

Sermon Series: Bethlehem's Light Still Shines  
Title: In the Darkness of Uncertainty, There is the Light of Wonder  
Text: Luke 2:17-20  
Date: December 30, 2007

Theme: Jesus is our eternal hope, even in the midst of our uncertain world.

*Opening Illustration: Camp sunrise in the Oregon Coastal Range*

### **Christmas Day is done.**

- That Christmas feeling may be over. It's just an action that we've completed.
- Is there a sense of relief? Feeling of let-down because nothing more came of it?
- Did you have the opportunity to sit in awe of Christmas? Did you let Christmas burn in your heart? Or do you have a bit of a let-down feeling because nothing more came of it?
- Sitting on this side of Christmas, what does it mean for you today? ...tomorrow? ...next week or month? ....the rest of this year? Does the uncertainty of the future get in the way of Christmas lasting for more than a day?
- Theme: In the darkness of uncertainty, there is the light of wonder.

### **The first Christmas lasted more than just a day.**

#### **Luke 2:17-20**

*When they had seen him, they spread the word concerning what had been told them about this child, and all who heard it were amazed at what the shepherds said to them. But Mary treasured up all these things and pondered them in her heart. The shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all the things they had heard and seen, which were just as they had been told.*

- Shepherds
  - Uncertainty: low end of society, wondering about the angels message
- Those that heard the shepherd's message
  - Uncertainty: listening to the shepherds message (which couldn't be admissible even in court)
- Mary
  - Uncertainty: Teenage mother, first child, just married, mom of the Son of God

### **What lessons can we see from this account:**

**Let the song of the angels continue to fill your heart.**

#### **Luke 2:10-14**

*Do not be afraid. I bring you good news of great joy that will be for all the people. Today in the town of David a Savior has been born to you; he is Christ the Lord. This will be a sign to you: You will find a baby wrapped in cloths and lying in a manger." Suddenly a great company of the heavenly host appeared with the angel, praising God and saying, "Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace to men on whom his favor rests.*

- The message of the angels filled the shepherds with joy, so much that they immediately took action, found the baby and forgot about societal norms as they testified to Christ's birth
- *Illustration: Shut-in's peanuts*
- Easy to forget about Christmas' Joy in today's material driven world.

## Let the light of the star continue to shine in you.

- *In him was life, and that life was the light of men. The light shines in the darkness, but the darkness has not understood it. (John 1:4-5)*
- Jesus is the Light of the World
- *Illustration: Creating Darkness*
- *Illustration: Black Death Christmas Eve in Goldberg, Germany*
- Jesus lights our lives with his love, grace and forgiveness, which is then reflected back to those we come in contact with.  
*For you were once darkness, but now you are light in the Lord. Live as children of light (for the fruit of the light consists in all goodness, righteousness and truth) and find out what pleases the Lord. (Ephesians 5:8-10)*

*You are the light of the world. A city on a hill cannot be hidden. Neither do people light a lamp and put it under a bowl. Instead they put it on its stand, and it gives light to everyone in the house. In the same way, let your light shine before men, that they may see your good deeds and praise your Father in heaven. (Matthew 4:14-16)*

## Let the wonder of his birth continue to transform you.

- Shepherds
  - *"They spread the word concerning what had been told them about this child..."*
  - *The shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all the things they had heard and seen*
- Those that heard the shepherd
  - *"...and all who heard it were amazed at what the shepherds said to them."*
- Mary
  - *"But Mary treasured up all these things and pondered them in her heart."*
- Us
  - *"...count yourselves dead to sin but alive to God in Christ Jesus. Therefore do not let sin reign in your mortal body so that you obey its evil desires." (Romans 6:11-12)*
  - *And we, who with unveiled faces all reflect the Lord's glory, are being transformed into his likeness with ever-increasing glory, which comes from the Lord, who is the Spirit. (2 Corinthians 3:18)*