

Series Title: **Good News for Your Soul**

Message Title: **Our Everyday Saviour**

Scripture Source: **Luke 2:9-12**

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Can You Remember?

...a time when you were startled unexpectedly and fear coursed through you? Illustrate: driving trip in Italy, narrow and winding roads, heart rate accelerates, pulse pounding...relief washes over me when we end up in secure circumstances! Fear has a way of sneaking up behind us and tapping us on the shoulder and causing us to freeze, hold our breath and wonder 'what next?'

What Kind of Fears Rattle and Reduce You?

Fear of the unknown? Fear of people...especially unfriendly ones!? Fear of uncertain circumstances? Fear of internal struggles and battles? Fear of failure? Fear of rejection? Fear of dying and death? Fear of unexpected tragedy? Fear of scarcity? What fears haunt you? Be as specific as possible.

Fear is defined as " a distressing emotion aroused by impending danger, evil, pain...whether the threat is real or imagined; the feeling or condition of being afraid...anticipation of the possibility that something unpleasant will occur...root word, sudden attack or danger...Old Norse, disaster"

Living immersed in fear reduces us, ensnares us, leaving us hampered, undermined in our ability to live a life of thoughtful, tangible expressions of love. But, there is a better way, a healthier way to think, believe and live and the Christmas story reveals hope infusing truths to be not merely acknowledged but actually believed and lived.

An Angel's Mission and Message: Luke 2:9-15

Shepherds are 'doing their thing' in the fields near Bethlehem...watching over and caring for their sheep. We learned about them last Sunday...and were reminded that whoever we are, we matter to God.

And then, without warning or announcement an angel enters their personal space. A visible presence radiates something supernatural..."the glory of the Lord shone around them..." Vs. 9 Something of the reality, magnificence, beauty, and power of the living God is seen and felt by these men. And they will never be the same! These men are terrified. Never have they experienced what is engulfing them in this unexpected moment and unlikely geography.

Angels are a well known presence in biblical history. The word 'angel' means 'messenger'. Share some information about angels: "mentioned at least 108 times in the OT and 165 times in the NT" (Christian Answers.Net)

- **The Angel's Mission:** to reveal truths about God and about humanity, from the heart of God. It begins with a clear and passionate word of instructive reassurance. "Do not be afraid." These simple and direct words reveal truth about who God is and who we are to God. God is aware of our humanity and cares deeply for us. He doesn't want us to be overcome by fear and immobilized. 'Do not be afraid.' You know how you respond to someone who is grappling with fear...you seek to comfort, to reassure the person, especially if they are vulnerable in some way. (the Lee Atwater story)

This Advent word 'angel' reminds us of God's mission to us, through the words of an angel.

Consider these verses: Joshua 1:9; Isaiah 41:10, 43:1; Psalm 27:1; Mark 6:50; John 14:27; Revelation 1:17.

What can we learn from this unsettling yet instructive moment? God cares and you matter to him. He knows your fears, the reasons behind them and he offers you the promise of himself to help you.

- **The Angel's Message: Luke 2:10-12**

With enthusiasm and great joy the angel announces "...a great and joyful event that is meant for everybody, worldwide: A Saviour has been born in David's town, a Savior who is Messiah and Master." (The Message rendering)

One who would set people free from the power and penalty of sin and enable people to relate to God as Father and live a life marked increasingly by love and active service in Jesus' name. A Saviour born to liberate people from damaging and degrading fears, one who would set people free from error and lies about who and what really matter in the journey of life. This Saviour has been born...for you!

A Message for You...and from You!

Will you believe that you can experience God's gracious and compassionate offer of salvation and new life and hope through faith in Jesus? Do you have questions or doubts? Let's talk.

What fear(s) do you need to face bravely, trusting that wherever you are, and whoever you are, there is One who is an 'everyday Saviour'. Tell him your fears. Seek to understand what is behind them and seek to face and move beyond these fears with the help of God...help often given through the voice and touch of another. Illustrate: Paul: 2 Corinthians 7:5-7

Who has been used of God to quell your fears in a meaningful way? Who is fearful in your life and could use your thoughtful words and comforting presence? _____

May our lives reveal something true about the compassionate and truthful mind and heart of God and the preciousness of people...like you and me.