your name and he wants you to come home.

**You and I were born with an X.** So on this night long ago, God the Father reached down through His Son and wiped away the X and said, ***"You're with Me."*** Draw near.

**Tonight Jesus makes us His own.**

**That's why these candles remind us of Bethlehem, a baby and a manger.**

**Because, as he invites us to play with fire, nothing can hold a candle to Jesus' love for you and me.**