

Christmas at Flatirons - Week 2

Jim Burgen

December 12, 2021

Group Creed

We come together as a Group with the goal of Spiritual Formation--encouraging one another to become the same kind of person that Jesus is, so that we can live out every part of our lives inside of His Kingdom.

// Bible References

Luke 2:8-20; 1 Corinthians 1:27-31; Ephesians 1:4; 1 Peter 1:20.

// Message Summary

This week's message from Pastor Jim Burgen is the second in our series of Christmas at Flatirons. Last week, we looked at the *why* behind the Christmas story. We found the reason behind God sending His Son, Jesus, to live on earth among us was simply this: love. God loved you and I so much that He initiated a rescue plan to save us from our own brokenness and sin, and this rescue plan required God Himself to put on flesh and walk among us. This week we unpacked the *what* behind the Christmas story. If the Christmas story is true, what are the implications? As we learned from the description of the angels announcing the news of Jesus' birth to the shepherds, the Christmas story means that God has made Himself available to all of us, regardless of our perceived ranking in life, level in the social hierarchy, or rung on the ladder of society.

// Biblical and Historical Context

The area around Bethlehem, where Jesus was born, was prime pasture land for sheep. As such, shepherds would tend to their flock there day and night, year round. The sheep from the area were frequently used as sacrifices in the temple at Jerusalem. To be a sacrifice, a sheep had to be perfect and without blemish (Leviticus 1:3). The sacrifice would be a temporary covering of sins for the Israelites, and would likely be met with a mixture of joy and despair: yes, their sins had been forgiven, but the effect would be short term. Into this environment, the angel announced the arrival of the perfect One who could and would bring the ultimate, permanent and absolute atonement: Jesus, the Son of God.

// Community Questions

1. Imagine you're a casting director for an upcoming Hollywood blockbuster. Who do you cast as the hero who courageously saves the day, and why?
2. When have you come to the rescue, pulled the kitten from the tree, helped the grandma across the street, or otherwise saved the day for someone else? Share the story!

// Discussion Questions

1. As a group, read Luke 2:8-12. Share something that stands out to you.
2. Why did the angels begin by saying, "Do not be afraid"?
3. Jim spoke about how God's plan to announce His Son's arrival was very different to how he would have brought the news.

Describe a time when God's plans did not align with yours. What happened?

4. The story of Christmas tells us that we don't have to do this life alone. Yes, we still have to do it, but we can choose to do it with or without Christ. What area of your life still needs to be done *with* Christ? What could you do today to begin that journey with Him?
5. Why does God often use the humble and the lowly to bring about His plans? What does that tell you about Him?

// Challenge

A daily challenge for us all is to continue to join God in what He is doing in our world. NextGen ministries is our church's way of supporting the next generation from the cradle to college. Consider whether you would be able to support the work God is already doing in the lives of children, students, college students and parents in NextGen. There are a wide range of volunteer and giving opportunities available at flatironschurch.com/nextgen.