

December 24, 2025

"I'll Be Home for Christmas"

Luke 2:1-14

Pastor Gary Hamrick



Christmas is too important to breeze by. And yet many people will walk past the nativity story with its good and joyful news of God coming to man in favor of the world's trinkets and distractions. It is time we stopped and realized what the Christmas story is all about: the Son of God entering our world to be with us, bleed for us, and rescue us.

1. **Luke 2:1-14** – “[1] And it came to pass in those days, that there went out a decree from Caesar Augustus, that all the world should be taxed. [2] (And this taxing was first made when Cyrenius was governor of Syria.) [3] And all went to be taxed, every one into his own city. [4] And Joseph also went up from Galilee, out of the city of Nazareth, into Judaea, unto the city of David, which is called Bethlehem; (because he was of the house and lineage of David:) [5] To be taxed with Mary his espoused wife, being great with child. [6] And so it was, that, while they were there, the days were accomplished that she should be delivered. [7] And she brought forth her firstborn son, and wrapped him in swaddling clothes, and laid him in a manger; because there was no room for them in the inn. [8] And there were in the same country shepherds abiding in the field, keeping watch over their flock by night. [9] And, lo, the angel of the Lord came upon them, and the glory of the Lord shone round about them: and they were sore afraid. [10] And the angel said unto them, Fear not: for, behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people. [11] For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord. [12] And this shall be a sign unto you; ye shall find the babe wrapped in swaddling clothes, lying in a manger. [13] And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host praising God, and saying, [14] Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men.” (KJV)

2. Context

- a. People often hurry past the greatest story ever told—the story of Jesus.
 - i. Jesus was born in obscure Bethlehem.
 - ii. Jesus grew up for us, to die for us, and to save us from our sins.
 - iii. **DISCUSS:** How do you avoid hurrying past the story of Jesus? What are ways you sit and dwell on the good news of the Gospel?
- b. The first Christmas
 - i. There was no room in the inn.
 1. Ceasar Augustus ordered a census to see how much he could tax those within the borders of the Roman Empire.
 2. Everyone had to return to their hometowns to be counted.

3. Because of this, Joseph and Mary had to return to the city of their ancestors, to Bethlehem, where David had been born.
4. Many others also traced their ancestry back to Bethlehem, so there was no room for Jesus' family.
- ii. Jesus' birth included natural and supernatural elements.
 1. Jesus was born to a natural woman but was conceived in a supernatural way.
 - a. Mary was a virgin. Joseph and Mary had no physical union before Jesus' birth.
 - b. Jesus is the Son of God. The Holy Spirit planted the Seed of God in Mary's womb.
 - c. **DISCUSS:** When has the Lord supernaturally visited your natural life?
 2. Jesus was born in a natural place, a "stable" or cave, but His birth announcement was supernatural.
 - a. Angels lit up the night sky.
 - b. Angels announced His coming in **Luke 2:14**, saying, "*Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, goodwill toward men!*"
3. **Luke 2:10-11** – "[10] And the angel said unto them, Fear not: for, behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people. [11] For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord." (KJV)
 - a. The angel's four messages:
 - i. Fear not
 - ii. Good news
 - iii. Great joy
 - iv. All people
 - b. Fear not
 - i. Biblical angels are majestic, mighty creatures, and can be terrifying.
 - ii. But the Biblical command is to "*fear not.*"
 1. **2 Timothy 1:7a** – "*God has not given us a spirit of fear.*"
 2. **1 John 4:18b** – "*Perfect love drives out fear.*" (NIV)
 3. **1 John 4:8b** – "*God is love.*"
 - iii. The more we trust our Prince of Peace, the less afraid we are.
 1. **DISCUSS:** How do you entrust your fears to God?
 2. **DISCUSS:** How have you seen your fears get smaller as your view of God grows larger?
 - c. Good news
 - i. There is no shortage of bad news in the world, but God brought us the good news of the Gospel.

- ii. This good news is that Christ came to save sinners.
 - 1. **1 Timothy 1:15** – *“This is a faithful saying and worthy of all acceptance, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners, of whom I am chief.”*
 - 2. **John 3:16** – *“For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life.”*
- d. Great joy
 - i. The Gospel produces great joy.
 - 1. If we understand that God loved us enough to come to our rescue, offering us the hope of heaven when we die, and properly apply that good news to our lives by accepting Christ as Lord, then we have great joy.
 - ii. Joy is greater than happiness.
 - 1. Happiness is circumstantial.
 - 2. Because happiness is subject to change, those who base their lives on happiness face emotional instability.
 - 3. Joy transcends circumstances because true joy is found in Jesus Christ.
 - 4. Because joy is based on the unchanging God, those who base their lives on the joy of the Lord enjoy a steady calm delight.
 - 5. Having joy does not mean we will never have another bad day, but that we will never have another bad day without God.
 - 6. **2 Corinthians 7:4b** – *“I am greatly encouraged; in all our troubles my joy knows no bounds.”* (NIV)
 - 7. **DISCUSS:** How have you found joy in the Lord amid difficult circumstances?
- e. All people
 - i. People are in desperate need of joy.
 - 1. People often cope quietly and suffer in silence.
 - 2. Charlie Chaplin said, “I always like walking in the rain, so no one can see me crying.”
 - ii. God’s good news of great joy offers salvation for all.
 - 1. All have sinned.
 - a. **Romans 3:23** – *“For all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God.”*
 - b. **Romans 3:10** – *“There is none righteous, no, not one.”*
 - c. Instead of being offended, we should be honest enough to be convicted.
 - d. **DISCUSS:** Why is it important to establish that all have sinned before we speak of the free gift of salvation?

2. Only perfect people enter heaven.
3. Jesus, the perfect Man, lived and died on a cross out of love for us so that those who trust in Him can join Him in heaven.
 - a. Salvation is a gift. We do not have to perform to earn God's favor.
 - b. Gifts are not the same as salaries.
 - c. While salaries are earned, gifts are free to the ones who receive them.
4. Jesus Christ is so much better than the world's performance-oriented view exemplified by Santa.
 - a. **Romans 6:23** – *"For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord."*
 - b. **DISCUSS**: How does the motivation for doing good differ between those who trust in Jesus' free gift to save them and those who trust in some form of works-based salvation?
5. We all want to belong, and Jesus offers us the opportunity to be part of His family. The choice is up to us.
 - a. **DISCUSS**: How does knowing you belong to the family of God impact how you treat the children of God?

* Unless noted, all Scriptures quoted are from the New King James (NKJV)