

**I. Introduction: simplicity and joy.**

**II. The angelic announcement of the Savior's birth. v. 8-12**

**A. Why is the announcement made to shepherds? v. 8**

1. God chooses to make the birth of His Son known, not to the great and mighty, but to the lowly. 1:51-53 14:11 Gen. 46:33-34 1 Co. 1:26ff Isa. 61:1ff
2. Jesus both begins and ends his life among the underclass. 23:32-33
3. David was a shepherd from Bethlehem who became a shepherd of God's people. 1 Sam. 16:11 17:28 2 Sam. 7:8
4. The image of shepherd is elevated as God is portrayed as the Shepherd of His people. Psalm 23
5. The promised Messiah would be the true Shepherd. Ps. 23 Ezek. 34:23f Isa. 40:11 Jer. 23:1ff Mic. 5:4
6. Jesus is that Good Shepherd who lays down His life for His sheep. John 10:11 Mt. 9:36 25:32 26:31 1 Pet. 2:25 Heb. 13:20
7. It appears that these shepherds had hearts which were prepared to hear the good news. 2:15,25-26,36-38

**B. The angel of the Lord suddenly appears to the shepherds. v. 9**

1. This is the third angelic announcement – a sudden appearance, fear, “fear not”, good news of a miraculous birth, and a confirming sign. 1:11-20,26-38
2. The awesome glory of the Lord shines forth. 1:78-79 9:30-31 Ex. 16:10 Ps. 63:2 Isa. 40:5 9:2 Ezek. 1:4 1 Jo. 1:5 Acts 26:13 7:55

**C. The angelic message is good news (gospel) which brings great joy. v. 10-11a**

1. Fear is overcome by joy in the Messiah. 1:12,14,30 24:52 Mt. 2:10 28:8
2. The birth of Jesus is good news of salvation. 1:19 3:18 4:18 9:6 16:16 20:1 Acts 5:42 8:4 Isa. 61:1-2 40:9 52:7
3. This joyful good news is for all people. 1:68,77 2:30-32 Gen. 12:3 John 3:16 Ro. 1:16-17 John 3:16 Eph. 2:11ff 1 Pet. 2:9ff
4. He is born *for you* alludes to Old Testament Messianic promises. v. 11a Isa. 9:6 Zech. 9:9

**D. What child is this? Or Who is this Child? His titles and honors:**

1. He is Savior. 1:47,69,71,74,77 Matt. 1:21 Jo. 4:42 1:29 Acts 5:31 13:23 Phil. 3:20 He. 5:8-9 7:25 1 Pe. 2:24-25 1:18-19 3:18 1 Jo. 4:14 Isa. 45:15 Hab. 3:18 Ps. 79:9
2. He is Lord. 1:43,46,66,76 Jo. 20:28 Acts 2:36 Phil. 2:10-11 Ps. 110:1 2:2 2 Co. 4:5 Hab. 3:18 Ps. 24:5 Deut. 20:4 Isa. 25:9
3. He is the Christ, the Son of David. 2:11,4 1:27,32,35,69 20:41-44 Acts 2:36 Ps. 2:2 Rom. 10:9 1 Co. 12:3 Isa. 9:7
4. The same titles and honors were given to Augustus Caesar. 1:51-53

**E. The shepherds will see an unusual sign. 2:12 1:20,36 Ex. 3:12 Isa. 7:14 37:30**

**III. Angelic praise to God. v. 13-14**

**A. The one angel is suddenly joined by a great multitude. 2:13a Ps. 68:13 103:20 148:2**

Mal. 3:1 Acts 2:2 9:3 1 Th. 5:3 Mark 13:36 Isa. 9:7

**B. God alone receives the glory in salvation. v. 13b-14a,20 19:37ff Eph. 2:1-10**

1 Cor. 1:30-31 Rom. 8:29-30 Eph. 1:3ff Acts 2:47 3:8-9 Ps. 115:1 Eph. 3:21

- C. Jesus brings peace on earth for those upon whom God's favor rests. v. 14b
1. This is good news because angels often come bringing judgment, not peace.  
1 Ki. 22:19 Dan. 7:10-11 Mt. 24:29-31 2 Thess. 1:6-9 2 Chron. 18:18 Mal. 4:1 Nah. 2:13 3:5 Isa. 2:12 9:19 10:26 13:4,13 Jer. 25:29
  2. The peace Jesus brings is not an immediate political peace. 12:51-53 John 14:27 Mt. 24:6 Eph. 6:10ff
  3. Jesus has purchased peace with God for all who believe in Him. 1:79 Isa. 9:6-7 Rom. 5:1-2,6-11 Col. 1:19-22 Acts 10:36
  4. We who are in Christ also enjoy subjective peace. John 14:27 Ga. 5:22 Isa. 26:3
  5. The peace He gives also results in peace with each other. Rom. 12:18 Heb. 12:14
  6. This peace is only for those upon whom God's (undeserved) favor (good pleasure) rests. 10:21 19:41-43 Ro. 3:17 Eph. 1:5,9 Phil. 2:13 Mt. 11:26 Isa. 26:12
  7. One day He will bring a dominion of peace to the whole world. Isa. 40-66 Ezek. 34:25ff Rev. 21:1ff
  8. There is an implicit contrast between the Pax Romana of Augustus Caesar and the true peace which Jesus brings. Jesus is the Prince of Peace. Isa. 9:6

#### IV. The shepherds go to see the Savior. v. 15-20

- A. They respond to the angelic revelation by quickly drawing near to Christ. v. 15-17
- B. Jesus, even in His infancy, causes intense responses. v. 18-20
1. Wonder/astonishment. v. 18 1:21,63 2:33 4:22 8:25 9:43 11:14 20:26 24:12,41 Acts 2:7 3:12 4:13
  2. Pondering/contemplation. v. 19 2:51 1:66 Gen. 37:11
  3. Glorifying and praising God. v. 20 4:15 5:25-26 7:16 13:13 17:15 18:43 19:37 23:47 Acts 3:8-9 13:48 Isa. 42:8,12 Ps. 66:2
- C. The shepherds set a pattern for all of us.
1. You hear the good news about Christ. v. 8-14
  2. You (quickly) investigate what you have heard. v. 15.
  3. You believe the good news. v. 17a Romans 10:9-13
  4. You praise and glorify God. v. 20
  5. You tell others the good news. v. 17b-18 Mt. 28:18-20 5:14-16 Col. 4:6 2 Ki. 7:9 Isa. 52:7 Rom. 10:15

#### V. Concluding applications: Where is your greatest joy today and for the future?

##### Discussion questions

1. In light of the rest of Scripture, why would the shepherds have feared angels?
2. Why would God choose to reveal the birth of His Son to lowly shepherds?
3. How is Isaiah 9:1-7 fulfilled in this passage?
4. What kind of peace does Jesus bring to earth?  
How did people misunderstand this back then? How do people misunderstand today?
5. What titles are given to Jesus in this passage?  
How does Jesus compare to Augustus Caesar?  
What false messiahs do we have today?
6. How does the experience of the shepherds in this passage parallel your experience?
7. According to the angels, how much of the glory in your salvation belongs to God? Why?
8. Is your heart thrilled today by the coming of Christ?  
How can you stir yourself to praise and glorify God?
9. Whom do you plan to tell?