

**Saint Timothy Lutheran – Edmonds, WA**

December 24, 2009 – “Christmas Eve”

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**“I Bring You Good News Of Great Joy.”**

(Text: Luke 2:8-14)

**Context:** The physician Luke, a Gentile Christian, wrote to a Gentile audience. He writes with diligence to detail. He does not focus upon the scriptural promises of the Hebrew Old Testament as does Matthew. He describes in a wonderful way what happened in regards to the life and ministry of Jesus Christ. In this section regarding the birth of Christ, Luke makes it clear that Joseph and Mary went to Bethlehem to participate in the census mandated by Caesar Augustus, the “first census taken while Quirinius was governor in Syria.” While in Bethlehem Mary gave birth to her first-born son and wrapped him in swaddling clothes and laid him in a manger for there was no room for them in the inn. Luke, then turns his attention to the angelic announcement of this important moment in human history. God had given the world a Savior, Christ the Lord.

**I. This Sinful World Was/Is A Place That Is Filled With Bad And Sad News, Daily.**

- A. People are estranged from their Creator.
  - 1. The shepherds had their own problems (wandering sheep, fatigue, threats to the sheep’s safety and to their own safety).
    - a. Being a shepherd was not a care-free, romantic existence.
  - 2. Even as they cared for the sheep, they had relationships with others.
    - a. They had their issues with each other.
    - b. They had their issues with their Creator.
  - 3. Today, guilt still plagues people’s consciences, but many deny that a “common moral system” has been placed in their hearts by a Creator.
  - 4. Guilt-laden people discuss the possibility of God’s existence and often decide that He must not exist because one cannot “prove” that He exists.
    - a. If God does not exist, Christmas means nothing except a commercial time of getting excited over receiving gifts or a time of being burdened by the fact that you’re expected to give gifts. (Why give anyway?)
- B. People are estranged from each other.
  - 1. Particularly at this time of year, all of our human estrangements “come home to roost,” so to speak.
    - a. People’s lack of “connectedness” with others appears evident and people become depressed.
- C. Estrangement from God at Christmas seems to suggest that “we are on our own.”
  - 1. No help is coming for mankind.
  - 2. But what if He does exist even though we have decided He doesn’t? What if?

**II. The Angel Said, “I Bring You Good News Of Great Joy...For All The People.**

- A. The angel was sent by God with a message for all people.
  - 1. He was, Luke says, “an angel of the Lord,” not of men, but of the Lord.
  - 2. The message was for all people. No one was to be excluded.
    - a. They can only exclude themselves through unbelief.
- B. The message is an announcement of what was happening.
  - 1. “Today, in the city of David (Bethlehem) there has been born for you a Savior, who is Christ the Lord. (A Savior from sin, death, & the devil.)
- C. The meaning of this message brings reconciliation and peace among people.
  - 1. Peace with God through the forgiveness of sins that the Savior brings.
  - 2. Peace with others through forgiveness & love that the Savior supplies.
  - 3. This true peace in one’s soul brings profound joy to the human heart.
    - a. This is the reason for which we were made: to love God and Man.