

## Christmas Eve, 2009

Luke 2:1-20

1 In those days Caesar Augustus issued a decree that a census should be taken of the entire Roman world. 2 (This was the first census that took place while Quirinius was governor of Syria.) 3 And everyone went to his own town to register.

4 So Joseph also went up from the town of Nazareth in Galilee to Judea, to Bethlehem the town of David, because he belonged to the house and line of David. 5 He went there to register with Mary, who was pledged to be married to him and was expecting a child.

6 While they were there, the time came for the baby to be born, 7 and she gave birth to her firstborn, a son. She wrapped him in cloths and placed him in a manger, because there was no room for them in the inn.

8 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 of great joy that will be for all the people. 11 Today in the town of David a Savior has been born to you; he is Christ 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, and on earth peace to men on whom his favor rests."

15 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.



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will be a sign to you: You will find a baby wrapped in cloths and lying in a manger."**

Trouble - ?

Hammonds  
Shelia  
Jamie  
Tracy  
Denise  
Judy  
Bob and Bev

A Savior / hero

Not just anyone – Christ (Messiah), Lord (God Himself)

To you -= to all

Intro – Today I was at the grocery store and saw a man on one of those power carts. I looked again and knew the man. I visit him every month and was surprised to see him, because he has been diagnosed with the beginning of Alzheimers. I put my arm around him and asked if his wife was with him. “O no!” he said, like I should have known better. I do know she is suffering from cancer. (And later I found out she has the flu too.) “Are your kids with you?” I asked, knowing his children help care for them. “No, just getting some things we need,” he answered. I was surprised, but had a list of errands to run and wished him merry Christmas. Later, at my desk I wondered about all these problems . . . at Christmas. Why didn’t I do something?

I. On this night of joy and peace, or forget, or try to forget all the problems that our world faces.

A. But, trouble can seem to overwhelm the joy of life.

1. We hope for peace, but the war Afghanistan is growing because threats from the enemies of our country are growing. Will we ever see peace?

2. More people at St. John are without work this Christmas than in the past, and our state economy is good compared to lower 48, and many other places in the world. Not having a job is real trouble.

3. This time of the year the joy of the season could often bring joy to the downtrodden. But, more and more Christians are being kept from expressing their faith and sharing their reason for Christmas joy in public settings. The papers told about a court ruling in California. And, more and more I know of people for whom this season of joy is more a season of depression.

4. Unfortunately, we could all add to this list of trouble and pain.

B. But, please don’t think that we are alone in our troubles. Consider the shepherds.

1. They had an honest job, but it was dirty job, that included long hours and danger.

2. In our story these shepherds did not have the warmth of a home, but were outside at night

3. And, their country was over run with foreign conquerors and soldiers, forcing people to travel so they could be counted and taxed.

4. Life looked dreary and full of trouble for them too.

C. If we look we can see troubles all around us, and trouble and pain in our own lives too, and often every solution we have tried has not worked.

1. Christians know the reason for trouble and pain, and death in our lives.

2. We are sinful. All of us. We rebel against our creator and Lord.

3. So, the troubles and pain of life are caused by us and the people around us.

II. We’ve been having a problem at home. Our gas fireplace has been going out while we have the gas turned on. That is not my area of expertise. So, I called the company that installed it to help. When people reach a point where the troubles of life are beyond what they can deal with, they look for someone to help them. That is exactly what we have in today’s lesson.

A. You see, for people in a life of pain and trouble, one word is the center of this portion of God’s word meant for us. Verse 11, **Today in the town of David a Savior has been born to you; he is Christ the Lord.**

1. God sends angels to the Shepherds with the message, “You’ve got trouble. I’ve got someone who can help you. A SAVIOR.

2. This Savior is personal. He is born FOR YOU, shepherds, and for each of you tonight.
3. But, this Savior is not just for you, but also for all people. Verse 10 says not only , **I bring you good news of great joy.** But, we are also told that this good news of great joy, this news of a Savior **will be for all the people;** for all troubles, all pain.

B. But there is something about this Savior God is sending. That fireplace problem, the repairman has been there twice, and it is still going out. You see, this Savior is not just any body with a good heart who might or might not help.

1. God sends an angel to these shepherd to tell them, **Today in the town of David a Savior has been born to you; he is Christ the Lord.**
2. This Savior is “**Christ**” – which means the promised Messiah.
3. This Savior is “**the Lord**”, which means almighty God himself.

C. Did you hear the story of the lady who went Christmas shopping with two little children. After a day of big crowds, a day of saying no to her children, and not being able to find what she wanted she pushed the button on an elevator to go disappointed back to her car. The door opened and the elevator was jammed full, but the folks made room in the elevator and the lady dragged her children uncomfortably into the packed elevator. As the doors closed, in exasperation she let out a sigh and said, “Whoever invented this Christmas thing ought to be strung up and shot.” From the back of the elevator everyone heard a voice say, “Don’t worry, we already crucified him.” Into a world of night shifts, conquering armies, pain and trouble and death A Savior has come.

1. Even though the shepherds and other Jews seem to have forgotten the promises, this Savior is not just a baby, but Christ the Lord himself is the one who will die to pay for the sin that causes the trouble and pain and death of life.
2. This is God who is the all-powerful Lord and will overcome the sin he pays for, by rising from the dead.
3. Unto you personally, and to all people, a Savior has been born, Christ the Lord, someone who really can, and did, and continues to help us.

III. This news of the Savior was given to the Shepherds. But, because the news was so good, and perhaps because the news was for all people, the shepherds shared it.

A. The shepherds shared the words of the angels, and the fulfilled promise of God.

1. So, for dreary painful lives, they shared the Savior, they shared hope.
2. They shared joy, because of hope through God and because of God’s love, joy in the midst of life’s trials.
3. They shared life, because our Savior is God himself who not only loves us in the middle of the troubles of life, he gives eternal life in heaven for all who believe in Him.

B. Who do you know who needs the love of God, shown in the gift of His son Jesus?

Who do you know who is facing life’s trials and needs a Savior.

**CONCLUSION** – I was bothered all day and wondered why I hadn’t done more for the man in the grocery store. So, I went and bought some Christmas goodies, got a card, and paid a visit. I got to share a Christmas prayer. You see, in the middle of life’s trials, we have a Savior, who has overcome our sin, promises eternal life in heaven, and loves us today. **I bring you good news of great joy that will be for all the people. 11 Today in the town of David a Savior has been born to you; he is Christ the Lord.**

