

**CHRIST OF CHRISTMAS**

The angels herald Jesus with three titles in Luke 2:10-12: Savior, Christ, Lord. Jesus is the promised deliverer (*Savior*), the 'anointed one' (*Christ*) marked for a special purpose, and He is God come in the flesh (*Lord*). This "*good news of great joy*" is the best news ever announced: God saving His people! The promised Savior does what we cannot do for ourselves, God's divine redemptive purpose in Christ. Jesus is Lord, to whom all owe allegiance. God's promised One provides ALL that we need!

**1- GLORY** v13-14. "*And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host praising God and saying, Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace among those with whom He is pleased!*" The gospel carries such historic and cosmic importance that God amplifies and magnifies the message with resounding noise and light - a magnificent heavenly vision giving voice to the song of redemption. The angels praise the eternal, sovereign, all-knowing, all-powerful, all-holy creator, ruler of the universe. God keeps His promise of a Savior, the co-equal Son of God, "*the radiance of the glory of God and the exact imprint of His nature, and He upholds the universe by the word of His power*" (Hebrews 1:1-4).

**2- PEACE** v13-14. The Son of God has humbled Himself, taking the form of a servant, being born in the likeness of men (Philippians 2:7), because the fullness of time has now come, and God has sent His Son to be born of a woman in order to redeem His people (Galatians 4:4-7). This good news is not for angels but for mankind, who are created in God's image yet rebelled against Him, so that we require a Savior. The armies of heaven announce the peace of heaven to now be upon the earth, with the cessation of hostility against God Almighty. Those with whom He is pleased is not every person, but any and all those of mankind who receive the Prince of Peace (Isaiah 9:6), now descended from heaven to earth as a babe in a manger. Will you receive Jesus as your Lord & Savior - and receive peace with God?

**3- HURRY** v15-16. When the angels went away from them into heaven, the shepherds said to one another, "*Let's go over to Bethlehem and see this thing that has happened, which the Lord has made known to us.*" God spoke through angelic messengers the good news for all mankind, revealed to the poor and needy. They hurry to respond, to receive and experience the Prince of Peace announced by God. Are you seeking Jesus too? "*And they went with haste and found Mary and Joseph, and the baby lying in a manger*" just as God said. And with the miraculous conception of Jesus, God provided a real human birth and real-life family. His parents descended from King David who had grown up nearby as a shepherd boy. The shepherds find the Shepherd-King, Jesus, King of Kings, lying in a shepherd's stone feeding trough, prefiguring His impending tomb. Are you as anxious as they, to come to Jesus today?

**4- AMAZED** v17-18. "*And when they saw it, they made known what had been told them concerning this child. And all who heard it were amazed at what the shepherds told them.*" Specifically, He whom the angels announced - "*good news of a great joy - a Savior, who is Christ the Lord*" - the promised "*Good Shepherd*" Messiah of the Lord, who would save His people from their sins. Jesus "*Jehovah saves*" - the lamb of God who comes in the fullness of time, born of a woman, just as God had promised, to take away the sin of the world. Trust in Jesus Christ today, to become a re-born adopted child of God. Then, like the angels and shepherds, tell everyone around you the Good News about love and life through Jesus!

**5- HEART** v19-20. "*Mary treasured up all these things, pondering them in her heart. And the shepherds were glorifying and praising God, for all they had heard and seen, as it had been told them.*" God is as good as His Word, keeping all His promises, in the fullness of time. And He is worthy of eternal praise and glory, as Lord of Lords and King of Kings. Many people witnessed the birth of Jesus in Bethlehem, and heard first-hand testimony from those who experienced angelic announcement. All those who personally received Him became re-born adopted children of God (John 1:11-13; 3:3-8). "*The Word became flesh, and dwelt among us*" says John 1:14 - the foremost miracle in human history, as God comes to dwell with mankind, as a man, Son of Man and Son of God - to recreate children of God by grace through faith.

**6- TRUST** - Jesus Christ has been born once, so that you may be born again, spiritually - to receive His eternal spiritual life, along with reconciliation to God as you become a new creation in Christ. Born again from above by the Holy Spirit, you put all your trust in Jesus Christ, as your Lord and Savior, and receive His new life. Then you will live to give glory to Him, who gives you loving forgiveness and life-changing new salvation life. Like the angels and shepherds, you will share this good news about Jesus Christ with everyone around you! Because you will be living out His life through yours - all by His power within you!

**7- HOPE** - When Jesus Christ comes again, as He promised, it will also be in exceeding great glory. And all who put their trust in Him will dwell with Him in glory forever, in fulfilling circumstances beyond anything that we can imagine. Rejoice in Him today! And realize that what He is, and who we are in Him, extends far beyond any momentary troubles we experience in this brief earthly existence - as we are being prepared for eternal glory with Him, the Lord who lives and reigns now and forever! □