



Study Guide

Sermon Recap

Josh emphasizes that in life, the only certainty we face is uncertainty, which is unavoidable for everyone. He urges the congregation to reflect on their fears, particularly as they approach the holiday season, reminding them that even biblical figures faced real anxieties. He encourages individuals to trust in God's promises and presence amid their fears and stresses the importance of recognizing that God understands their struggles. Ultimately, Josh concludes that through Jesus' birth and resurrection, hope and peace are possible, even in the face of life's uncertainties.

Discussion Questions

▼ Josh discusses being surrounded by uncertainty and how everyone will face fears and troubles, especially around Christmas time.

- What are some fears or uncertainties you have experienced during the holiday season?
- How do you think these fears affect your daily life and your relationships?

Read Scripture

Luke 2:1-21 NIV

¹ In those days Caesar Augustus issued a decree that a census should be taken of the entire Roman world. ² (This was the first census that took place while^[a] Quirinius was governor of Syria.) ³ And everyone went to their own town to register.

⁴ So Joseph also went up from the town of Nazareth in Galilee to Judea, to Bethlehem the town of David, because he belonged to the house and line of David. ⁵ He went there to register with Mary, who was pledged to be married to him and was expecting a child. ⁶ While they were there, the time came for the baby to be born, ⁷ and she gave birth to her firstborn, a son. She wrapped him in cloths and placed him in a manger, because there was no guest room available for them.

⁸ And there were shepherds living out in the fields nearby, keeping watch over their flocks at night. ⁹ An angel of the Lord appeared to them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were terrified. ¹⁰ But the angel said to them, “Do not be afraid. I bring you good news that will cause great joy for all the people. ¹¹ Today in the town of David a Savior has been born to you; he is the Messiah, the Lord. ¹² This will be a sign to you: You will find a baby wrapped in cloths and lying in a manger.”

¹³ Suddenly a great company of the heavenly host appeared with the angel, praising God and saying,

¹⁴ “Glory to God in the highest heaven,
and on earth peace to those on whom his favor rests.”

¹⁵ When the angels had left them and gone into heaven, the shepherds said to one another, “Let’s go to Bethlehem and see this thing that has happened, which the Lord has told us about.”

¹⁶ So they hurried off and found Mary and Joseph, and the baby, who was lying in the manger. ¹⁷ When they had seen him, they spread the word concerning what had been told them about this child, ¹⁸ and all who heard it were amazed at what the shepherds said to them. ¹⁹ But Mary treasured up all these things and pondered them in her heart. ²⁰ The shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all the things they had heard and seen, which were just as they had been told.

²¹ On the eighth day, when it was time to circumcise the child, he was named Jesus, the name the angel had given him before he was conceived.

John 16:33 NIV

³³ "I have told you these things, so that in me you may have peace. In this world you will have trouble. But take heart! I have overcome the world."

Matthew 11:28-30 NIV

²⁸ "Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest. ²⁹ Take my yoke upon you and learn from me, for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. ³⁰ For my yoke is easy and my burden is light."

John 10:7-18 NIV

⁷ Therefore Jesus said again, "Very truly I tell you, I am the gate for the sheep. ⁸ All who have come before me are thieves and robbers, but the sheep have not listened to them. ⁹ I am the gate; whoever enters through me will be saved.^[a] They will come in and go out, and find pasture. ¹⁰ The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy; I have come that they may have life, and have it to the full.

¹¹ "I am the good shepherd. The good shepherd lays down his life for the sheep. ¹² The hired hand is not the shepherd and does not own the sheep. So when he sees the wolf coming, he abandons the sheep and runs away. Then the wolf attacks the flock and scatters it. ¹³ The man runs away because he is a hired hand and cares nothing for the sheep.

¹⁴ "I am the good shepherd; I know my sheep and my sheep know me— ¹⁵ just as the Father knows me and I know the Father—and I lay down my life for the sheep. ¹⁶ I have other sheep that are not of this sheep pen. I must bring them also. They too will listen to my voice, and there shall be one flock and one shepherd. ¹⁷ The reason my Father loves me is that I lay down my life—only to take it up again. ¹⁸ No one takes it from me, but I lay it down of my own accord. I have authority to lay it down and authority to take it up again. This command I received from my Father."

Discussion Questions

▼ In John 16:33, Jesus says, 'In this world you will have trouble. But take heart! I have overcome the world.' Josh also talks about how fear and uncertainty are part of life, but also emphasizes the message of hope found in Jesus.

- How does this verse provide comfort for you when you're facing uncertain times?
- What is an example of a time when you felt unsure, but found comfort in your faith or in a Bible verse?

▼ The people involved in the Christmas story, like Mary and Joseph, were not perfect; they experienced real fears and struggles.

- How does recognizing that biblical characters like Mary and Joseph had fears and faced uncertainty just like we do help you face your own fears?
- How can realizing that others you come into contact with in your own life have faced similar struggles help you cope with your own fears?

▼ Josh explains that while fear isn't optional, living in fear is a choice we can make, emphasizing the power to change our mindset.

- How does recognizing that living in fear is a choice help you change your perspective on challenging situations?
- What steps will you take to shift your mindset from one of fear to one of peace in the upcoming year?
- What is a specific promise from God that you hold onto during tough times?

Prayer

- Ask for prayer requests and listen to each other.
- Pray for strength to face uncertainty and trust in God's plan.
- Ask God for peace in the midst of anxiety as the holidays approach.
- Seek guidance for stepping out in faith in challenging situations throughout the week.

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