

Advent

Week Three



Great Joy

Luke 2:8-20

8 And there were in the same country shepherds abiding in the field, keeping watch over their flock by night.

9 And, lo, the angel of the Lord came upon them, and the glory of the Lord shone round about them: and they were sore afraid.

10 And the angel said unto them,

Fear not: for, behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people.

11 For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord.

12 And this shall be a sign unto you; Ye shall find the babe wrapped in swaddling clothes, 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, and on earth peace, good will toward men.

15 And it came to pass, as the angels were gone away from them into heaven, the shepherds said one to another,

Let us now go even unto Bethlehem, and see this thing which is come to pass, which the Lord hath made known unto us.

16 And they came with haste, and found Mary, and Joseph, and the babe lying in a manger.

17 And when they had seen it, they made known abroad the saying which was told them concerning this child.

18 And all they that heard it wondered at those things which were told them by the shepherds.

19 But Mary kept all these things, and pondered them in her heart.

20 And the shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all the things that they had heard and seen, as it was told unto them.

The Shepherds, Before

Joy of Advent

■ Shepherds were...

- Not very respectable: “people of the land”
- Suspected of being careless with “mine” and “thine”
- Couldn’t testify in court
- Poor: probably keeping someone else’s flocks

■ Working the night shift

2:8

■ Expecting nothing more exciting than a coyote

■ Why great joy?

2:10

- *No one* would have expected shepherds to hear this news first
- God can come to those who aren’t expecting it

Angels

Joy of Advent

- Nature of angels: not completely understood
 - Apparently made a binding choice eons ago
 - Loyalty was permanently determined (Psalm 103:20-21)
 - Not “robots:” still exercise initiative
- Carry the greatest news since creation itself 2:10
- Why great joy for the angels?
 - They heard the news early, and perhaps more fully
 - Now they get to “herald” it

Shepherds, After Joy of Advent

- "They said to one another" 2:15
- They hurried 2:16
- They found
 - Mary & Joseph—the angels didn't mention them!
 - The two might have been "on guard" at first
 - Did Mary and Joseph give background?
 - The baby, just as predicted
- They went back to work and spread the word 2:20

Mary and Joseph

Joy of Advent

- They “know” what’s up (Luke 1:26; Matt. 1:20)
- But very little encouragement since then
 - Traveled a long dusty road (I doubt they had a donkey)
 - Disappointed in Bethlehem 2:4
 - Stable: Not the best birthing accommodations 2:7
 - *Their* experience with angels must have seemed distant
- The joy the shepherds bring 2:16
 - God really is in this
 - The good news has been shouted from heaven
- And Mary treasures these things in her heart 2:19

The Big Idea

What's the "Great Joy"?"

The Advent of Christ is the "Great Joy"

- It's the "good news"
- "This day"
- "A Savior"
- "Christ the Lord"

See Yourself in This Story

Joy of Advent

■ Shepherd

■ Angel

■ Mary or Joseph

■ Townspeople

Aaronic Blessing

“The LORD bless you and keep you;
The LORD make His face shine upon you,
And be gracious to you;
The LORD lift up His countenance upon you,
And give you peace.” ’

Numbers 6:24-26, NKJV