

What did the shepherds do with the good news they had received?

The significance of this birth was understood by the shepherds, who had been entrusted with the good news. If this was good news to all people, then all people had to find out.

The good news was not only good news in that field in Bethlehem. It is still good news today. Why is Jesus' birth good news for us?

Matthew 1:21 NLT - 21 And she will have a son, and you are to name him Jesus, for he will save his people from their sins."

Peter and John understood the good news of Jesus. What did they do when they were threatened for preaching about Him?

Acts 4:20 NLT - 20 We cannot stop telling about everything we have seen and heard."

You may not have heard this from an angel, but Jesus came to save you from your sins. What is your response to this good news?

WRAP-UP

Before we have faith in Jesus we walk in spiritual darkness. But as Isaiah foretold hundreds of years earlier, God sent light into the world to save us- the Light of the World - Jesus. We need the hope of salvation, love, and a future that only Jesus can offer. Don't pack away the good news of Jesus with your Christmas decorations, respond as the shepherds did – go and tell the world because people must know!

MEMORY VERSE

Acts 4:20 NLT - 20 We cannot stop telling about everything we have seen and heard."

PRAYER (20 MIN)

Ask your group to pray for you regarding one area where you can apply this study in your life

Challenge- Watch for an opportunity to tell somebody the good news of Jesus this week.

“People Must Know!”

Pastor Phil Causey

INTRODUCTION

Let's all give one collective sigh of relief- we survived another Christmas. It may have passed quietly, or you might have been swept up in the hustle and bustle of parties and shopping and traveling to visit family. But how much attention were you able to give to the reason we celebrate Christmas? Did you have time to reflect on what makes the birth of Jesus so important? Of course, we know Jesus came to save us from our sin. But sometimes we allow the familiarity with that fact to obscure its significance. When we truly grasp this truth, we will feel the urgency of sharing the good news with everyone because people must know.

Ice Breaker

Did you see “The Chosen” Christmas special this year? If so, what did you find unique or unexpected in the way Jesus' birth was presented?

Key Passage

Luke 2:10-11 NLT - 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!

STUDY QUESTIONS

1. Prophetic Announcement

When we think of the story of the Savior's birth, we might think it started in a manger in Bethlehem, but we would be wrong. Our need for salvation began in the Garden of Eden and the first prophetic announcement of our Messiah was made there.

Genesis 3:6, 14-15 NLT - 6 The woman was convinced [by the serpent]. She saw that the tree was beautiful and its fruit looked delicious, and she wanted the wisdom it would give her. So she took some of the fruit and ate it. Then she gave some to her husband, who was with her, and he ate it, too. ... 14 Then the LORD God said to the serpent, "Because you have done this, you are cursed more than all animals, domestic and wild. You will crawl on your belly, groveling in the dust as long as you live. 15 And I will cause hostility between you and the woman, and between your offspring and her offspring. He will strike your head, and you will strike his heel."

When Satan, in the form of a serpent, deceived Eve in the Garden, God already knew the solution to the sin that began there. The offspring of the women (Jesus) would conquer Satan one day on the cross. If we follow the genealogy of Eve, we find that all of mankind was “infected” with sin. But Jesus was the sinless offspring who conquered Satan.

When faced with a choice whether or not to trust God’s definition of good and evil, Eve decided she would rather be the one in control when she seized the fruit. In what areas do you find it most difficult to release control to God rather than controlling a situation yourself? (e.g. relationships, finance, job...)

2. Light in the Darkness

Isaiah 9:1-2 NLT - 1 Nevertheless, that time of darkness and despair will not go on forever. The land of Zebulun and Naphtali will be humbled, but there will be a time in the future when Galilee of the Gentiles, which lies along the road that runs between the Jordan and the sea, will be filled with glory. 2 The people who walk in darkness will see a great light. For those who live in a land of deep darkness, a light will shine.

As Isaiah the prophet wrote to God’s people, he was warning them about a pending invasion of Assyria. They had been, and would be, facing a time of great darkness. But God showed Isaiah a hope beyond that darkness. Although it would be hundreds of years in the future, Isaiah saw that God would not abandon His people but promised to send a Savior.

God’s light cannot be extinguished by darkness. Isaiah prophesied that the darkness would be dispelled when Galilee shined with the Lord’s glory. What sort of darkness do you need God to dispel with His glory? Are you facing challenges of relationships, health or finance that seem to cast a shadow in your life? Israel had to wait hundreds of years for Isaiah’s prophecy, but we can look back to the birth of Jesus as the fulfillment of God’s promise of hope in a dark world.

Isaiah 9:6-7 NLT - 6 For a child is born to us, a son is given to us. The government will rest on his shoulders. And he will be called: Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace. 7 His government and its peace will never end. He will rule with fairness and justice from the throne of his ancestor David for all eternity. The passionate commitment of the LORD of Heaven’s Armies will make this happen!

The Son of God is called by many titles. In what circumstances do you recall God ministering to you as each of these- Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace?

3. Good News

Luke 2:9-11 NLT - 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!

When the angel appeared to the shepherds in the fields, the first thing he had to do was calm their fear, but the very next thing was to announce that he brought good news. After waiting hundreds of years, the Messiah had been born!

What did the angel say would be the response to his good news (v.10)? Why do you think God announced this good news to shepherds rather than to kings?

Luke 2:15-17 NLT - 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.