



**Key Texts:**

Luke 2:8-20

**Key Challenge:**

Every ounce of joy in our lives should remind us of the one who provided that joy.

[Leader note: Begin the message with an illustration about a time when you or someone else were surprised by really good news; when the entire perception of your life was altered by some news. Below, you'll see the story of when my wife told me that I was going to be a father. If you cannot find an illustration, feel free to use mine as something that happened to your friend, Timothy.]

**The Real:** About ten years ago I was interning at a church, learning the ropes of all things Student Ministry. My wife and I had been married for about three months, and we were just excited to start this new adventure together. It was a fun season of life. We were young and in love. It was just the two of us, and it was awesome!

One night while I was at youth group, my wife called me and shared some news with me that would change our lives forever. I remember standing behind the soundboard in the youth room when my phone started to buzz. Youth Group hadn't started yet, and everyone was just hanging out. I answered the phone casually not expecting any sort of life-altering news. She asked me how my night was going and if I happened to be sitting down at the moment. I could tell something was up. Her voice began to shake. I asked her if everything was ok. She started crying on the other end of the phone. I couldn't tell if they were tears of joy or sadness. Then she said the words that changed my life forever, "You're going to be a daddy."

I could not believe what I just heard. She was crying tears of joy and in the back of the youth room my emotions took over. I started to pace. Thoughts were just racing through my mind. I had been looking forward to this moment since I was a little kid; I just wasn't expecting it so soon. I was completely overwhelmed with joy. I literally could not control myself in that moment. Suddenly, I started sprinting around the room like a mad man.

The youth pastor at the time asked what was going on. I told him I couldn't breathe. I literally could not contain the amount of joy that was inside of me.

**The Rub:** What is THE BEST news you have ever received? What kind of emotions did you experience when you got this news? Maybe the best news you received was when your parents told you that you were going to be a big brother or sister (or maybe that was the worst news you have ever received). Maybe the best news you have ever received was finding out you actually passed that test that you completely forgot about and did not study for at all. Maybe you finally landed a job after countless interviews. Or maybe just last month you got that early acceptance letter to the school of your dreams. How sweet was that phone call from your new boss telling you that you got the job? How great was it when you realized that it was the thick envelope in your mailbox?

This morning we're going to be reading about some incredible news that was recorded in the book of Luke, news that would change the world forever, and news that would cause an uncontrollable amount of emotion for millions.

Luke is the longest book in the New Testament (1,121 verses). Luke wrote more verses in the New Testament than anyone else: 2128 in Luke and Acts. Paul wrote the second largest number of verses (2032). The Gospel of Luke is one of the books of the Bible that actually states the purpose of the writer. Luke said that he wrote to inform Theophilus, who was a recent convert to Christianity, about the truthfulness of the gospel that Theophilus had heard (1:4).

Joel B. Green said that:

“Luke's purpose was apparently not to provide an historical foundation for the Christian message. . . . He has 'ordered' the events of his narrative so as to bring out their significance, to persuade Theophilus—who is not so much concerned with the issue, “Did it happen?” as he was with the queries, “What happened?” and “What does it all mean?” By providing a more complete accounting of Jesus in his significance, Luke hopes to encourage active faith.”

**The Read** Let's take a look at how this news first got delivered. **And in the same region there were shepherds out in the field, keeping watch over their flock by night. Luke 2:8(ESV).**

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