

GIVING UP ON Christmas

December 16, 2018 · Pastor Matt Doan

Giving Up Fear for Joy Luke 2:8-20

Fearful Shepherds Luke 2:8-9

Luke 2:9b – *“...and the glory of the Lord shone around them; and they were terribly frightened”*

- Our fearful world longs for a good shepherd (Ezekiel 34)
- The fearful world of Hebrew shepherds (1 Samuel 16:11; 17:34-36)
- The glory (“doxa”) of the Lord shone around them (Luke 2:9)
 - The shepherds thought they were about to die
 - Revelation 19:1 - *“After these things I heard something like a loud voice of a great multitude in heaven, saying, ‘Hallelujah! Salvation and glory (‘doxa’) and power belong to our God.”*

Joyful Worshippers Luke 2:20

Luke 2:20 – *“The shepherds went back, glorifying and praising God for all that they had heard and seen, just as had been told them.”*

- The shepherds were the first Christmas worship leaders (“glorifying and praising God...”)
- The shepherds joined the already worshipping choir in heaven (Revelation 19:5-6)
- The shepherds became Bethlehem's first missionaries

What Caused the Shepherds to Trade Fear for Joy? Luke 2:10-19

Luke 2:10 – *“...Do not be afraid; for behold I bring your good news of great joy which will be for all the people...”*

- The shepherds traded fear for joy because the Savior had arrived for all the people (Luke 2:11-12)
- The shepherds traded fear for joy because of the angels armies declaration (Luke 2:13-14)
- The shepherds traded fear for joy because they met Jesus (Luke 2:15-19)
 - Earthly Happiness vs. Christian Joy (James 1:2-4)
 - What Jesus found joy in (Hebrews 12:2)

*“Shepherds, why this jubilee? Why these songs of happy cheer? What great brightness did you see?
What glad tiding did you hear? Gloria in excelsis Deo. Gloria in excelsis Deo.”*

-From the Christmas Carol, “Angels We Have Heard On High” (1862)

Digging Deeper: Joy-Filled Psalms

Psalm 16:11 "You will make known to me the path of life; In Your presence is fullness of **joy**; In Your right hand there are pleasures forever."

Psalm 30:5 - "For His anger is but for a moment, His favor is for a lifetime; Weeping may last for the night, But a shout of **joy** comes in the morning."

Psalm 51:12 - "Restore to me the **joy** of Your salvation And sustain me with a willing spirit."

Psalm 67:4 - "Let the nations be glad and sing for **joy**; For You will judge the peoples with uprightness And guide the nations on the earth."

Psalm 90:14 - "O satisfy us in the morning with Your lovingkindness, That we may sing for **joy** and be glad all our days"

Psalm 100: 2 - "Serve the Lord with gladness; Come before Him with **joyful** singing."

Psalm 126:5 - "Those who sow in tears shall reap with **joyful** shouting."

Psalm 149: 5 - "Let the godly ones exult in glory; Let them sing for **joy** on their beds."

LifeGroup Discussion:

1. Hebrew shepherds lived in constant fear of attacks, robberies and persecution. The appearance of the "angel of the Lord" in Luke 2:9 no doubt marked the most fearful moment of their lives. What did the angel say to comfort the shepherds fears? What are some of your personal fears today? What may God say to you to comfort your fears?
2. The shepherds went from being "terribly frightened" in Luke 2:9 to "glorifying and praising God" in Luke 2:20. What were the reasons for such a dramatic transformation in the lives of the shepherds? Share some areas of your life where you have been transformed from being "terribly frightened" to "glorifying and praising God."
3. Christian Joy isn't bound by circumstances, in fact Christian joy is often found even in suffering. Psalm 30:5 tells us, "*Weeping may endure for a night, but joy comes in the morning.*" How does suffering in this life produce eternal joy? Read Hebrews 12:1-3. How did Jesus suffering produce joy in His life and in our lives as His followers?

In Response:

COMMUNION: Communion is a "meal" for believers in Jesus Christ to help us give thanks and remember His death on the cross for the forgiveness of sins. The matzah bread represents the body of Christ given for us. The cup of juice represents the blood of Christ that was shed to pay the price for our sins. We are called to examine ourselves before taking communion (Read 1 Corinthians 11:23-34). We typically pass communion elements the first Sunday of the month. Most other weeks, communion is available at tables around the room after the sermon.

GIVING: The offering is received during each Sunday service. This is a way to express a wholehearted trust in God and worship Him through giving. It is also an act of obedience to God that helps free us from money having mastery over us. Tithing is a biblical command of 10% as a baseline of giving, but the New Testament calls us as followers of Jesus to give even more. Our prayer is that you plan ahead to give purposefully and joyfully to God, helping to further ministry locally and globally in Jesus' name. Discover ways to give on the front of the bulletin or calvarylife.org/give

PRAYER POINTS: These locations at the front right and left of the Worship Center will have people available to pray with you during the time of singing after the sermon and after the service as well. These people are excited to pray with you about anything in your life, including praying to tell Jesus that you believe in Him as God and trust Him for salvation. They will also pray for any health needs, stresses, worries, family members, temptations or anything else.