



# ADVENT #3 - GOSPEL FOR THE SHEPHERDS DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

LUKE 2

- 1 In the first few verses of Luke 1, what are some clues that the historian Luke is trying to be painfully accurate with his political and historical facts?

 Why do you think he mentions Roman emperors and governors, people of power?


- 2 In Luke 2:4-7, what new things do we learn about Joseph and Mary?


 Put yourself in the drama. How would you feel, trudging over a hundred miles because some occupation government officials wanted you to register so they could tax you and, if you are a man, possibly draft you into their army?

 Look again at verse 7. What different emotions might Joseph and Mary have experienced?

- 3 Shepherds were poor, lower-class people in their society, despised by religious Jews because their work kept them away from many religious activities. Looking at Luke 2:8-14, why do you think God chose shepherds to be the first ones to hear the good news of the birth of Jesus?

- 4 In Luke 2:10, the angel talks about “good news of great joy for all people.” Look carefully at the three ways Jesus is described in verse 11. What are they?


 What would each of these have meant for poor Jewish shepherds under Roman occupation in the first century?

 Take time to ponder what each description means to us today. Why is this announcement by the angel good news?

- 5 Notice the contrast between these majestic titles for Jesus and the poor situation into which he was born in Luke 2:6-7. Why do you think Luke emphasizes this contrast?


6 **What is the reaction in heaven to the birth of Jesus according to Luke 2:13-14?**

 *What is a benefit to those on earth?*

 *“On earth peace among those whom he favors” is a different translation from the one in our traditional Christmas carols, but it is more accurate. What do you think it means?*


7 **After the angels leave, in Luke 2:15-16, what do the shepherds do?** What have they become?

8 **What is the shepherds’ first act after seeing and experiencing Jesus (Luke 2:17)?**


 *Think back to the time when you experienced good news in your life. Did you want to tell others about the good thing?*

 *If we truly experience Jesus in our lives, and thus become “witnesses” to his truth as the shepherds were, how might we respond?*

9 **Again, put yourself into the passage.** What feelings do you think Mary experienced in this passage?

 *What feelings did the shepherds experience? Note that the shepherds left glorifying and praising God (Luke 2:20).*

 *Is there anything in your life or experience right now for which you can praise God? Is there anything you are thankful for?*

 *As we close up 2016 in Community Groups, take some time to think of how God has worked in your life this year and be ready to share! Take time to ask for prayer for your particular holiday burdens. Share the character trait of God that God has made known to you this year. Consider people who have helped you spiritually and thank God for them. Share names of people you want to see come to know Christ and pray together for them. As we consider the JOY of Advent, what are things that make you rejoice in God your Savior?*

## **PRAYER REQUESTS**

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