

# freshfire

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MARIO MURILLO MINISTRIES NEWSLETTER

CHRISTMAS 2016

*Great Joy*



# Great Joy

**Luke 2: 8-14** <sup>8</sup> Now there were in the same country shepherds living out in the fields, keeping watch over their flock by night. <sup>9</sup> And behold, an angel of the Lord stood before them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were greatly afraid. <sup>10</sup> Then the angel said to them, "Do not be afraid, for behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy which will be to all people. <sup>11</sup> For there is born to you this day in the city of David a Savior, who is Christ the Lord. <sup>12</sup> And this will be the sign to you: You will find a Babe wrapped in swaddling cloths, lying in a manger." <sup>13</sup> And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host praising God and saying: <sup>14</sup> "Glory to God in the highest, And on earth peace, goodwill toward men!"

**A spirit of heaviness hangs over our nation—a crushing weight of care.** There is battle-fatigue from the most grueling political campaign in American history. We have endured angry rhetoric, vile exposes, sordid details, and lies—especially lies.

We cannot shake the anxious suspicion that our nation and our rights have gone up in flames.

News of widespread violence in our streets assaults our senses daily. Foreign powers threaten us with nuclear weapons...the Cold War is heating up again.

A plethora of screens and devices nag at us to gaze at horrible events and be drained with worry.

The saints feel an enormous frustration: stupidity and wickedness got a megaphone—

wisdom and righteousness got duct tape over their mouth.

These are the times that rob inner peace, bring deep restlessness, and rinse the color and enjoyment from our lives.

We are not just exhausted...we have a weariness deep in our soul. Given all of this, how foolish is it for me to write you a letter entitled Great Joy? Great Joy?!

I can and I will! A miracle once happened that matches this moment of darkness. It is not just a great miracle—it is the message of this hour to every hurting child of God. It is the story of the angels announcing the birth of Jesus to the shepherds.

This story will remind us of powerful and urgent truths. We will remember the JOY OF THE LORD

and how it is what separates us from all other faiths. Joy is available that is stronger than our situation. For any other religion to have joy, the money must be there, the circumstances must be going right, and feelings must be right.

Not so for the child of God. For us, joy breaks out. Joy overtakes. Joy wells up and powers us at dark times. **Take away these 3 truths from the story of Christmas:**

**1. By appearing to lowly shepherds, the angels made it clear that a new power was now freely working in the earth.** Moreover, this power operates as no other power had ever operated. This power came and went as it pleased and raised the humble to be a force against the proud without swords. Love had taken



In 2016 we tore away the lies and set the captive free

on muscle and showed so gently yet irresistibly that all things were changing. A new kingdom had come and it would expand through means that made all weapons and human force futile.

**Now had come to pass what Daniel told King Nebuchadnezzar 600 years before;** *Daniel 2: 44*

*“And in the days of these kings shall the God of heaven set up a kingdom, which shall never be destroyed: and the kingdom shall not be left to other people, but it shall break in pieces and consume all these kingdoms, and it shall stand forever.”*

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**2. Christmas reminds us that God will find a way to reveal His power to hurting people.** The Kingdom of God serves the real King. The strategies, tactics and surprises of the Kingdom of God overrule, neutralize, and trump the frowning battlements of human authority.

I am talking about Christmas because I love this Holiday. Every year it speaks to me in a new way. **This year, because of our state-run news media and frenzy against God, Christmas speaks to me in a very unique way.** Christmas this year reminds me of one of the wonderful ways that the Kingdom of God insinuates itself into a sick society.

**The Three Wise Men were another sign that something outside their control was afoot.** Wisemen from Persia! It was the ultimate surprise! Everything about their surprise visit was disturbing. Herod should have known the amazing strategies that were unfolding right under

his nose. An unseen wisdom was playing him like a puppet.

It requires skill from beyond our planet to take the most anticipated person in history and sneak him in as a baby. **The Desire of all nations** came into our world unobserved with only a handful taking notice. His birth was literally obscure.

The Jews assumed that if and when the Son of God arrived, it would be with all the ceremony possible, that crowns and scepters should immediately have been laid at his feet, and that the high and mighty princes of the world should have been his humble servants. Instead, *"He came into the world, and the world knew him not. He came to his own, and his own received him not."*

**3. Christmas puts people in special danger and thereby makes them safe:** By asking the shepherds to leave their herds behind, the angels were demanding their ultimate sacrifice. For Mary it was an infinitely greater demand.

Divine danger is the greatest safety and human safety is the greatest danger. Ironically, Mary was actually leaving danger when she answered the call of God. Her protection multiplied when she became the mother of Jesus! Whatever outward trappings of danger there seemed to be, the truth of it was now she was out of danger!

In a few weeks, you will get a letter from me that will be the most dangerous and exciting letter you have ever gotten from me. Yes, it will be dangerously glorious!

Yes, times are bad. Yes, we are in a mess. Yes, it seems hopeless. The first Christmas happened in a time just like ours. Our God is behind the scenes tinkering with another surprise miracle.

**Outpourings of the Holy Spirit come when society feels best protected from God. When hearts seem their coldest, voices scream the loudest, and the devil tries the hardest, awakening arrives, unexpected and unstoppable. Hallelujah!!!**

