

GOOD TIDINGS OF GREAT JOY TO ALL PEOPLE

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“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.” (Luke 2:10)

Go back over 2000 years ago and imagine that you are one of the shepherds living out in the fields near Bethlehem, keeping watch over your flock by night. Everything is silent except for the quiet breathing of the sleeping sheep, and an occasional hushed word between you and the other shepherds. You are trying your best to stay alert for any dangers that may approach the flock in the moonlit darkness, but nothing could have prepared you for what happens next.

In a moment the darkness is shattered by the light of God’s glory and an angel is standing before you and the other shepherds. Suffice it to say, all of you are scared to death. Then the angel speaks telling you not to be afraid, but that he brings good news of great joy that will affect all people. He tells of a Savior born that day in Bethlehem, and you would be able to find him wrapped in swaddling clothes, lying in a manger (Luke 2:8-12).

God did not command us to remember the birth of Jesus as an annual celebration on December 25th. To insist that Christians do so as an organized religious observance is to speak and act without divine authority. But we can and should reflect on this great Bible event at all times. The circumstances of the Word becoming flesh give witness to the power and love of God (Jn. 1:14). Let us encourage people to always seek the Savior!

After the angel spoke, he was joined by a multitude of the heavenly host praising God and saying, “Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace among those with whom he is pleased” (Lk. 2:12-13 ESV).

Anything that thrills the heavenly host should also cause great excitement in us! Peace on earth certainly is something to be desired, and the Savior offers that peace for all those “with whom he is pleased.” This divine peace is available to all who look to God and obey the will of the Father (Jn. 14:27).

While strife and division plague an ungodly world, Jesus offers reconciliation between man and God and peace among all those who are in Christ. Let us give glory to God for this good news that is still as exciting as when it was first heard by those humble shepherds on that blessed night.