

# Fear Not, Shepherds!

Luke 2:8-20

## Opening Question

1. When you think of the phrase “*fear not*” in the Christmas story, what images or emotions come to mind? Why do you think fear is such a strong theme at the beginning of Jesus’ life?
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## Observing the Text (Luke 2:8–20)

2. What words or phrases in this passage signal fear or anxiety? What words or actions signal joy, peace, or love?
  3. Why do you think the angels’ first words to the shepherds are “*Do not be afraid*” (v.10)? What does that suggest about human reactions to God’s presence?
  4. How are the shepherds described socially and economically in the first-century world? Why might their role matter for understanding this story?
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## Fear Meets Love

5. The shepherds are “terrified” (v.9), yet by the end of the story they are praising God (v.20). What changes between those two moments?
6. How does the *good news* the angels proclaim address the shepherds’ fear—not just emotionally, but spiritually?
7. In what ways does God’s love show up *before* the shepherds do anything to earn it?

Optional cross-reference: Read 1 John 4:18 together.

**How do you see this truth—“perfect love drives out fear”—embodied in this story?**

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## The Shepherds as Models of Courageous Love

8. The shepherds go “with haste” to Bethlehem (v.16). What fears might they have had to overcome to act so quickly?
9. After seeing Jesus, the shepherds make the message known (v.17). Why do you think love leads them to speak, rather than remain silent?
10. How do the shepherds’ actions challenge the idea that courage means having no fear?

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## From Fear to Witness

11. The shepherds return to their fields, but they are changed (v.20). What stays the same in their lives—and what is different?
12. How does worship (glorifying and praising God) become a response to fear rather than an escape from reality?
13. What does this passage teach us about who God entrusts with the good news of Jesus?

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## Personal Reflection & Application

14. Where do you see fear at work in your own life right now—fear of inadequacy, uncertainty, rejection, or loss?
15. How might receiving God’s love more deeply help you respond differently to that fear?
16. Is there a step of obedience, testimony, or trust God may be inviting you to take—like the shepherds—even while fear is still present?