

Dec 9. Fear Not.

“Fear not, for behold, I bring you good news of great joy that will be for all the people” Luke 2:10

I want us to consider this phrase: “fear not” as I’ve recently been struck by how frequently they appear in Scripture and particularly in relation to the Christmas story.

Each time an angel appears, they start off with “do not be afraid” such as to Zechariah when he met the angel in the temple who foretold him of the birth of John the Baptist. Mary, when she met the angel Gabriel who told her she was going to have a baby. Joseph, when he was wondering whether to take Mary as his wife because she was expecting. And finally the shepherds on the hillside when the angels appeared first announcing to them that Christ had been born.

That feeling of anxiousness and being worried is a common thread right now in conversations with many people I encounter and for myself at times. We all have different reasons for this whether it be related to health, employment, studies or our family.

Each person needed this phrase when they saw the angel. Let’s consider the circumstances of each before an angel appeared: Zechariah was a priest who was “advanced in years” and had no children. Mary was engaged to be married and so looking ahead to the future. Joseph had just found out his bride to-be was pregnant meaning something unexpected had happened. The shepherds in those days weren’t well paid and weren’t widely accepted in society. Can you relate to these?

So as we reflect on the Christmas story this year, let’s remember that God said “do not fear” and what was said next to each person:

“Do not fear” because like Zechariah “your prayer has been heard”.

“Do not fear” because like Mary, if we know the Saviour whom she bore, Jesus, then “we have found favour with God”.

“Do not fear” because like Joseph, we are part of God’s sovereign plan.

“Do not fear” because like the shepherds, we have good news of great joy which is for everyone, and I mean everyone, that God sent His Son, Jesus Christ, into this world to save sinners.