

# Good Tidings of Great Joy!

Luke 2:1-14

Well, the announcement of more taxes did not seem like good news! Having to travel with a late-term pregnant wife and giving birth in a place for animals probably did not seem like great joy. But somehow good news and great joy was going to come out of all this.

The angelic announcement to the shepherds, in Luke 2:10, started with four very important parts: “**Fear not**”; “**Good tidings**”; “**Great joy**”; “**All people**.” Fear has been a great tool of the Devil throughout human history (Hebrews 2:14-15). We now have a way to overcome fear (I John 4-19; Romans 8:15; II Timothy 1:7). With reference to “All people”, the event being announced is not limited to a few shepherds or Bethlehem or even the entire nation of Israel. The Gospel of Christ is of world-wide importance (Genesis 12:1-3; John 3:16; I Timothy 4:10; I John 2:2). In today’s message, we want to focus on the other two points: “**Good tidings of great joy**.”

**Good Tidings** – This expression means “Good News” or “Gospel.” From the Greek language we get the word “Evangelism.” This news is meant to be shared / told to others.

In Romans 1:1-3 it is called “The Gospel of God” (cp. I Timothy 1:11 “The blessed God”). This gospel is God’s story, which He began to tell through the prophets (Romans 1:2 cp. 16:25-27). It is the gospel “Concerning His Son” (Romans 1:3 cp. I John 5:10).

In Ephesians 1:13 it is the “Gospel of your salvation.” It is of great personal importance. In Romans 16:25, Paul calls it “My gospel.” It is to be shared in a personal way.

The “**Good tidings**” is also called the “Glorious Gospel” (II Corinthians 4:4; I Timothy 1:11); the “Eternal Gospel” (Revelation 14:6); the “Gospel of grace” (Acts 20:24); the “Gospel of peace” (Romans 10:15; Ephesians 6:15); and the “Gospel of the Kingdom” (Matthew 4:23; 9:35; 24:14). These aspects of the gospel are summarized well in Isaiah 52:7.

**Great Joy** – Joy is a matter of delight and gladness. It is something which causes joy and rejoicing. This joy is based on facts and on relationship. So, it is not just the stirring of emotions and feelings.

In Romans 5:11 we have “Joy in God through our Lord Jesus Christ.” Read verses 1:11 and you will see that joy is not based on circumstances, but on a positive relationship (cp. I Peter 1:3-8).

In Romans 14:17 we see that joy is through the work of the Holy Spirit (cp. Galatians 5:22-23). It also is in the context of believing the Scriptures (Romans 15:13). This joy also develops with a relationship with other believers (Philippians 1:1-3; 2:2,17-18; 4:1; III John 4). The joy which is produced by the Holy Spirit causes us to take pleasure in the will of God (Hebrews 12:2 cp. Matthew 26:51-54). See also James 1:2-8; I Thessalonians 5:18.

**So, what makes you joyful? What would be the reason you don’t have joy right now? What can you do to have joy in this life? How can you share this joy with others?**