

**Preaching Christ....
...by the power of the Holy Spirit
...and the authority of the Word of God**

Date: 25th December 2019
Services: *Across the Diocese*
Series: Who is Jesus?
Title: Saviour of the World
Passage: Luke 2:8-21

INTRODUCTION

- Who is this Jesus for whom the whole world has stopped today?
- Over the past few weeks throughout Advent, we've seen very clearly from the Bible, that Jesus is
- God in skin
- God making himself known
- God with us
- God dealing with our sin...
- And finally today –
- Jesus is God – the Saviour of the World.
- Let me ask you – does the world need saving?
- What might the world need saving from?
- We are in all kinds of mess... we don't have to look far.
- As we look at that Gospel reading from Luke this Christmas – I want to deal very briefly with
 1. **joy and peace** – vv6-14
 2. **news worth sharing** – vv15-21
- So...

1. JOY AND PEACE

- Nowadays people make announcements about the birth of their **baby** mostly on **social media**... I'm not even sure if they have a birth sections in newspapers now do they?...
- But **the** announcement of THIS baby's birth – was like no other
- in an economy of words, Luke just tells us the **facts**...
- *And there were shepherds living out in the fields nearby...*
- Unlike today - shepherds... were at the **bottom** of the **social scale** – **they were** isolated **socially** and **religiously**... ..
- Yet when God dispatches his angelic hosts to announce the coming into the world of his **eternal Son**, it is to the **fields** he sends them – not the **palaces**, not the **parliaments**, or the **Caesars**, or the **high priests**...
- ...but to **shepherds**... //
- God arranges his **own** celebration... a **heavenly** choir to **fill** the night sky and give **songs of celebration**... what do we read in Hebrews 1? – *when God brings his **first born** into the **world** – **let all God's angels worship him!!***

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- And **you** know the announcement **well**: *Do not be afraid. I bring you good news that will cause great joy for all the people.*¹¹ *Today in the town of David a Saviour has been born to you; he is the Messiah, the Lord.*
- Good news of great joy... a **saviour**, the **messiah**, the **Lord**!
- Into the mess of our world – comes a profound gift of a man who will change the **calendar** and change the **world**!
- ...in **fulfilment** of God’s promises
- ...out of SO much **love** for the **world**...
- ...so that **whoever** believes in him will **not perish** but **have eternal life**...////
- The world **needs** good news doesn’t it? //
- It’s **crying out** for good news!!
- The ever changing impact of **COVID-19**; tensions with **China**, the impact of **climate change** – *however* you think that change is occurring...
- **Murder** on our **streets**...
- **Strained** relationships in our **families**...
- **Drought** and **bushfire**; **plague** and **flood**...
- **Ice** addiction... young people **destroying** their **lives** – and **with** them, their **families**. //
- The world needs a **Saviour**... a **messiah**...
- And the world needs to **return to** and **bow to** and **surrender** and **submit** to the **Lord of Lords**! ///
- Yes, this **GOOD NEWS** does bring **GREAT JOY** – to **anyone** and all who would **embrace** it... //
- The joy comes when you realise that to the mess of the world – and the mess of our own lives – there is an answer – there’s hope – there IS a future! //
- I hope you know **something** of that **JOY** today ///
- But can I ask you about the **PEACE**?
- It’s when the choir of angels joins the **first** angel and they add in song... *Glory to God in the highest heaven, and on earth **peace** to those on whom his favour rests*
- “**Peace on earth**”
- Such a **misunderstood promise**...
- This proclamation does **NOT** mean there’s going to be **no more war**!
- Jesus himself tells his disciples – *nation will rise against nation – there will be **wars** and **rumours of wars**!*
- So the angelic choir was **not** suggesting that as a result of the arrival of the baby in this manger, there was going to be **peace on earth**! //
- If **that** was the message, we’d have to say Christianity was a downright **failure**! /
- But this phrase doesn’t **mean** that... and never **did**!
- Nor does it mean some dimension of **personal** or **psychological tranquillity** whereby individuals are removed from life’s **disappointments** and **shocks** and **tragedies**
- Again we’d have to be honest and say that if **that** were the message it was a downright **failure**...

