

### **Introduction**

1. I have a confession to make: I have a new love in my life
  - a. This new love in my life has such soft skin
  - b. I rest my head on her head – and she is so warm
  - c. This new love in my life is quite a snuggler, too
  - d. Her features are so beautiful: her skin, her ears, her toes
  - e. I just stare at her: her beautiful fingers, her small perfect nose
  - f. And her smile warms my heart like I can't describe
  - g. I have fallen head over heels for her – this new love of mine
2. My wife, Myrna, knows about this new love in my life...
  - a. For Myrna is the new grandmother of this new love
  - b. And I am the grandfather of this new beautiful little baby girl, Ani
3. A baby can so much change your life!
  - a. But as I watch this sweet child sleep in peace, I cannot help but think of how she will come to realize how harsh and painful this world can be
  - b. I wish I could protect her from all the hurts that might even come near her – but I know that's not possible
  - c. And so – as my granddaughter, Ani, sleeps in my arms in her swaddling cloths, I can pray for her, and I can tell her about Jesus who has come to do something about this world of hurt and pain, and how He has come to save her that one day Ani may go to heaven
4. I wonder how Mary felt as she held her new Baby, Jesus, in her arms
  - a. As she pondered everything in her heart, I wonder if she was as amazed as we are about her baby: that this Baby is God
  - b. As she marveled at her new son with soft warm skin, with tiny little fingers, that snuggled into Mary's arms – she also marveled that this is God
  - c. Mary held God, as she wrapped Him in swaddling cloths

### **I. Wrapped in Swaddling Cloths... more like a Shroud of Death!**

- A. Adam and Eve rebelled against God, and immediately they were cloaked with the Shroud of Eternal Death
  - i. When Adam and Eve had Cain, and Abel, and Seth – these sons inherited Adam and Eve's sin, they too were shrouded with death
  - ii. Myrna and I passed the curse of our fallen nature on to our son Ben; and my granddaughter inherited Ben's sin –
  - iii. Draped over us all is the shroud of death and misery and hell
- B. And then, comes forth Jesus → born of the Virgin Mary, yet conceived by the Holy Spirit
  - i. He is not born in sin, for He has no sin

- ii. But He comes to wear our shroud of sin and death in order to give us life eternal
- iii. Once wrapped in swaddling cloths and lying in a manger – this same Jesus was wrapped in burial cloths and lying in a tomb... for us
- iv. And then He rose from the dead → and at His rising, He wraps us with the garment of new life
- v. For all who believe in Him will never die eternally, He has wrapped us in the swaddling cloths of eternal life

## **II. Wrapped in Swaddling Cloths... more like a Blanket of Darkness**

### **A. Isaiah prophesies “Those walking in darkness have seen a great light”**

- i. What is this blanket of darkness?
- ii. You know.
- iii. It is the darkness of our sins: the darkness of our violent anger, the darkness of our failed marriages, the darkness of our slanderous and wicked tongue, the darkness of our lusts, the darkness of our evil intentions, the darkness of our laziness
- iv. What is this blanket of darkness?
- v. You know.
- vi. It is the darkness of a spouse dying, the darkness of living through cancer, the darkness of losing our home in flood or fire, the darkness of being so deeply hurt by one whom we loved and trusted, the darkness of depression and anxiety

### **B. Jesus is born in the darkness of night, but that night is the beginning of our light!**

- i. With Jesus we are not lost in the dark
- ii. Even when our lives are blanketed with darkness → the Light of this Newborn Baby penetrates our pain and fears, and He gives us hope and Light eternal
- iii. My little granddaughter may “light up my life” – but this Infant Jesus swaddles you and me in the Light of everlasting life in heaven – where there is darkness NO MORE!

## **III. Wrapped in Swaddling Cloths... more like a Virgin’s Womb**

### **A. God could have come to earth roaring for the mountains**

- i. He could have come with a violent wind, or a thunderous waterfall
- ii. He could have come splitting open the earth and taking on the size of a giant all the world would see, holding the sun and moon in His bare hands...

### **B. But He came as a Baby – for this is how He becomes Adam’s blood in order to die Adam’s death for Adam’s sin**

- i. GOD... places Himself in the womb of Mary

- ii. GOD... transports Himself from heaven's highest throne to a woman's lowliest place
- iii. And coming forth from the water of Mary's Womb, He is swaddled in her arms and nurtured from her own body

- C. Being the children of Adam, we deserve not a womb, but a tomb
- i. We are dead in sin – no matter how much “life” it looks like we have on the outside...
  - ii. Inside, we are shriveled up and dead and damned
  - iii. But this Jesus has supplied us with a womb – by which we are given brand new life; with a new hope, and a new purpose
  - iv. We have been born again out of the womb of the Church, the Font of Holy Baptism
  - v. No longer are we clutched in death, but this Baby Jesus has given us new life, and His Holy Church nourishes and swaddles us in this life with forgiveness and eternal life
  - vi. How do we get through life? →
    - 1. by the nourishment that comes from Christ's body and blood, fed to us in Christ's Church
    - 2. At this Table – This Infant Christ swaddles us with His love, telling us He is always with us, and that He comes to remedy our pain and sin and death

#### **IV. Wrapped in Swaddling Cloths... more like a Garment of Salvation**

- A. I have the cutest picture of Ani – she is clothed in a red and white Santa dress, with a Santa hat – and she looks like a doll
- i. Look at the clothing market – think of how many people get “clothes” for Christmas: from underwear to a fancy new dress
  - ii. But weather it's my little Ani, or you receiving new clothes for Christmas – clothing merely hides the ugliness of our sins
- B. The Christmas Good News is not about coming home for Christmas, you will not hear the Christmas Good News from Retail stores, you will not find it under your Christmas tree, nor will you taste at the Christmas dinner or company parties...
- i. This night, Christmas, is about Jesus, wrapped in swaddling cloths – come to clothe you with the Garment of Salvation – which we need to be saved!
  - ii. This Jesus has not come to hide or clothe your sins, to mask your fallen state in order for you to sneak into heaven...
  - iii. This Jesus has come to take our sins upon Himself and make us His holy children
  - iv. He has come to clothe you with forgiveness of sins, & to dress you for Heaven, as He comes to swaddle you with and in Himself – clothed in Him forever. Amen!