

MAIN POINT

Through the advent of Christ, we no longer have to fear because He has made the way to restoration with God.

INTRODUCTION

What is the most interesting or special gift you have ever been given?

What do you consider to be the best gift you have ever given to someone else?

We all like to give someone we love a special and distinctive gift. Among the many blessings of Christmas is the ability to share gifts with family and friends. Maybe your shopping has been done for weeks or months, or maybe all your shopping still lies ahead of you. Most of us look forward to this time spent with those we love the most sharing the gift we have in and for each other. In sending Jesus as the Savior, God gave the world a unique and irreplaceable gift—His one and only Son. As today's text reminds us, our response to this gift should be rejoicing and not fear.

DISCUSSION

> **READ LUKE 2:1-10.**

How did Mary and Joseph demonstrate faithfulness to God in these verses? How did God demonstrate His faithfulness?

How can we demonstrate our faithfulness to God through our obedience? What are some specific, common obstacles that keep you from everyday obedience?

How does living faithfully for the Lord demonstrate praise to Him?

How do you typically respond when you know God is at work but you're not sure what He's doing? Explain.

What helps us follow the Lord in obedience even when we don't know the details? How is this connected with fear in our lives?

How did the shepherds respond at the appearance of the angel and the heavenly host? Why might they have been afraid?

How is the absence of fear connected to rejoicing?

Why has Jesus given us reason to rejoice instead of fear? How does this impact your life on a daily basis?

How might we seek to train our minds toward rejoicing and trusting over fear?

What did the angel of the Lord mean in saying that the good news he brought was "for all the people"? How does this continue today?

APPLICATION

What is winning out in your life generally--fear or joy? Why do you think that is? How might you seek to make way for more joy?