



**Preparing for His Coming  
Part 4**

**Jesus: The Savior  
Luke 2:8-17**

**Westport Christian Church  
December 20, 2009**

Luke 2:8-17 "In the same region there were some shepherds staying out in the fields and keeping watch over their flock by night. And an angel of the Lord suddenly stood before them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them; and they were terribly frightened. But the angel said to them, "Do not be afraid; for behold, I bring you good news of great joy which will be for all the people; for today in the city of David there has been born for you a Savior, who is Christ the Lord."

"This will be a sign for you: you will find a baby wrapped in cloths and lying in a manger." And suddenly there appeared with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host praising God and saying, "Glory to God in the highest, And on earth peace among men with whom He is pleased."

When the angels had gone away from them into heaven, the shepherds began saying to one another, "Let us go straight to Bethlehem then, and see this thing that has happened which the Lord has made known to us." So they came in a hurry and found their way to Mary and Joseph, and the baby as He lay in the manger. When they had seen this, they made known the statement which had been told them about this Child.

Each year there are certain things that take place that we expect. There are certain songs that are played on the radio, certain TV shows that come on every year that we watch, year after year. One of our daughters favorite movies to watch this time of the year is, "It's A Wonderful Life."

Now, I know that most of you have seen that movie and some perhaps many times. In that movie there is a man named George Baily. George had spent day after day going through the same routine with basically no thought of tomorrow or how important life truly is. Now George was in the banking business and was facing a difficult time. It looked like he was going to be arrested and spend some time in jail for some money that was owed. You see, he did what he thought was a good thing and now, it was not looking good. George's life had gone from dull to desperation. But George had an encounter with an angel that changed his life.

There, in a certain part of the country of Judea was some plain, simple men who were going through life's everyday routine. They were nobody special, just plain, old shepherds. Shepherds for the most part were looked down upon. Their job was considered by many as one of the lowest jobs a person could have.

After all, their occupation demanded they move from location to location to keep good grass before the sheep. Often this meant spending time away from family and also made it extremely hard to follow the strict laws of Judaism. Their responsibility was one that seemed very simple, to provide food and water as well as a secure location for the sheep.

Many times you and I get caught up in the everyday occurrences of life. Getting up day after day, going through the same old, same old, trying to provide for and protect our families. And like the shepherds, sometimes something extraordinary has to come our way to get our attention.

An angel appears to the shepherds and informs them that something special has taken place. After calming their fears, this messenger informs them that they must hurry into town to discover for themselves this wonderful thing that has taken place.

The angel promises good news, not just good news for the shepherds, but good news that will bring great joy to all the people. The good news is

announced, in the city of Bethlehem there has been an amazing birth. This child will be the Savior. Savior means one who will deliver. For the angel declares to them that this child is not only the Savior, but He is the Christ. The long awaited Messiah. But it didn't stop there, this child was not only the Savior, who will deliver and the Christ who is the Messiah but He is also Lord. This word Lord was used exclusively in reference to God the Father. The essence of the message is that a savior has been born who is the awaited messiah and the embodiment of God. What an amazing and accurate picture of Jesus.

The angel directs the shepherds to go into the city and discover for themselves. Then the angel gave them a sign. You will find the baby wrapped in cloth and lying in a manger. Now, wrapping the baby in cloths was a normal everyday occurrence and there is nothing special about it. But the baby will be lying in a manger, now this was out of the ordinary. However, this identifies where the shepherds would find the baby. The whole purpose of the sign was to validate the message, to bring authenticity to the proclamation that this was truly good news for all the people.

With the announcement came a celebration for we read, there with the angel a multitude of God's mighty warriors joining together for the purpose of praising God. This was the encore of celebration praise and adoration to the Lord most High.

The shepherds hurried away to see for themselves if what they had just heard was true. They went into Bethlehem and there they discovered Mary, Joseph and the baby lying in a manger. They shared with Mary and Joseph what had happened while they were in the field and after they had seen for themselves we read, "The shepherds went back, glorifying and praising God for all that they had heard and seen, just as had been told them."

Most of you if not all of you here today have heard this story over and over. I'm afraid that for many it becomes just part of the yearly activities that people do this time of year. For some this is the only time of the year that they attend worship. We often live our lives from the day to day routines with none or little concern about tomorrow. We get so caught up in following the strict laws of the retail market, the hustle and bustle of trying to find that perfect gift that we absolutely

miss the message of Christmas.

A Christmas card was once published with the title "If Christ Had Not Come." It was founded upon our Savior's words "If I had not come." The card represented a pastor falling into a short sleep in his study on Christmas morning and dreaming of a world into which Jesus had never come. In his dream he found himself looking through his home, but there were no little stockings in the chimney corner, no Christmas bells or wreaths of holly, and no Christ to comfort, gladden and save. He walked out to the street, but there was no church with its steeple pointing to Heaven. He came back and sat down in his library, but every book about the Savior had disappeared.

The doorbell rang and a messenger asked the preacher to visit his poor, dying mother. He hastened with the weeping child, and as he reached the home he sat down and said, "I have something here that will comfort you." He opened his Bible to look for a familiar promise, but it ended with Malachi. There was no Gospel and no promise of hope and salvation, and he could only bow his head and weep with her in bitter despair. Two days later he stood beside her coffin and conducted the funeral service. There was no message of consolation, no hope of heaven. (Source Unknown)

More than two thousand years ago a few shepherds outside of the city of Bethlehem had an encounter with an angel and their life was never the same.

One of the greatest shows to watch this time of year gives great reflection of the true meaning of Christmas. At the end of the movie a great theologian stands, taking his place on center stage, Linus begins reading, "In the same region there were some shepherds staying out in the fields and keeping watch over their flock by night. And an angel of the Lord suddenly stood before them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them; and they were terribly frightened. But the angel said to them, "Do not be afraid; for behold, I bring you good news of great joy which will be for all the people; for today in the city of David there has been born for you a Savior, who is Christ the Lord."

That same message rings true today as well, a Savior has been born. That baby however did not remain in a manger but grew up to be a man. You see, it was no accident that was laid in a feeding trough, for He is the

Bread of Life. It was not an accident that the message was first told to some shepherds watching over some sheep in a pasture, for many of those sheep would soon be used as a sacrifice for the sins of the people of Israel. Those shepherds were among the first to see the perfect Lamb of God, who came to take away the sins of the world.

Oh my friends don't miss the true meaning of the Christmas celebration, "for today in the city of David there has been born for you a Savior, who is Christ the Lord."

Merry CHRISTmas to all!!

AMEN.