

# Glory All Around Us

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Psalm 19 and Luke 2:1-20

Brett McBride

## Consider

The Advent season is a time where we celebrate and await the glory of God breaking into the world in an unprecedented way in the birth of Jesus of Nazareth. Glory is central to the Christmas story and to the whole story of the Bible, but what is it? How does it intersect with our lives today? Through our Advent series entitled *Brighter* we're going to focus on **glory** and deepen our understand of and participation in the glory of God.

## Let's Examine

*Read Luke 2:1-20*

As we read through Luke's account of Jesus' birth, we're going to focus in on Luke 2:8-20 and the story of the shepherds as they receive the glorious good news.

- After reading through Luke 2:8-20 again together, take some time to observe the text. What are key images, words, or phrases that stand out to you? Who are the characters? What do you wonder about? *Take some time to observe individually, jot down notes and share your observations (or questions) together.*
- Imagine you were there: you are one of the shepherds on duty on what you thought was going to be a routine night watching over your flocks. What would you be thinking, feeling, or experiencing at the appearance of the God's angelic messenger and the radiance of glory flooding the dark night around you? What does the text say the shepherds felt?
- Take a moment to highlight all the times the word "glory" appears in this passage. How is the word glory used in each of these cases?
- In Luke 2:9-10, the glory of God brings a message with **content**. What is the content of the glorious message? How is the content of the angelic message good news and a cause of great joy for all people?
- How do the shepherds respond to the news brought to them by God's angelic messengers? What do they do about it?

# Let's Apply

## Read Psalm 19

Luke 2 stands as a special manifestation of the glory-declaring heavens of Psalm 19. In both, we see the heart of God to radiate his glory into all of creation and to all peoples. God's utterly **holy** and **unique** glory is revealed to **common** shepherds. "Their voice goes out into **all** the earth, their words to the **ends** of the world..."

- Glory in the Hebrew mind has a range of meaning that includes weightiness, heaviness, significance, and splendor. Do you think the longing for glory is something that all humans share? How do you see the human longing for glory being expressed in our world and in western secular society in misguided ways?
- In Luke 2, God takes all the initiative in revealing his glory. How do you see God doing this today in the global church and in your own life? How do you see God at work revealing his glory?
- Consider the shepherds **response** to glory in verses 15-20. What do we learn from them about how we can experience and respond to God's glory today?
- In verse 20, the shepherds "glorify God". This is an act that they **do**. How can we glorify God today as people who have received and believed the good news of Jesus the Messiah?
- Think about a friend or neighbour who doesn't go to church or know Jesus. If you had to describe to them what glory is in a way they can understand, what would you say?

# Let's Pray

This Christmas season we are using our Advent Prayer Guide to pray. If you don't yet have one, you can find a digital copy here: <https://thepeopleschurch.ca/wp-content/uploads/2022/11/Brighter-%E2%80%93-Prayer-Guide-%E2%80%93-Digital-Version.pdf>

- As a group, use pages 2-6 of the *Brighter Advent Prayer Guide* to lead you into a time of prayer.
- As encouraged in the guide, pray for God's presence to come into the lives of those you know who are lonely this Christmas season.
- Spend time praying for the Lebanon Society for Education and Social Development (LSESD) using their story and information provided in the guide.
- Pray as the Spirit leads for any needs, petitions, intercessions and praises you have as a group.

*Holy Spirit, empower us with the love of the Father to join Jesus in his mission. Grow us as your body for your global mission. Through Christ we pray. Amen.*