

To Be His Angel

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Preacher: Harry Robinson

[0 : 0 0] that we may be very aware of your presence, and that our hearts may be open to not only obey you, but to love you.

We ask this in your holy name. Amen. Now, I'd like to ask you a number of questions, because you'll see a sequence in them, I hope.

God wanted to send to a very old couple called Zechariah and Elizabeth a child whose name was to be John the Baptist, but he didn't know how to tell them.

So he got somebody who he sent to tell them, and that somebody was an... Could someone say that loud and clear?

An angel. Well, and then when God chose Mary, who was a teenage girl, to be the mother of the Lord Jesus, he didn't know quite how to tell Mary about it.

[1 : 2 1] So, he got an... Very good. Does anybody know what the angel's name was? Gabriel.

Gabriel. Now, the night on which Jesus was born was a clear, starlit night, and this very exciting thing happened in a stable, and God was so excited about it that he needed to tell somebody, and the only people who were still awake were the shepherds sitting on the hillside outside of Bethlehem, and God wanted to tell them.

So what did he do? He sent... And to accompany the angel, he sent what is called a multitude of the heavenly hosts, and they were the ones who sang King of kings and Lord of lords, glory, hallelujah, words to that effect.

So that... There was once a time when Elisha was in great trouble as his predecessor, Elijah, had been.

You saw Elijah get into trouble this morning. Elisha got into the same trouble with the king of Syria, and the king of Syria decided that he would end Elisha's life.

[2 : 5 1] And so Elisha went to a city called Dothan, and Elisha went to bed one night, and he slept very well. And it might even be said that he slept in a little the next morning, and his servant got up before Elisha was out of bed, and he went and looked over the city wall.

And there were thousands upon thousands of Syrian troops closing in on the city in order to kill Elisha.

And his servant was so upset, and he said, whatever will I say to Elisha, because we've had it. We're cornered by the Syrian army, and we haven't any hope in the world.

And so he woke up Elisha, and he gave him the dreadful news. And Elisha looked up, and he said, can't you see? And the servant of Elisha looked up and looked, and there in the mountains, all around, the armies of Syria were far greater armies, and chariots, and horsemen, and they were the angels of the Lord.

Who do you think won the battle? The angels. Now, the angels are very important people because they do exactly what God tells them to do, and that's what makes them different from you and me.

[4 : 30] Now, I would like someone to come up here this morning who would be willing to be made an angel. Would anybody like to be an angel? All you have to do is come up here, and I'll make you into an angel.

I can do it. Well, this is too bad, isn't it? There's nobody here who wants to be an angel.

Wouldn't one of you come up to be an angel? You could be very big or very small. Bethan, this is what I would call a reluctant angel, yeah?

At least a semi-reluctant angel. Oh, here's an angel. Would you be willing to be an angel? Are you all watching this?

I see this. I see this. This is a preoccupied angel.

[5 : 53] Here he goes, and he gives the message to his daddy. Now, you see, that's what it means to be an angel. Simply to be a messenger.

And we just had a little boy who was an angel because he took a message to his father.

Well, you remember that angels came along at very important times. When Peter was in prison and the doors were all locked, and Peter wanted to get out, and the Lord wanted him to get out, he sent an angel.

And you can go through the Bible, and you'll see all sorts of wonderful instances in which angels did exactly what God told them to do.

And I would like to tell you that I don't know how many of you have ever seen an angel.

[7 : 04] I won't ask you to put your hand up, but some of you might have seen an angel. One of the things about angels is that sometimes you don't know that they are angels.

And so we're warned to be very careful because sometimes somebody might come with a message for us, and we won't realize that this is a messenger from God.

Well, if you think about angels, and today is the day of a particular angel, a senior angel whose name was Michael, Michael the archangel, so that if your name is Michael, this is your name day.

This is the day that they should have a party for you, and if they're not having a party for you, you give them the message that today is the day for a party for all the Michaels.

Well, the problem was that angels didn't do a good enough job, and God needed somebody else to take his message.

[8 : 27] Remember when you read 1 Corinthians 13, it says, though I speak with the tongues of men and of angels, that that's not good enough.

