

Sermon Discussion Guide:

Jesus is the Good News of God

Sunday, December 17, 2023

Scripture: **Luke 2:1-20**

Series: **Advent 2023**

OVERVIEW

While Mary was betrothed to Joseph and still a virgin, she conceived a son by the Holy Spirit. She was told by an angel that when her son was born, he was to be named Jesus and he would be called the Son of the Most High and his kingdom would have no end. Late in her pregnancy, Caesar Augustus decreed that an empire-wide census should be taken and that each person was to be registered in their own town, so Mary and Joseph traveled from Nazareth to Bethlehem, the city of David, because Joseph was of the family line of David. It was in Bethlehem that Jesus was born and laid in an animal feeding trough. These were the humble beginnings of the entrance of Jesus into the world. **Jesus is the good news of great joy for all people.**

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. We traditionally celebrate the birth of Jesus by giving gifts to friends and loved ones. In answer to the question, "What would be the greatest gift that God could give to the world?" a common answer from a person on the street would be "world peace" by which they would mean the end of all wars. In what sense has God given the gift of peace, but a different kind of peace? Why is the gift of peace that God provides through Jesus the greatest gift?
2. Read Proverbs 21:1 and Micah 5:2-5a. Although Caesar decreed the census that resulted in Jesus being born in Bethlehem, how do we know that God sovereignly directed these events? When God reveals detailed events that are out of our control 700 years in advance and can direct a king's heart like channeled water in his hand, how does this give you hope?
3. How does the meaning of the word "Bethlehem" point to Jesus?
4. We would probably all be terrified if we were shepherds outside in the field watching over our flocks of sheep in the middle of the night when suddenly we were surrounded by the blinding light of the glory of the Lord! How does the angel host's proclamations and praises in verses 10-14 change their perspective from fear to excitement?
5. Why is it significant that Jesus' birth announcement was given to lowly shepherds?
6. How did the shepherds respond [see verses 15-18, 20]? What are some ways you can respond likewise this Christmas season?