

Luke 2:1-20

¹In those days Caesar Augustus issued a decree that a census should be taken of the entire Roman world. ²(This was the first census that took place while Quirinius was governor of Syria.) ³And everyone went to their own town to register.

⁴So Joseph also went up from the town of Nazareth in Galilee to Judea, to Bethlehem the town of David, because he belonged to the house and line of David. ⁵He went there to register with Mary, who was pledged to be married to him and was expecting a child. ⁶While they were there, the time came for the baby to be born, ⁷and she gave birth to her firstborn, a son. She wrapped him in cloths and placed him in a manger, because there was no guest room available for them.

⁸And there were shepherds living out in the fields nearby, keeping watch over their flocks at night. ⁹An angel of the Lord appeared to them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were terrified. ¹⁰But the angel said to them, “Do not be afraid. I bring you good news that will cause great joy for all the people. ¹¹Today in the town of David a Savior has been born to you; he is the Messiah, the Lord. ¹²This will be a sign to you: You will find a baby wrapped in cloths and lying in a manger.”

¹³Suddenly a great company of the heavenly host appeared with the angel, praising God and saying, ¹⁴“Glory to God in the highest heaven, and on earth peace to those on whom his favor rests.”

¹⁵When the angels had left them and gone into heaven, the shepherds said to one another, “Let’s go to Bethlehem and see this thing that has happened, which the Lord has told us about.”

¹⁶So they hurried off and found Mary and Joseph, and the baby, who was lying in the manger. ¹⁷When they had seen him, they spread the word concerning what had been told them about this child, ¹⁸and all who heard it were amazed at what the shepherds said to them. ¹⁹But Mary treasured up all these things and pondered them in her heart. ²⁰The shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all the things they had heard and seen, which were just as they had been told.

Series: Advent: God’s Gift of Christ

Dec. 24, 2017: Peace: God Reigns on Earth

Bad News of Oppression (1-7)

Where in the world do you see the greatest need for peace?

Where in your life do you see the greatest need for peace?

Luke 2:1-3 – At the time of Christ’s birth, what kind of peace existed? What kind of peace were the Jews still hoping for? (Luke 1:68-75)

Luke 2:4-7 – What circumstances did Mary & Joseph go through? Why is this a surprising context for Jesus’s birth? (Luke 1:46-55)

Good News for All (8-12)

10-12 – The message was good news for all: that a Savior had been born, who was the Messiah, the Lord. What do these titles mean?

8-9 – God uses angels to tell shepherds the good news.

Why would shepherds be suitable messengers for this news?

Peace on Earth (13-14)

13-14 – What can we expect from Christ’s coming? How does this match God’s overall plan? (Ephesians 1:9-10, 2:11-22)

The angels speak of peace on earth, but we sometimes speak of escaping earth to find peace in heaven.

How does our hope in resurrection (Philippians 3:21) and a renewed creation (Revelation 21:1-5) clarify this tension?

Passing the Peace (15-20)

15-18 – How do the shepherds respond to the good news?

What does this show us about how the good news is spread?

19 – How is Mary’s response different? Who do you relate to?

Have you found peace with God through Jesus Christ?

If so, you are invited to join His work of bringing peace on earth (2 Corinthians 5:14-21). Where has He placed you?

Write down the name of someone who needs to find peace in God.

How can you show and tell to them? Pray for them too.