



## Message Discussion Guide Week of December 24, 2023

**Message:** Christmas: The Real Story, Part 4: The First Christmas Carol

**Key Scriptures:** [Luke 2:1-20](#)

**Preachers:** Pastor Tom Parkinson

### Message Highlights:

Do you believe in angels? According to a recent study, seven out of ten American adults believe in angels, though what people believe about angels varies widely.

There are 300 references to angels in the Bible

- The Hebrew and Greek words used for “angel” both mean “messenger.” Angels are God’s messengers.
- There are two types of angels in the Bible
  - Human – angels who are human beings that deliver God’s message (i.e. the three angels that visit Abraham in Genesis 18).
  - Spiritual – angels created by God and sent from heaven to deliver God’s message (i.e. the angels in the Christmas story).

It is impossible to understand the Christmas story without the angels. The angels are the interpreters of what earthly events mean from the perspective of heaven.

- A teenage girl pregnant out of wedlock in the first century is sad and tragic. It is the angel who helps us see that it is good news.
- A baby born into such poverty that he needs to be laid in a manger is heartbreaking. It’s the angel who helps us see that this baby changes the world.

The angels that appear on Christmas night are the “heavenly host,” God’s angel army sent to do spiritual battle against the evil powers of this world. Their weapon is the song they sing:

- They sing “glory to God.” Glory means heaviness or weightiness. To give God glory means to acknowledge that God’s actions and words outweigh everything else.
- Their song announced peace – deep and abiding peace.
- Their song is for everyone – all humanity finds favor with God.

The best thing we can do this Christmas is to be an angel by allowing our lives to sing the song of praise with the angels, giving God glory, and receiving God’s peace.

**Discussion Questions:**

- 1.) Do you believe in angels? What do you believe about angels? What role have angels played in your faith?
- 2.) Pastor Tom shared that the Bible references two types of angels: human and spiritual.
  - a. Have you ever encountered someone who you think was a human angel? Do you think it is possible for normal people to deliver messages from God?
  - b. There are so many appearances of spiritual angels in the Bible. Do you believe such appearances still happen today?
- 3.) Read [Luke 2:1-20](#), with a special focus on verses 13-14
  - a. What have you learned about the birth of Jesus that you didn't know before this series?
  - b. Which details in the story of Christ's birth are most meaningful to you? Why?
  - c. What is the role of the angels in the story of Christ's birth?
- 4.) What does it mean to give glory to God? Why is it so important to sing praise to God? Which praise songs/carols are most meaningful to you?
- 5.) What is your primary takeaway from this message?

**Abundant Life Tip:** The birth of Jesus means peace has come to the world. To experience God's lasting peace, you must first have peace with God through a relationship with Jesus Christ.