

The Birth

(Luke 2:8-20)

Yearly Theme: *“Joy is...”*

Series Title: *“Joy’s Good News”*

September 6th, 2020

Something to think about:

All too often in life, we wait on joy to come into our lives through different circumstances. We anticipate the next “great” thing to happen to make us happy, but when it does it sometimes seems lackluster. We think, “When I’m a teenager, then life will be better.” but we’re left wanting. Then we think, “When I graduate high school, then life will be better.” but we’re left wanting. So, then we think when I get a career, or get married, or have children, or get that promotion, or retire, or... then I will have ‘made it.’” but, something still seems missing. Is joy really that illusive?

Joy is not illusive to the person who realizes that joy is not a pursuit, a feeling, or emotion; rather joy is a *fruit* of God’s Holy Spirit that is produced in our lives when Christ is our Lord and Savior. Joy comes as a result of realizing that some 2000 years ago, God came to earth in the form of a human, born as a baby to a virgin girl named Mary in a small town in Judea called Bethlehem. Let’s take a look at that story...

Luke 2:8-20 (NLT),

⁸ *That night there were shepherds staying in the fields nearby, guarding their flocks of sheep. ⁹ Suddenly, an angel of the Lord appeared among them, and the radiance of the Lord’s glory surrounded them. They were terrified, ¹⁰ but the angel reassured them. “Don’t be afraid!” he said. “I bring you good news that will bring great joy to all people. ¹¹ The Savior—yes, the Messiah, the Lord—has been born today in Bethlehem, the city of David! ¹² And you will recognize him by this sign: You will find a baby wrapped snugly in strips of cloth, lying in a manger.”*

¹³ *Suddenly, the angel was joined by a vast host of others—the armies of heaven—praising God and saying,*

¹⁴ *“Glory to God in highest heaven,
and peace on earth to those with whom God is pleased.”*

¹⁵ *When the angels had returned to heaven, the shepherds said to each other, “Let’s go to Bethlehem! Let’s see this thing that has happened, which the Lord has told us about.”*

¹⁶ *They hurried to the village and found Mary and Joseph. And there was the baby, lying in the manger. ¹⁷ After seeing him, the shepherds told everyone what had happened and what the angel had said to them about this child. ¹⁸ All who heard the shepherds’ story were astonished, ¹⁹ but Mary kept all these things in her heart and*

thought about them often. ²⁰ The shepherds went back to their flocks, glorifying and praising God for all they had heard and seen. It was just as the angel had told them.

What’s the key point this morning from this passage of Scripture?

Key Point: *“True Joy was born in Bethlehem.”*

As we look at the story of Christ as written in the Gospels in the New Testament (specifically Luke’s Gospel) what can we learn about the theme of “JOY”? What does real joy look like?

Well, in this specific passage we learn that...

1. There is a terrifying presence of real joy.
2. There is a calming assurance of real joy.
3. There is Good News that brings great joy.

Something to take home:

There’s a story told of a third-century man who, while anticipating death, penned these last words to a friend:

“It’s a bad world, an incredibly bad world. But I have discovered in the midst of it a quiet and holy people who have learned a great secret. They have found a joy which is a thousand times better than any pleasure of our sinful life. They are despised and persecuted, but they care not. They are masters of their souls. They have overcome the world. These people are the Christians--and I am one of them.”¹

Let me ask you something important: *Are you still holding on to your balloon?* Has the occasion for joy in your life been illusive? It doesn’t have to be. You can have joy unspeakable and full of glory. The key is to remember the Source of that joy is only found in Christ.

C. S. Lewis wrote:

“Our Lord finds our desires not too strong, but too weak. We are half-hearted creatures, fooling about with drink and sex and ambition, when infinite joy is offered to us, like an ignorant child who wants to go on making mud pies in the slum because he cannot imagine what is meant by the offer of a holiday at the sea. We are far too easily pleased.”

Don’t let the world, or your circumstances and situations, steal your joy. Always remember...

Key Point: *“True Joy was born in Bethlehem.”*

And His name is *Jesus*.

¹ *Today In The Word*, June, 1988, p. 18.