

# HOPE

## 1<sup>ST</sup> ADVENT – LUKE 2:8-20

### STARTING THE DISCUSSION...

Hope seems to be out of fashion. No one really expects things to get better, we are mostly just hoping that things don't get worse! And after a year like the one we have just been through it is hard to blame people. We have had floods, pandemics, and division, what hope is there? But it is into our hopeless situation that the birth of Jesus is such good news! God entered our world when we had no reason to hope for something better. We were trapped and lost in sin with no hope for anything better, but into our hopeless world Jesus was born. A small child but a Jesus is the hope of something greater yet to come and the birth of Jesus signals that our hope is genuine. We can expect better things that are still to come. We have the hope of heaven because two thousand years ago, God sent his Son into the world to redeem us! Praise God!

### KEY TEXT: LUKE 2:8-20

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<sup>8</sup> And in the same region there were shepherds out in the field, keeping watch over their flock by night. <sup>9</sup> And an angel of the Lord appeared to them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were filled with great fear. <sup>10</sup> And the angel said to them, "Fear not, for behold, I bring you good news of great joy that will be for all the people. <sup>11</sup> For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, who is Christ the Lord. <sup>12</sup> And this will be a sign for you: you will find a baby wrapped in swaddling cloths and lying in a manger." <sup>13</sup> And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host praising God and saying,



<sup>14</sup> “Glory to God in the highest,  
and on earth peace among those with whom he is pleased!”  
<sup>15</sup> When the angels went away from them into heaven, the shepherds said  
to one another, “Let us go over to Bethlehem and see this thing that has  
happened, which the Lord has made known to us.” <sup>16</sup> And they went with  
haste and found Mary and Joseph, and the baby lying in a manger.  
<sup>17</sup> And when they saw it, they made known the saying that had been told  
them concerning this child. <sup>18</sup> And all who heard it wondered at what the  
shepherds told them. <sup>19</sup> But Mary treasured up all these things, pondering  
them in her heart. <sup>20</sup> And the shepherds returned, glorifying and praising  
God for all they had heard and seen, as it had been told them.

**Additional Texts:** *Isaiah 7:13-14, Micah 5:2, Daniel 7:13-14, Matthew 5:3,*

## UNDERSTANDING THE WORD

1. Look at the Old Testament verses listed above and see how they relate to the birth of a child that these angels are now announcing. What should they have been expecting?
2. Vs 14 is the angel's exclamation of what is taking place at the birth of Jesus, what do we learn about the coming of Jesus from them?

## APPLYING THE WORD

3. What things have distracted me from fixing my gaze on Jesus at Christmas time in the past? How can we overcome them?
4. In what ways have you held on to the wonder and beauty of the Christmas season? What areas have you allowed yourself to lose the sense of wonder at the birth of Jesus?

## PRAYING & ACTING

1. How can your life group bless someone this Christmas Season? What ways can you bless your community around you? Discuss a couple practical ways that you can do this as a group and decide one that you will do together.



2. Who is someone who doesn't know Jesus that you could invite to a Christmas Eve service this year? Discuss how you can hold one another accountable to inviting them.

