



*Joy* - Ephesians 2:8-11

When the angels announced the birth of Jesus there were two key, yet very different emotions at play. The immediate reaction of the shepherds was fear.

Of course, they were afraid. They were minding their own business and just keeping their sheep safe. There was no plan for a light show to take place in the sky above them. Why wouldn't they be afraid?

Yet, in the midst of their fear, the angel of the Lord tells them to "Fear not" and brings to them a message of "great joy." The long-awaited Messiah was here! That truly was news that brought with it great joy. Christ the Lord had come. The hope of the nations (Matthew 12:21) was born as a baby in Bethlehem and the shepherds were the first invited to visit this special family. They would receive the privilege to be among the first to see and experience the joy of the coming of the Messiah. Time to celebrate!

Now that is Joy!

*Thoughts for Reflection*

What brings you joy this Advent season?

8 And in the same region there were shepherds out in the field, keeping watch over their flock by night.

9 And an angel of the Lord appeared to them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were filled with fear.

10 And the angel said to them, "Fear not, for behold, I bring you good news of great joy that will be for all the people.

11 For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, who is Christ the Lord.

12 And this will be a sign for you: you will find a baby wrapped in swaddling cloths and lying in a manger."