

ADVENTure - Grace for the Adventure

Luke 2:8-16

Ice Breaker: Pastor Brian told a story about a man who traded a paperclip to get a house. What would you consider your best trade or deal that you have made?

Luke 2:8-14 *And there were shepherds living out in the fields nearby, keeping watch over their flocks at night. 9 An angel of the Lord appeared to them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were terrified. 10 But the angel said to them, "Do not be afraid. I bring you good news that will cause great joy for all the people. 11 Today in the town of David a Savior has been born to you; he is the Messiah, the Lord. 12 This will be a sign to you: You will find a baby wrapped in cloths and lying in a manger." 13 Suddenly a great company of the heavenly host appeared with the angel, praising God and saying, 14 "Glory to God in the highest heaven, and on earth peace to those on whom his favor rests."*

1. What were the shepherds doing?

2. What do you think it means that the glory of the Lord shone around them? (a Bible dictionary or study Bible may help) Compare verse 9 use of glory and verse 14. How are they the same or different?

3. Glory can be expressed as the light of God. How does John the Baptist and Isaiah connect Jesus to the glory of the Lord? (Isaiah 9:2; John 1:3-5, 9-14)

Isaiah 9:2 *2 The people walking in darkness have seen a great light; on those living in the land of deep darkness a light has dawned.*

John 1:3-5, 9-14 *3 Through him all things were made; without him nothing was made that has been made. 4 In him was life, and that life was the light of all mankind. 5 The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it...*

9 The true light that gives light to everyone was coming into the world. 10 He was in the world, and though the world was made through him, the world did not recognize him. 11 He came to that which was his own, but his own did not receive him. 12 Yet to all who did receive him, to those who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God—13 children born not of natural descent, nor of human decision or a husband's will, but born of God. 14 The Word became flesh and made his dwelling among us. We have seen his glory, the glory of the one and only Son, who came from the Father, full of grace and truth.

4. Of all the people that the angels could have visited, why do you suppose God sent them to the shepherds? (See note)

Note: In that day, shepherds were considered to be at the lowest rung of the social ladder. Their work not only kept them away from the temple and the synagogue, but it made them ceremonially unclean. Yet in His grace, God gave the first announcement of the Savior's birth to lowly shepherds! (See Luke 1:52-53.) (*Wiersbe's Expository Outlines on the New Testament*.)

Luke 1:52-53 (NIV) *52 He has brought down rulers from their thrones but has lifted up the humble. 53 He has filled the hungry with good things, but has sent the rich away empty.*

5. Pastor Brian makes the point that the shepherds had every right to be bitter because of their position in society and how they were treated. How do you think this event would have changed their perspective of themselves especially in relationship with God?

6. How can we trade bitterness in our relationships for love and hope? (Ephesians 4:31-32, Isaiah 61:3)

Ephesians 4:31-32 *Get rid of all bitterness, rage and anger, brawling and slander, along with every form of malice. 32 Be kind and compassionate to one another, forgiving each other, just as in Christ God forgave you.*

Isaiah 61:1-3 *The Spirit of the Sovereign Lord is on me, because the Lord has anointed me to proclaim good news to the poor. He has sent me to bind up the brokenhearted, to proclaim freedom for the captives and release from darkness for the*

prisoners, 2 to proclaim the year of the Lord's favor and the day of vengeance of our God, to comfort all who mourn, 3 and provide for those who grieve in Zion— to bestow on them a crown of beauty instead of ashes, the oil of joy instead of mourning, and a garment of praise instead of a spirit of despair. They will be called oaks of righteousness, a planting of the Lord for the display of his splendor.

7. For whom was this good news? (Luke 2:10) How do you think the shepherds felt hearing the good news was for them too?

8. How can we help even the marginalized in our world get the message that the “good news” is for everyone?

9. What was (is) the “good news” that will cause great joy? (Luke 2:11) Why would this be “good news” to them?

10. What is the significance of the three titles given (Luke 2:11) regarding the one who was born?

11. How has this “good news” brought great joy into your life? Who was the “angel” who first told you about Jesus?

12. To whom does God give his peace in verse vs. 14? Who would that be? (Isaiah 9:6; 53:5; John 14:27; Romans 5:1)

Isaiah 9:6 (NIV) *6 For to us a child is born, to us a son is given, and the government will be on his shoulders. And he will be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.*

Isaiah 53:5 (NIV) *5 But he was pierced for our transgressions, he was crushed for our iniquities; the punishment that brought us peace was on him, and by his wounds we are healed.*

John 14:27 *Peace I leave with you; my peace I give you. I do not give to you as the world gives. Do not let your hearts be troubled and do not be afraid.*

Romans 5:1-2 (NIV) *Therefore, since we have been justified through faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ, 2 through whom we have gained access by faith into this grace in which we now stand. And we boast in the hope of the glory of God.*

Luke 2:15-20 *When the angels had left them and gone into heaven, the shepherds said to one another, "Let's go to Bethlehem and see this thing that has happened, which the Lord has told us about." 16 So they hurried off and found Mary and Joseph, and the baby, who was lying in the manger. 17 When they had seen him, they spread the word concerning what had been told them about this child, 18 and all who heard it were amazed at what the shepherds said to them. 19 But Mary treasured up all these things and pondered them in her heart. 20 The shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all the things they had heard and seen, which were just as they had been told.*

13. What did they do and what did they find as a response to the "good news" from the angels?

14. How can we share the "good news" of the birth of Jesus to those around us this Christmas season?