

The Gloria: The Staggering Good News of Christmas

Luke 2:1-20

Shawn Reese



Background

Each year at this time, the tradition for world leaders from all over the world is to provide a Christmas message to their people, a Christmas proclamation. Some do it merely out of duty while others seem to have some conviction behind it. But, as thoughtful as those proclamations typically are, none of them will ever come close to the staggering proclamation made by the angels to the shepherds on that first Christmas. Join us this Sunday as we explore the staggering good news of Christmas.

Sermon Text: Luke 2:1-20 (ESV)

I. The Context (v 1-9)

¹ In those days a decree went out from Caesar Augustus that all the world should be registered. ² This was the first registration when Quirinius was governor of Syria. ³ And all went to be registered, each to his own town. ⁴ And Joseph also went up from Galilee, from the town of Nazareth, to Judea, to the city of David, which is called Bethlehem, because he was of the house and lineage of David, ⁵ to be registered with Mary, his betrothed, who was with child. ⁶ And while they were there, the time came for her to give birth. ⁷ And she gave birth to her firstborn son and wrapped him in swaddling cloths and laid him in a manger, because there was no place for them in the inn. ⁸ And in the same region there were shepherds out in the field, keeping watch over their flock by night. ⁹ And an angel of the Lord appeared to them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were filled with great fear.

II. The Staggering Good News (v 10-14)

¹⁰ And the angel said to them, "Fear not, for behold, I bring you good news of great joy that will be for all the people. ¹¹ For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, who is Christ the Lord. ¹² And this will be a sign for you: you will find a baby wrapped in swaddling cloths and 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 among those with whom he is pleased!"

III. The Response (v 15-20)

¹⁵ When the angels went away from them into heaven, the shepherds said to one another, "Let us go over to Bethlehem and see this thing that has happened, which the Lord has made known to us." ¹⁶ And they went with haste and found Mary and Joseph, and the baby lying in a manger. ¹⁷ And when they saw it, they made known the saying that had been told them concerning this child. ¹⁸ And all who heard it wondered at what the shepherds told them. ¹⁹ But Mary treasured up all these things, pondering them in her heart. ²⁰ And the shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all they had heard and seen, as it had been told them.

Discussion Questions

1. Preparation

- a. What is one thing you hoped to talk about today/tonight?
- b. What question(s) did you come away with from the sermon?

2. Sunday questions

- a. What are you joyful for this Christmas?
- b. What stands out to you the most from this Sunday's service?
- c. Is there one Christmas message that stands out to you from our culture? If so, compare and contrast it's message with the message from the angles to the shepherds that first Christmas.
- d. Christmas season is the season of "fear not" (those are the first words of the angel(s) to Mary, Zachariah, the shepherds and Joseph). What fears do you have at this time? What would it look like for you to "fear not" during this time?
- e. What was the best good news you heard in the sermon this Sunday?