

“Fear Not! There’s Joy!”

Luke 2: 8-20

East Berlin Community Church

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Introduction

- For many, the “most wonderful time of the year” is followed by the most miserable time.
 - Disappointment over Christmas not living up to the “hype”
 - Loneliness at Christmas celebrations
- No matter what amount of discord or discouragement, there is still available over-riding sense of joy.
 - “Happiness” is conditioned by and dependent on what is “happening” around us.
 - “Joy” is a state of mind characterized by peace in spite of life’s happenings

“Fear Not! There’s Joy!”

A. The Revelation of Joy

- Luke 2:8-9-- *“Now there were in the same country shepherds living out in the fields, keeping watch over their flock by night. And behold, an angel of the Lord stood before them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were greatly afraid.”*
 1. For the shepherd on the hillsides surrounding Bethlehem, it was just another night of work.
 2. Suddenly these shepherds were surrounded by the Shekinah glory. The same glory that...
 - a. Appeared to Abraham in Ur of the Chaldees (Acts 7:2)
 - b. Filled the tabernacle during Israel’s wilderness wanderings. (Exodus 40)
 - c. Ezekiel witnessed departing from the temple (Ezekiel 10)
 3. Standing in the midst of the Shekinah glory was an “angel of the Lord”, possibly Gabriel
 4. The Shepherds reaction-- *“They feared a great fear”*
 5. The Angelic reassurance
 - Luke 2:10-- *“Then the angel said to them, ‘Do not be afraid, for behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy which will be to all the people.”*

B. The Reasons for Joy

1. **A Grand PROMISE has been kept!** *“Born today”*
 - Luke 2:10-11-- *“Then the angel said to them, ‘Do not be afraid, for behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy which will be to all people. For there is born to you this day in the city of David a Savior, who is Christ the Lord.’”*

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 - a. Promise of the Messiah in the Old Testament
 - 1) The promised “seed of the woman”
 - Genesis 3:15-- *“will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your seed and her Seed; He shall bruise your head, and you shall bruise His heel.”*
 - 2) The promised “prophet”
 - Deuteronomy 18:15-- *“The LORD your God will raise up a Prophet like me from your midst, from your brethren. Him you shall hear.”*
 - 3) The promised “king”
 - Isaiah 9:6-7-- *“For unto us a Child is born, unto us a Son is given; And the government shall be upon His shoulder. And His name will be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace. Of the increase of His government and peace there will be no end. Upon the throne of David and over His kingdom, to order it and establish it with judgment and justice from that time forward, even forever. The zeal of the LORD of hosts will perform this.”*

- b. Prominence of the word “born”-- promise fulfilled
 - John 16:21-- *“A woman, when she is in labor, has sorrow because her hour has come; but as soon as she gives birth to the child, she no longer remembers the anguish, for joy that a human being has been born into the world.”*

2. **A Great NEED has been met!** *“ A Savior, Christ the Lord”*
 - a. Need caused by man’s sinfulness
 - b. Need of a permanent solution
 - c. Permanent solution found in the suffering Messiah.
 - Isaiah 53:4-6-- *“surely has borne our griefs and carried our sorrows; Yet we esteemed Him stricken, smitten by God, and afflicted. But He was wounded for our transgressions, He was bruised for our iniquities; The chastisement for our peace was upon Him, and by His stripes we are healed. All we like sheep have gone astray; We have turned, everyone, to his own way; And the LORD has laid on Him the iniquity of us all.”*
 - Hebrews 9:26-- *“But now, once, at the end of the ages, He (that is, Christ) has appeared to put away sin by the sacrifice of Himself.”*

3. **A Glorious DISCOVERY will be made--** *“You will find”*
 - Luke 2:12-- *“And this will be the sign to you: You will find a Babe wrapped in swaddling cloth, lying in a manger.”*
 - a. The joy of finding what is lost.
 - Luke 15:6-- *“calls together his friends and neighbors, saying to them, ‘Rejoice with me, for I have found my sheep which was lost.’”*
 - Luke 15:9-- *“she calls her friends and neighbors together, saying, ‘Rejoice with me, for I have found the piece that was lost!’”*
 - Luke 15:22-24-- *“Bring out the best robe and put it on him, and put a ring on his hand and sandals on his feet. And bring the fatted calf here and kill it, and let us eat and be merry, for this my son was dead and is alive again; he was lost and is found.”*
 - b. The sign-- lying in a manger
 - c. The joyful anticipation by the angels.
 - Luke 2:13-14-- *“And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host praising God and saying: ‘Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, goodwill toward men!’”*
 - Luke 15:7-- *“I say to you that likewise three will be more joy in heaven over one sinner who repents than over ninety-nine just persons who need no repentance.”*
 - Luke 15:10-- *“Likewise, I say to you, there is joy in the presence of the angels of God over one sinner who repents.”*

C. The Realization of Joy

1. **Come and See for yourself**
 - Luke 2:15-16-- *“So it was, when the angels had gone away from them into heaven, that the shepherds said to one another, ‘Let us now go to Bethlehem and see this thing that has come to pass, which the LORD has made known to us.’”*

2. **Share the Good News with others around you.**
 - Luke 2:17-18-- *“Now when they had seen Him, they made widely known the saying which was told them concerning this Child. And all those who heard it marveled at those things which were told them by the shepherds.”*

3. **Worship and Praise God continually**
 - Luke 2:20-- *“Then the shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all the things that they had heard and seen, as it was told to them.”*