

Good News. Great Joy: The first evangelicals.

Sermon Notes

December 15, 2024

This Christmas Series:

Luke 2:10b “*...Do not be afraid. I bring you good news that will cause great joy for all the people.”*

Read Luke 2:1-18

“*...they were terrified.*” (9) “*Do not be afraid...*” (10)

Encountering God is often met with fear.

Unexpected messengers can cause fear because of a lack of familiarity or strangeness of message and presence.

We often fear what we do not understand, because we do not know how it might affect us.

There is a strong propensity to fear the unknown, even for Christians.

[Illustration: 1st PLT retreat]

“*good news*” - (**euangelizō**) to evangelize, bring good tidings.

Evangelize is to proclaim, to speak of or share good news.

Evangelical- one who shares the good news.

What was the Good News?

1. The Messiah who saves had come.
 - The long prophesied coming of one who saves.
 - Saving us from the penalty of our sins. **Romans 6:23**
2. Peace will come to those His favor is shown.
 - This peace would come at a price.

Isaiah 53:5 “*But he was pierced for our transgressions, he was crushed for our iniquities; the punishment that brought us peace was on him, and by his wounds we are healed.*”
 - This peace was His message of good news.

Ephesians 2:17 “*He came and preached peace to you who were far away and peace to those who were near.*”

- This peace was what he gives to those who receive His message. “his favor upon us”

John 14:27 “*Peace I leave with you; my peace I give you. I do not give to you as the world gives. Do not let your hearts be troubled and do not be afraid.*”

Understanding the gospel will often come with further investigation. (15-16)

Proclaiming the good news comes immediately at the point of understanding and faith. (17-18)

THEY BECAME THE FIRST EVANGELICALS OF JESUS CHRIST!

All praise and glory go to God for all things we have seen and heard! (20)

Such things happen as evidence of true belief.

Consider the story of the woman at the well. John 4:1-26, 39

Jesus spoke of living water where you will never thirst again—good news!

She asked questions to understand: Where? How? Who are you?

She believed and proclaimed the good news.

John 4:39-42 “*Many of the Samaritans from that town believed in him because of the woman’s testimony, “He told me everything I ever did.”⁴⁰ So when the Samaritans came to him, they urged him to stay with them, and he stayed two days.⁴¹ And because of his words many more became believers.⁴² They said to the woman, “We no longer believe just because of what you said; now we have heard for ourselves, and we know that this man really is the Savior of the world.”*

Do you understand the good news? [[Explain peace made with God](#)]

Do you believe?

Are you an evangelical? [[Not a political movement or automatic description for believers](#)]

You are called to and favored to proclaim this good news!

Isaiah 52:7 “*How beautiful on the mountains are the feet of those who bring good news, who proclaim peace, who bring good tidings, who proclaim salvation, who say to Zion, “Your God reigns!”*

Romans 10:13-15 “*Everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved.”¹³ ¹⁴ How, then, can they call on the one they have not believed in? And how can they believe in the one of whom they have not heard? And how can they hear without someone preaching to them?¹⁵ And how can anyone preach unless they are sent? As it is written: “How beautiful are the feet of those who bring good news!”*

You proclaim what you love—“Did you see the Eagles signed Saquon!?!”

Still not there in believing this good news?

Maybe you are still skeptical and need to see and hear.

Maybe you need to do some additional investigation.

Perhaps, you are afraid of what it might mean for you.

You believe but you are not an evangelical?

Do you fear human responses? **Matthew 10:28-33**

Do you lack personal confidence in sharing? **Luke 12:11-12**

Take inspiration from the first evangelicals (shepherds and woman at the well) just share what you have seen and heard and let God take it from there.

Your oikos needs your testimony!

Benediction:

John 4:42 “They said to the woman, “We no longer believe just because of what you said; now we have heard for ourselves, and we know that this man really is the Savior of the world.”