

DISCUSSION GUIDE  
DECEMBER 16 & 17

# ANGELS

HEARING GOD THIS CHRISTMAS

 pathwaychurch

FOLLOWING JESUS • IN COMMUNITY • FOR OTHERS

# Angel to Shepherds

LUKE 2:9-20 | WEEK 4

## Opening Questions

1. Do you have any memories of the Christmas season that are extremely painful or sad? What made it difficult or challenging?
2. Have you ever heard of or experienced an act of kindness, compassion, or thoughtfulness that made it easier for someone who was struggling during Christmas? Did it require a great sacrifice and effort on their part—or was it simple and plain?

## In the Word

1. Luke is the only writer to record the accounts of Mary and the shepherds, neither of whom could claim a prestigious position or high status in the eyes of their culture. What do you make of this?
2. Shepherds were considered unclean (ceremonially) and not always trusted. But notice how people reacted to the shepherds in [Luke 2:18](#). Do you see any reason to believe that their testimony made it any farther than the edge of town? Do you think others believed them?
3. [Luke 2:19](#) tells us that Mary treasured all these things and pondered them in her heart. [Read the verses before verse 19](#) and discuss—what was it that she was pondering? What are “these things”?
4. [Luke 2:51](#) tells us that when Jesus was 12, He was accidentally left behind in Jerusalem. They found Him listening and asking questions of the teachers, which was a common Jewish way of teaching as well as learning ([verses 46 and 47](#)). It tells us again that Mary treasured all these things, even if she didn’t understand all His words ([verses 50 and 51](#)). What do you think she treasured here?

5. Luke is usually accepted as the only writer of the New Testament who is clearly non-Jewish (Gentile). Given the fierce hostility between Jews and Gentiles, do you think God might be making a point about the coming Kingdom which Jesus will build? For reference, see [Ephesians 2:11-18](#).

## **Making It Personal**

1. Have you ever looked down on someone because of their appearance, occupation, or some other quality? Do you think you need to grow in this area?
2. Suffering, depression, and other struggles can make Christmas a difficult time for many. Describe a time in your life, or the life of someone you know, when personal difficulty eventually became a blessing to others.
3. The shepherds immediately sought out the situation they'd been told about. Can you think of a time when you've encountered a word from God, but struggled to respond due to pride or apathy?
4. Has God ever surprised you with a message (or a learning experience) that changed the way you thought and acted? Was it difficult to respond and change? What emotions did you experience?

## **Additional Notes**