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- ...because we still experience **fear**, we still experience **disappointment**, we still experience **pain** and **illness** and **anxiety disorders**... ///
- No, the **peace** of which the angels **sing**...
- ...is peace **WITH God**... through the forgiveness of sins...
- **THAT'S** the peace this little baby born in Bethlehem will bring...
peace with God – the end of hostility between us and him
NOW remember – this can NOT come about a result of our best endeavours!
- **WE can't** make peace with **God**!! //
- **That's why we needed a Saviour!**
- Think about this... there is an hostility between the **creator** and the **creature** – entirely of the creature's making... that we the **creatures cannot fix**! //
- **Religion's** answer is '**try a little harder**' ...
- But in the end... no one can **keep it up**... and some people are just not interested in **trying**!
- So... this peace **cannot** be created by our own **best efforts** / – but here's the **solution**:
Christ's mission was to establish this peace. //
- how does this Jesus in a manger make peace? /
- Well he doesn't make peace in the **manger**.
- He makes **peace** by his **blood** shed on the **cross**. ////
- Let me ask you – do **you** know that peace?
- Do you **have** that peace? //
- You might say 'well Mark, I'm doing my **best**'.
- That's not what I asked. //
- I asked whether you have this **peace**.
- The **absolute** **peace** that **floods** your heart when you have the **assurance** that your **sins** are **forgiven**...
- **THIS** is **good news of great joy**... this is what it is... that a **Saviour has come**... to **save** us from **sin** and **death**... and make **peace** with God for us which we could **never** do on our **own**... //

2. NEWS WORTH SHARING

- Well somewhat briefly now...
- What was the **reaction** to this announcement?
- The shepherds made a decision to go to **Bethlehem**
- and by **whatever** means they **found** the baby – and I want you to note **two** things the shepherds did after that...
- First.. they **spread the word**... not just that they'd seen a **beautiful baby** – nothing too remarkable about that – v17 – *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.*
- they spread the word: concerning what had been **told them** about this **child**... //

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- They were telling others, what the **angel** had told **them**... **good news of great joy** – a **Saviour**, the Messiah, the Lord!! - peace ///
- When **you** hear good news, you don't need a **training program** to tell **others**...
- Did you tell someone you had a **good report** from the **oncologist**?
- Did you tell someone you **passed** the **exam**?
- did you **tell** someone you're **engaged**?
- Did you **tell** someone you and your child have been **reconciled**?
- Did you tell someone you got that **job** or that **promotion**?
- Of **course** you **did**...! // no one **told** you to do it... no one **trained** you in **HOW** to do it...
- What **not** tell someone **good news of great joy**? –
that in **Jesus** we have a **Saviour**...!
that **sin** can be **forgiven**..
that we can be sure of our **eternal future**...!?? That there's **light** for this world's **darkness**?
That we can be at **peace** with **God**?? ///
- And the **second** thing the shepherds did?
- V20 - *The shepherds returned, **glorifying and praising God** for all the things they had **heard and seen**, which were **just** as they had been **told**!*
- If you have no **joy** this morning in **Jesus**... if you have no **peace** in your heart... if you're not **humbled** by and **grateful** for all that God has **done** for you in **Jesus**... Then perhaps you haven't yet **understood** the **good news of Jesus – the good news of Christmas!** – and I urge you then to take every opportunity in 2022 to learn more – to read right through Luke or Mark – and seek you get your head around the reality of who Jesus is and why he came //
- I'm nearly finished –
- Have a wonderful Christmas – celebrating this good news of great joy – this peace Jesus came to bring between the creatures and the Creator...
- And just as the shepherds joy-filled reaction was to tell **others** and **praise God**...
- ...surely when **WE** have really **grasped** how **GOOD** the **good** news is?
- ...**WE** will **tell others**... and we'll **praise God**...!
- *I bring you good news that will cause great joy for all the people.* ¹¹ *Today in the town of David a Saviour has been born to you; he is the Messiah, the Lord.*