

December 17

Angel's Commitment

Christmas is the largest card-sending occasion in the United States, with approximately 1.9 billion cards sent to friends and loved ones. Each year Hallmark provides more than 2,200 Christmas card designs....and yet many of them fail to communicate what Christmas is really all about. You see you could get a beautiful Christmas card, even a Hallmark, and still if it has not announced the real meaning of Christmas then someone has come short of sending the very best.

The best Christmas announcement is the one that reminds us all, of that first Christmas announcement on the night Christ was born. The original Christmas announcement was sent by God and delivered by His angels. Are we sending that same announcement this Christmas?

The first week of Advent we talked about Joseph. Today, we will look at the angels.

Have you seen any angels lately?

(2) We have seen a lot about angels on television specials as well as entertainment segments. There was the feature article in USA Today about guardian angels. Time magazine devoted the cover to angels. Inside, the feature article, "Angels among Us," declared the statistic that 69 percent of Americans polled said they believed in angels.

Have you seen any angels lately?

(3) People in the Bible have. Did you know that angels are mentioned directly or indirectly nearly 300 times in the Old and New Testaments? Abraham and his aging wife, Sarah, entertain three visitors (angels) who reveal to them that they will have a son. Jacob wrestles all night with an angel in human disguise.

Samson's father, Manoah, carried on a conversation with a messenger completely unaware that he was talking to an angel, until after the messenger had disappeared.

(4) In the New Testament, angels accompany critical events in the life of Jesus.

They announce his birth, minister to him after his temptation, announce his resurrection, and attend his ascension. They assist the fledgling church at crucial times, aiding the apostles under persecution, assisting the spread of the gospel to the Gentiles, rescuing Paul and Silas from a Philippian jail.

Do you know "the reason angels can fly? (It) is because they take themselves lightly."

Have you seen any angels lately?

(5) Angels exist and act in ways to point us to Christ. When an angels shows up, you know that something amazing is happening! And that's what happened on the night Christ was born. The angels came to deliver good news. The angels came to deliver joy. The angels came to point the shepherds to Christ.

(6) "The angel said, "Don't be afraid. I'm here to announce a great and joyful event that is meant for everybody, worldwide: A Savior has just been born in David's town, a Savior who is Messiah and Lord."" (Luke 2:10)

What would have happened if the angels had decided to take a day off? What if the angels were called to duty and looked at each other and said, "Nah, that's a bit too far of a drive for a work commitment." What would have happened if they had decided to take a vacation day?

How does the story change if there are no angels? Without angels, Mary would have been very confused about the baby growing inside of her. Without angels, Joseph would have not married Mary. Without angels, the baby would not have

been born in Bethlehem and fulfilled many prophecies. Without angels there are no shepherds. Without angels, there is no one to proclaim this mighty event. Without angels, there is no one to make clear the true identity of this child born in such humble circumstances.

(7) The story goes on to say, "At once the angel was joined by a huge angelic choir singing God's praises: Glory to God in the highest heaven, and on earth peace among all who please Him." (Luke 2:13-14)

This is only the second time in the whole Bible that a group of angels rather than just one angel had appeared to people. This proved that they had a very important message to give to the shepherds.

(8) The Angels' Commitment was to call others to worship.

The announcement of the angel in each part of our Christmas story called others to worship. The greatest thing we have to celebrate this Christmas is not gifts or good food. We have more to celebrate than just the presence of family and friends.

(9) Our celebration is a call to worship that we might sing and say as the angels did that first Christmas. "Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace to men on whom his favor rests." (Luke 2:14)

(10) Or maybe your song is "Fall on our knees and hear the angel voices. Because this was a Holy Night. A Night divine."

Is that our announcement?

Is that our message?

Are we being like the angel and praising and worshiping God in the celebration of who He is and what He has done through Jesus Christ.

(11) Let this Christmas be one where we sing the story of Christmas—by our words and actions, and on our hearts.

“Come and worship,
Come and worship,
worship Christ the newborn King.”

We still have a week before Christmas. What is your Christmas announcement to others?

Is it one that calls others to join in the celebration and the worship of Him?

Our Christmas announcement and the announcement of all of our days should be nothing less than this.

(12) What announcement will you make to God and to others today and all of your days? Amen. And Glory to God in the Highest.