



“The Song Of The Angels: Hope For The Poor”

Luke 2:1-20

Icebreaker:

Christmas tree – live or artificial? What’s better?

The Study:

Luke’s gospel, and his version of the Christmas story in chapters 1 & 2, was written that we might have “certainty” in our faith (1:4). In this study we focus on the story of Jesus’ birth in Luke 2, which angels announce with a song sung to a group of shepherds.



Read Luke 2:1-3.

1. Why does Luke mention these secular rulers in these verses? How does it add certainty to our faith to know that the story of Jesus is part of the historical record (that history is *his story*)?

Read Luke 2:4-5.

2. God works in, with and under the unfolding of events around us to accomplish his purposes. Little did Joseph know as he took his family on this journey that he was fulfilling ancient prophecies. Which ones? (Look at Isaiah 9:1, Micah 5:2, and Psalm 89:20, 27-29).

Read Luke 2:6-7.

3. The story is so familiar to us that we may be tempted to forget what a difficult and disappointing time this must have been for Joseph and Mary. Put yourself in their sandals for a moment. What things would you be complaining about?

4. Can you be in the center of God’s will for your life, perfectly obeying him, doing what he asks you, pleasing him with your every decision...and still suffer? What should you remember in such moments? (For perspective, read Hebrews 10:32-36; 1 Peter 4:12-16).

Read Luke 2:8-14.

5. That an army of angels appears to shepherds to announce the birth of God’s Son is one of many strange paradoxes in this story,

We read some quotes from the book “The Jesus Style” by Gayle Erwin that highlights some of these ironies in the story. Discuss what is odd about any of the following aspects of Jesus’ birth (when you consider that this is God the Son coming to earth.) What would you have done differently if you had been part of Jesus’ PR team?

Born In A Barn

Jesus' Childhood Home of Nazareth

His Parents (The Circumstances Of His Birth)

Jesus' Lineage (Genealogy)

Jesus' First Messengers - Shepherds

6. How does all of this demonstrate that Christmas is hope for the poor (and weak, and lonely, and rejected, and sick, and bullied, etc.)?

7. Why was the Christian message – that “God so loved *the world*” – so radical at the time?

8. How does this explain who was flooding into the early church?
Read 1 Corinthians 1:26-27.

9. How did Christians respond to who they saw lying in the manger?

➤ James 1:27

➤ James 2:1-7

➤ Matthew 25:31-40

10. The idea of seeing equal worth and dignity in every human is heard a lot today, even in those who aren't Christians. But this ideal came from Christianity. Many of those advocating these ideals today have rejected the doctrine, and the God, (and the people!). that led to these ideals arising in the first place. What will be the end result of this? Does this help explain any of the cruelty and incoherency that we're witnessing today?

Prayer Requests:

9. How did Christians respond to who they saw lying in the manger?

- James 1:27

- James 2:1-7

- Matthew 25:31-40

10. The idea of seeing equal worth and dignity in every human is heard a lot today, even in those who aren't Christians. But this ideal came from Christianity. Many of those advocating these ideals today have rejected the doctrine, and the God, (and the people!). that led to these ideals arising in the first place. What will be the end result of this? Does this help explain any of the cruelty and incoherency that we're witnessing today?

Prayer Requests:



“The Song Of The Angels: *Hope For The Poor*”

Luke 2:1-20

Icebreaker:

Christmas tree – live or artificial? What's better?

The Study:

Luke's gospel, and his version of the Christmas story in chapters 1 & 2, was written that we might have “certainty” in our faith (1:4). In this study we focus on the story of Jesus' birth in Luke 2, which angels announce with a song sung to a group of shepherds.



Read Luke 2:1-3.

1. Why does Luke mention these secular rulers in these verses? How does it add certainty to our faith to know that the story of Jesus is part of the historical record (that history is *his story*)?

Read Luke 2:4-5.

2. God works in, with and under the unfolding of events around us to accomplish his purposes. Little did Joseph know as he took his family on this journey that he was fulfilling ancient prophecies. Which ones? (Look at Isaiah 9:1, Micah 5:2, and Psalm 89:20, 27-29).

Read Luke 2:6-7.

3. The story is so familiar to us that we may be tempted to forget what a difficult and disappointing time this must have been for Joseph and Mary. Put yourself in their sandals for a moment. What things would you be complaining about?

4. Can you be in the center of God's will for your life, perfectly obeying him, doing what he asks you, pleasing him with your every decision...and still suffer? What should you remember in such moments? (For perspective, read Hebrews 10:32-36; 1 Peter 4:12-16).

Read Luke 2:8-14.

5. That an army of angels appears to shepherds to announce the birth of God's Son is one of many strange paradoxes in this story,

We read some quotes from the book "The Jesus Style" by Gayle Erwin that highlights some of these ironies in the story. Discuss what is odd about any of the following aspects of Jesus' birth (when you consider that this is God the Son coming to earth.) What would you have done differently if you had been part of Jesus' PR team?

Born In A Barn

Jesus' Childhood Home of Nazareth

His Parents (The Circumstances Of His Birth)

Jesus' Lineage (Genealogy)

Jesus' First Messengers - Shepherds

6. How does all of this demonstrate that Christmas is hope for the poor (and weak, and lonely, and rejected, and sick, and bullied, etc.)?

7. Why was the Christian message – that "God so loved *the world*" – so radical at the time?

8. How does this explain who was flooding into the early church? Read 1 Corinthians 1:26-27.