

The Promise of Joy

Christmas Series 2025
Pastor Josh Whitney (josh@trc.life)
Luke 2:8-20

Luke 2:8 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. 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!"

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.

1. The earth is a _____ planet.

2. God does _____ things through ordinary people.

3. Everyone needs saving from the _____ consequences of their sins.

4. The message of Christmas _____ a response.

5. Christian, do you realize you have Good News too _____ to hide?

6. Happiness comes and goes, but joy is _____ because it is focused on the eternal.

7. Don't suppress your sorrow, _____ it in something deeper — eternal joy found only in Christ.

Discussion Questions:

1. Why do you think God chose shepherds (social nobodies) to receive the first birth announcement of Jesus? What does that say about how God works with "ordinary people"?
2. The angels' message was "good news of great joy." What steals our joy most easily today, and how does the Gospel confront those joy-thieves?
3. The shepherds responded quickly: "Let's go and see." What keeps people today from investigating Jesus seriously or responding in obedience?
4. We contrasted happiness (temporary) with joy (eternal). Can you share a time when you experienced joy in spite of difficult circumstances?
5. We discussed three stories of Christians being "inappropriately joyful." What would it look like for you to display that kind of joy in your workplace, family, or school this week?
6. "Don't suppress your sorrow — root it in eternal joy." What does it look like to hold sorrow and joy at the same time? How can our Small Group support one another in this?

Next Week's Message: "The Promise of Peace"