

“Hark! The Herald Angels Sing”

Analog Christmas Sermon Series | Week Four | Newbreak Church

December 19th, 2021

Newbreak’s Sermon Study Guide is an in-house resource that serves sermon-based Life Groups and/or individuals who want to reflect further on how the message contributes to their spiritual formation.

In this week’s study, we look at the song, “Hark! The Herald Angels Sing,” and here we talk about why the angel’s message and song is worth listening to!

Icebreakers for Life Groups

- The traditional Christmas colors are red and green. What color would you add to the mix that isn’t usually thought of as a Christmas color? Why?
- What do you imagine an angel's voice sounds like? Is there a certain singer’s voice that you think is “angelic”?

Going Deeper Into the Message

Read Luke 2:8-14

Point 1 – Fear doesn’t have the final word.

The angels knew when they appeared to the shepherds in the field that their presence would startle and frighten the shepherds. They knew that this was not routine for the shepherds. But they also knew they could calm their fears. They could reassure the shepherds. In order to receive the good news of the Messiah being born, the shepherds had to be calm and unafraid. God does this with us. He has good news to share with us, too. He has a wonderful plan for our lives. Sometimes we let fear keep us from trusting Him. Some of us are scared to hear from Him because we have messed up, we have broken His laws, we have disappointed Him. And still He says to us, “Do not be afraid. I bring you good news that will cause great joy for all people.”

God removes our fear so He can fill us with His love, His Good News, His plan for our redemption. So, let Him reassure you today and give you His promised Son, our Savior! If there is any fear holding you back, today is the day to hand that fear over to God and ask His help to trust Him more.

Questions for Group Discussion or Personal Reflection

- What fears are you dealing with today? What promises of God could you take hold of if you were to release those fears and give them to God, knowing He loves you?
- Who do you know who is struggling with fear in their lives right now? How can you encourage them? What would you say to them?

Read Luke 2:10

Point 2 – Great joy is available today!

In the 1998 science fiction film *Deep Impact*, a comet is discovered to be on a collision course with earth and the whole movie was about trying to figure out how to stop the extinction event. Spoiler: One piece of the large comet hits the earth and it causes a MEGA tidal wave off the Eastern Coast of the US. If you haven't seen the movie, you aren't missing much. (However, the tidal wave scene is pretty much the only scene worth watching.) In a similar way in this story, God's proclamation through the angels was going to bring GREAT joy to the whole world. It was like a MEGA Tidal Wave Event of good news ready to spread across the face of the world.

In the Greek, the word used to describe the great (megas) fear of the shepherds was also the same word used to describe the great (mega) joy of the shepherds. Just as the shepherds experienced GREAT fear from seeing the heavenly beings, the Lord wanted to bring them GREAT joy through His wonderful declaration. The shepherds were given a chance to exchange their "great" fear for "great" joy. Sometimes our fear makes us feel like our world is ending and the "what ifs" keep us locked in chains. But since God's joy has arrived, we are able to experience an untouchable peace that offers us hope for the future.

Questions for Group Discussion or Personal Reflection

- Can you think of a time in your life when you experienced God's "great" joy? Was it in a season of stress, grief, or great fear?
- What do you think holds us back from experiencing more of God's joy in our lives?

Read Luke 2:11

Point 3 – We now have a Savior who puts our broken lives back together.

Hail the heav'n-born Prince of Peace! Hail the Son of Righteousness! Light and life to all He brings, Ris'n with healing in His wings. Mild He lays His glory by, Born that man no more may die, Born to raise the sons of earth, Born to give them second birth. – Lyrics from Hark! The Herald Angels Sing

From before He was even born, Christ was for us. Not only was He born into the world to be the final sacrifice in our place, He is on our side. He wants the best for us. He stands in our stead. He stands before the Father and says, "They can come to You clean and holy because they have been washed whiter than snow in my blood." We are no longer broken and unclean. We are a new creation. "God made him who had no sin to be sin for us, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God" (2 Corinthians 5:21, NIV). He loves us and only wants communion with us. He patiently puts us back together and makes us whole.

Questions for Group Discussion or Personal Reflection

- What broken parts do you need to give to God today? Do you believe He can fix them, that He can restore those pieces and make them new? Why or why not?
- Sit in quiet meditation with this part of the song for a few moments. Ask God to speak to you. What is God saying to you?

Read Luke 2:13-14

Point 4 – Join the song of the angels.

“Join the triumph of the skies, With the angelic host proclaim: Christ is born in Bethlehem.” - Lyrics from Hark! The Herald Angels Sing

The angels announced the good news of Christ’s birth and a great company of the heavenly host appeared, praising God. They had to praise Him for this marvelous news. They could not contain their praise. They could not keep it to themselves. Luke 2:14 says, *“Glory to God in the highest heaven, and on earth peace to those on whom His favor rests.”* Why praise God? Why join the angels and the heavenly hosts in bringing your praises to Him? Praise Him because you have found favor with Him, so much so that He has given you His peace. He has given you His Son. Join the heavens in proclaiming this great thing He has done and the fulfillment of His promise from ages past! Revel in the favor He has bestowed on you and don’t be silent in sharing the peace He has given you.

Questions for Group Discussion or Personal Reflection

- Meditate on what God has given you. Praise Him for individual ways He has made your life better, even if it’s not great right now. This becomes easier the more you practice praising Him.
- *“Through Jesus, therefore, let us continually offer to God a sacrifice of praise—the fruit of lips that openly profess his name”* (Hebrews 13:15, NIV). Throughout your week this week take time to offer praise to God. See how it changes your outlook on your circumstances.

—FINAL CHALLENGE QUESTIONS—

How are you going to think differently in light of what you have read, heard, and discussed this week?

What is one thing you are going to change in your life in light of the sermon?

BONUS: For those of you with kids or around kids: What is one truth from this message that you can share with your kids?