



**Sermon Title:** Unwrapped week 3

**Sermon Title:** Fear & Joy

**Date:** 12/11/2022

**Luke 2:8–20**

Verse 9 says **they were terrified**. Verse 20 says **The shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God**. What made the difference? Between verse 9 and verse 20, they met Jesus.

**Big Idea: Reverently fear God, and it will lead to joy.**

That statement embodies a couple of serious implications.

**Implication #1: No fear of God leads to many fears.**

**Proverbs 9:10**

A proper fear of the Lord is based on several accurate perceptions:

- A perception of how holy [separate] and qualitatively different He is from us.
- The realization that He sees us for who we are.
- That we have fallen far short of His standards of character.
- The realization that we are accountable to Him and will someday stand before Him.

I imagine the shepherds were sitting, huddled for warmth around a fire. Then, without warning, the landscape is awash with an incandescent brightness. And they were terrified because they had witnessed heavenly glory.

There are a couple of different meanings for the word "glory."

- It can refer to the glory we ascribe to God in worship.
- It also can refer to the luminous manifestation of His presence. In Luke 2, it took the form of brilliant light that turned night to day.

Moses understood this. He experienced God's glory on multiple occasions. God's glory emanated from a bush in the desert. It probably glowed like the filament of a lightbulb. **Exodus 3:6**

Years later, Moses would recall this experience and ask for a repeat.

**Exodus 33:21–23**

God, this time reveals even more of His glory to Moses. But in order to experience it, Moses needed protection! The Israelites, far away at the base of the mountain, knew something truly awesome was taking place.

**Exodus 24:15-17**

Even protected by solid rock, Moses' exposure to God's glory left him with lingering physical manifestations of that experience. **Exodus 34:29,30**

Like the burning bush, Moses' face physically glowed. To say the Israelites were intimidated is an understatement. We can understand why the shepherds. Every one of us will someday see what the shepherds saw. Your response will depend on whether or not you are prepared for it.

**Implication #2: Reverent Fear of God will free you from every fear.**

**Luke 2:15–17**

Fear became joy. What made the difference? Verse 16 tells us they found the baby. They met Jesus.

Just prior to his conversion, Paul saw the glory of God. The encounter temporarily blinded him, and it changed the direction of his life. For the rest of his life, he eagerly awaits **Titus 2:13, the blessed hope -- the glorious appearing of our great God and Savior, JESUS CHRIST.**

He's not afraid but eager. What made the difference? Meeting the one who is the source of glory made the difference. **2 Timothy 1:12**

The difference for the shepherds was that they found Christ.

The difference for Paul – Christ found *Him*.

Some day YOU will experience firsthand the glory of God.

**Revelation 20:11–12** describes the scene.

**Revelation 20:15** will result in the *ultimate fear*.

The ultimate *joy*, however, will be when people who have trusted in Jesus come face to face with Him. The difference between fear and joy is the difference a relationship with Jesus makes. It transforms fear into joy.

### **Discussion Questions:**

- **What about the sermon stuck with you this week? What part challenged your thinking?**
- **Did you have any fears that vanished when you met Jesus? Explain**
- **How would you explain the fear of God and its benefits to an unbeliever?**
- **Is there such a thing as an unhealthy fear of God? Explain**
- **What does a biblical fear of God look like in a believer's life?**