

“Good News of Great Joy”
Sermon Notes

Proposition: Set your minds on the news that came down from heaven this Christmas.

3 Reasons Why

By...

1. The _____ was born to offer _____ to all people. (Verses 8-12)

2. _____ comes only to those who _____.
(Verses 13-14)

3. God’s _____ ought to always _____ at this news. (Verses 15-21)

Community Group Study Guide
For the Week of December 25th - 31st

Please read Luke 2:8-21.

1. Joseph was required to register for the census in Bethlehem, which was in Judea, rather than in his home town of Nazareth (Luke 2:4). Bethlehem is called the city of David.

- a. Isn't Jerusalem the City of David? (See 2 Samuel 5:7)
- b. What makes Bethlehem the City of David? (See 1 Samuel 17:12)
- c. Why is it important that Jesus was born in Bethlehem and not Nazareth? (See Micah 5:2)

2. In Luke 2:5, it mentions that Mary was betrothed, as opposed to married, to Joseph when the couple went to Bethlehem to register for the census. Apparently Mary had to be registered for the census as well. If she had to go to Bethlehem to do so, what does that imply about her own ancestry? (Compare Luke 3:31 with Matt 1:6)

3. In Luke 2:7, Luke refers to Jesus as Mary's firstborn son rather than her only son.

- a. Would Luke have used the term "firstborn" rather than "only" son if he intended to indicate that Mary remained a virgin after she married Joseph?
- b. Does the later reference to brothers of Jesus (Luke 8:19-21; Acts 1:14; Mark 6:3) suggest that Luke's intent here is not to indicate that Jesus was her only son? Please explain.
- c. Does the wording in Matthew 1:25 suggest that Mary remained a virgin after the birth of Jesus?

4. When the angel of the Lord appears to the shepherds in verse 9, the glory of the Lord shone around them.

- a. What is the significance of the glory of the Lord shining around the shepherds? (See Exodus 16:10; 25:16-17; 40:34-35; Ezekiel 1:28 ;10:3-4).
- b. Why does the glory of the Lord shine on the shepherds in verse 9, but not on Zechariah in Luke 1:11, or on Mary in Luke 1:28?
- c. Why does the angel appear to shepherds?
 - (1) Could the angel be calling to mind David's early career as a shepherd?
 - (2) Could it be because shepherds were humble members of society?
 - (3) Could the shepherds be a reflection of God's love for sinners, as we read later in Luke 15:4-7?
 - (4) Could they point forward to Jesus' depiction as the Good Shepherd? (John 10)
 - (5) Could the shepherds provide a premonition of Jesus' suffering and death? (See Mark 14:27; Zechariah 13:7).

5. When Mary heard the news from the Shepherds, she "treasured up all these things, pondering them in her heart."

- a. What did Mary learn from the report of the Shepherds that she hadn't already heard herself from Gabriel?
- b. Whom did Mary regard as her savior? (See Luke 1:47; Hosea 13:4).