

## NEXT STEP QUESTIONS

1. Spend seven minutes discussing this week's talk. What was the one thing that resonated with you most?
2. Read Luke 2:4-7. What were some of the stresses in this passage? Which of the stress items listed do you identify with or relate with the most?
3. What did God do about the stress Mary and Joseph were under? Read Luke 1:26-38 (Mary) and Matthew 1:18-25 (Joseph).
4. How do we know God cares for us? Read John 14:25-27. How have you seen this in your life?
5. At times we may feel like the forgotten shepherds. In those times, how can you recognize and remember that God has not forsaken you, that you matter?
6. When we have stress in our lives, what are some strategies that God gives us to cope, and act in a way that pleases God? Reflect and then read Matthew 11:28-30, 1 Peter 5:6-8, Hebrews 13:5-6, and Psalm 56:3.
7. How can you put some of those strategies into place this week and in the next year?

### Action Step:

Try to memorize 1 Peter 5:7, "Cast all your anxiety on him because he cares for you." Put this into practice this week. Think or write down the things you are stressing over. Picture yourself throwing it towards God. Remember who God is and compare Him to your stresses. Remember He cares for you and you matter.



churchontheridge.org  
35131 SE Douglas St. Snoqualmie, WA 98065

# THE Heart OF Christmas

Church on the Ridge

December 8-9, 2018  
Charlie Salmon

## The Heart of Christmas

*Above all else, guard your heart, for everything you do flows from it.*

Proverbs 4:23 NIV

### Guard your heart or else Christmas can become

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#### The Stressed Heart of Christmas

*And it came to pass in those days that there went out a decree from Caesar Augustus that all the world should be taxed. (And this taxing was first made when Cyrenius was governor of Syria.) And all went to be taxed, each one into his own city. And Joseph also went up from Galilee, out of the city of Nazareth into Judaea unto the city of David, which is called Bethlehem (because he was of the house and family of David) to be taxed with Mary his espoused wife, being great with child. And so it was that while they were there, the days were accomplished that she should be delivered. And she brought forth her firstborn son and wrapped him in swaddling clothes and laid him in a manger because there was no room for them in the inn.*

Luke 2:1-7 AKJV

*Just thinking of my troubles and my lonely wandering makes me miserable. That's all I ever think about, and I am depressed.*

**Lamentations 3:19-20 CEV**

*I have cried desperately for help, but still it does not come.*

**Psalms 22:1 GNT**

*And there were in the same country shepherds abiding in the field, keeping watch over their flock by night. And, behold, the angel of the Lord came upon them, and the glory of the Lord shone round about them, and they were sore afraid. But the angel said unto them, Fear not; for, behold, I bring you good news of great joy, which shall be to all the people. For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour, who is Christ the Lord. And this shall be a sign unto you; You shall find the babe wrapped in swaddling clothes, lying in a manger. And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host praising God and saying, Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward man.*

**Luke 2:8-14 AKJV**

**Guard your heart from \_\_\_\_\_**

*"Fear not..."*

**Luke 2:10 AKJV**

*And, behold, the angel of the Lord came upon them, and the glory of the Lord shone round about them.*

**Luke 2:9 AKJV**

*His angel guards those who honor the LORD and rescues them from danger.*

**Psalms 34:7 GNT**

*God will command his angels to protect you wherever you go.*

**Psalms 91:11 CEV**

*And we know that God causes everything to work together for the good of those who love God and are called according to his purpose for them.*

**Romans 8:28 NLT**

*Those who know your name will trust in you, for you, Lord, have never forsaken those who seek you.*

**Psalms 9:10 NIV**

**Guard your heart from \_\_\_\_\_**

*"I bring you good news of great joy."*

**Luke 2:10 ESV**

*The Lord says, "I will guide you along the best pathway for your life. I will advise you and watch over you. Do not be like a senseless mule."*

**Psalms 32:8-9 NLT**

*Make your ways known to me, O Lord, and teach me your paths. Lead me in your truth and teach me because you are God, my savior. I wait all day long for you.*

**Psalms 25:4-5 GWT**

**Guard your heart from \_\_\_\_\_**

*And there were in the same country shepherds abiding in the field, keeping watch over their flock by night.*

**Luke 2:8 AKJV**

*And this shall be a sign unto you; You shall find the babe wrapped in swaddling clothes, lying in a manger.*

**Luke 2:12 AKJV**

*When they saw the star, they were overjoyed. On coming to the house, they saw the child with his mother Mary, and they bowed down and worshiped him. Then they opened their treasures and presented him with gifts of gold, frankincense and myrrh.*

**Matthew 2:10-11 NIV**

**Guard your heart FOR \_\_\_\_\_**

*'And you, O Bethlehem, in the land of Judah, are by no means least among the rulers of Judah; for from you shall come a ruler who will shepherd my people...'*

**Matthew 2:6 ESV**