

New Life Christian fellowship

Twinkeling stars, singing angels, faith, joy and peace – the Christmas story. If we look deeper we see a different picture.

Controversy - first century scandal of a couple having a child outside marriage.

Uprooted - Caesar Augustus' census uprooted the couple, with Mary heavily pregnant, from their homes. After an arduous journey to Bethlehem, the poor travellers were turned away from the inn.

Giving birth - no midwife, in a dirty barn, surrounded by animals – not exactly cosy.

This sounds stressful, not joyful! Is this how life is for us sometimes?

Circumstances are difficult, negative thoughts overwhelm. Joy is often the last thing on our minds. In dire circumstances God says: "Good News".

Anxiety and fear threaten our faith, cancel our peace, suffocating our joy. This is not good news. How can we combat this?

When faith is under pressure because of things we don't understand, remember Mary. When Mary heard she was to be the mother of the Messiah, she was confused: "How can this be as I am a virgin?" She could have lost faith, reeled into stress, thinking: "what will people think, I will be an outcast!.." Instead she had faith saying: "Let it be to me according to your will." Mary and Joseph faced hard circumstances that seemed out of control. God was in control, this gave them joy. Mary trusted God to use all circumstances to bring about his purposes. This is what we can do too. It is not easy to trust God when things are going wrong. Remember, God is good, in control, using all things to orchestrate his purposes for the good of us who love Him.

Then there is fear, a normal human reaction. The shepherds felt fear. Angels said: "Do not be afraid for we bring great news of great joy for all people!"

Joy is a weapon we can wield against fear. Dwelling on the negative feeds fear; thinking about our blessings, remembering who God is and how He love for us, can help to combat fear. For some of us this is difficult, we may need outside help and to learn a new way of thinking, step by step. It is a constant battle. Singing praises to God, like the angels did, brings joy too.

Seeing Jesus, the shepherds fear transformed to faith, peace and joy. They were excited by Jesus' birth and went around telling everyone!

Jesus is the Good News that can keep us going in our toughest circumstances. When high winds hit holding onto Jesus' hope, seeking his peace, living in his joy, is our shelter from life's storms.

Without Jesus there is no Christmas. This is the greatest story ever told.

Kilgetty Community Christmas Carols, with free Coffee and Mince Pies – Sunday 18th December 10.45am Kilgetty Community Center – All welcome. Call 01834 831533/07827293781 if you want to talk or would like us to pray