

## Fear and Good News: Small Group Lesson and Devotional for the week of December 13, 2009

### Getting to Know You

1. What makes you afraid?
2. How often do you experience this fear?
3. Are you ever afraid of something God says? Like what?

### Getting to Know the Scripture

1. In Luke 1 and 2, the angel of the Lord appears 3 times and tells his hearers not to fear. Why do you think that is? Try and put yourself in each of these four character's shoes: Zechariah, Luke 1:5-80; Joseph, Matthew 1: 18-21; Mary, Luke 1: 26-38; the shepherds, Luke 2: 8-20.
2. When you think of Joseph, does he seem like a person who lacks faith? Think about his role as husband and father. Joseph and Mary remind us that a bit of fear doesn't disqualify them as people of great faith. Try to think of another scripture or a story in your life where you had fear, but still acted in faith.
3. Have you ever had God allow something in your life that seemed so bad, yet it proved to be something really good? What was that like? Did you learn anything from the experience?
4. The angel declares to the Shepherds in Luke 2:10 that this good news is for "...all the people." Have you ever thought of yourself as a recipient of the angel announcement? If the angel of God says something to you, should you doubt it?
5. Try to define these names of Jesus: Savior, Christ, and Lord. Evaluate the work of God in your life as it relates to these names.

### Practical Application

1. What has God been talking to you about? Is it scary? Does that mean you shouldn't try?
2. Take three minutes (really, 180 seconds, set your watch) and write down everything that you can think of that God has done for you.
3. Try placing a small "J" somewhere that you will see it all day today. (Write it on a "post it" and stick it to your computer. Write it on a band aid and put it on your finger. Change the home screen on your cell phone to a "J"). Every time you see that "J" today, remember that the angels said "...today..." The perpetually present Jesus is certainly with you today!

Fear and Good News  
Luke 2: 10

In the message of the angels to the shepherds, there is a hidden truth for all followers of God.

- I. “Do not be afraid...”
  - a. [what makes you afraid?] [disease? Public speaking? Death?]
  - b. Its natural that Human fear often accompanies \_\_\_\_\_
  - c. Angels first words to Zechariah, Joseph, Mary, shepherds
  - d. “I know this is going to freak you out, so hold on...”
  - e. Fear doesn’t necessarily mean a lack of faith. Fear is a natural \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_, faith is a decision to move ahead anyway with the knowledge that God never fails.
  
- II. “...I bring you good news of great joy...”
  - a. What humanly looks \_\_\_\_\_, God makes \_\_\_\_\_
  - b. “You call this good news?!”
  - c. Zechariah—mute, Joseph – confused and disappointed, Mary—in shock, Shepherds—scared to death
  - d. But look at what happens...
  
- III. “...for all the people...”
  - a. God doesn’t play \_\_\_\_\_
  - b. Not national, denominational, ethnic, socio-economical
  - c. (This story is a huge illustration)
  - d. This good news is \_\_\_\_\_ good news
  
- IV. “...Today...a Savior...Christ...Lord...”
  - a. Savior from our \_\_\_\_\_ [what a messed up world]
  - b. The Christ – ancient, majestic, the long awaited one...
  - c. Lord – rightful authority
  - d. Today: the perpetually present, the I Am

Fear and Good News  
Luke 2: 10

In the message of the angels to the shepherds, there is a hidden truth for all followers of God.

- I. "Do not be afraid..."
  - a. [what makes you afraid?] [disease? Public speaking? Death?]
  - b. Its natural that Human fear often accompanies God's mighty acts
  - c. Angels first words to Zechariah, Joseph, Mary, shepherds
  - d. "I know this is going to freak you out, so hold on..."
  - e. Fear doesn't necessarily mean a lack of faith. Fear is a natural human emotion, faith is a decision to move ahead anyway with the knowledge that God never fails.
  
- II. "...I bring you good news of great joy..."
  - a. What humanly looks bad, God makes good
  - b. "You call this good news?!"
  - c. Zechariah—mute, Joseph – confused and disappointed, Mary—in shock, Shepherds—scared to death
  - d. But look at what happens...
  
- III. "...for all the people..."
  - a. God doesn't play favorites
  - b. Not national, denominational, ethnic, socio-economical
  - c. (This story is a huge illustration)
  - d. This good news is your good news
  
- IV. "...Today...a Savior...Christ....Lord..."
  - a. Savior from our selves [what a messed up world]
  - b. The Christ – ancient, majestic, the long awaited one...
  - c. Lord – rightful authority
  - d. Today: the perpetually present, the I Am