Is it? It says something else has to be there besides the wonderful way that angels can speak in the language which they know and understand.

But Paul says that's not good enough. And Paul even said at one time, angels couldn't be entrusted with the message that God has for people.

They weren't good enough. And the reason was when God wanted to send the law to people to tell them how to behave and do what God wanted them to do.

Do you know how he sent the message? He sent it by angels. And the angels came to Moses and gave Moses the law. But now God had a very much more important message that he wanted people to receive.

[9 : 32] And angels couldn't do it. And so he sent his own messenger, the supreme angel.

And this is, we're told in Galatians, where at the fullness of time, God sent forth a man born of a woman.

Now the thing that made this man an angel in the full sense of the word was that he did exactly what God wanted him to do.

He was given a message and he delivered the message. And this messenger was Jesus Christ. And he was both the message and the messenger.

So that when he arrived, and you say, well, what does God have to say to me? He said, I am what God has to say to you.

[10 : 38] I am God's message to you. And the reason he could do that was that he not only obeyed God, but he also loved God.

He obeyed him not because he had to, like the angels, but he obeyed God because he loved him. And so it was to Jesus that the message of the angels was given.

That is, because he was both the message and the messenger. He was the angel who could speak, but he was also the angel who could love.

Now when the New Testament came along, there were lots of people that believed in angels and there were even some who worshipped angels. And St. Paul wasn't very happy about that because he thought they perhaps were not paying attention to the angel whom God had sent, who was Jesus, both the message and the messenger.

Now when I tell you that you probably haven't seen an angel, not even come close perhaps to having seen an angel.

[12 : 05] I once had a friend who read the story of the angel visiting Peter in the prison. He said, if only that angel had left one feather behind so we could have known he was there.

But not very many people see angels. And the reason we don't see them is because God has a message which cannot be communicated by angels because they could only communicate the law of God or the will of God.

And God needed messengers who could not only communicate his law but could also communicate his love. And that's why God wants you to be his angel.

Not only to share his message but also to share his love. So that God makes it possible for you to do what the angels can't do.

He can't depend on them. We were looking at the story of Cornelius, the centurion this week. And an angel came and visited him.

[13 : 25] And you'd think if God had a message for Cornelius he could have given it to him by the angel. But the angel could only say to Cornelius go down to Joppa and get Peter.

And Peter will come here and he will give you the message in person. And not only will he give you the message in words but his heart will be filled with love for you so that you receive both the truth of God's message and the impact of God's message which is his love.

Now in the last two Sundays and again next Sunday we're talking about missions and the most important work of missions belongs to you.

Angels in the Old Testament were those who represented God and took messages for God. Do you know who represents God now and takes messages for him?

You and me. boys and girls you are the messengers and the message is delivered with love.

[14 : 46] Remember what it said that the the words of the angels alone are not enough. There's got to be love. And so the great mission that God has to the world is that men and women all over the world should receive the message and the messenger.

Not only what God has to say but what God has to give. And God gives his son the Lord Jesus.

And you are called to be an angel because you are to deliver the message and you are to share the love which God has poured out into your hearts by Jesus.

And that's probably why you haven't seen an angel largely because you are meant to be one. And you are meant to be the representative of God communicating the message of God and sharing this way the love of God for all the people of the world.

You see God sent forth his son born of a woman and God sends forth you and I with the message about Jesus and the love of Jesus in our hearts in order to communicate the message of God to everybody.

[16 : 14] When you become a Christian that's what you're called upon to do. Let me say a prayer. Father thank you for the messengers your angels who brought us news of important events that were happening but thank you that you in your grace and in your mercy want us to be the messengers now.

You want us to be the angels and that we are to communicate to people to tell people the message and to show people the love and we ask that as your angels in heaven obey you so your angels on earth may obey you too.

We ask in the name of the one you sent to bring the message of your love given Jesus Christ. Amen. Now we're going to stand to sing our offertory hymn it's number 83 in our blue hymn book number 83 O praise ye the Lord.

Amen. Amen. Amen.

Amen. Amen.

[19 : 21] Amen. Amen.

Amen. Amen.

Amen. Amen. Eternal God in Jesus Christ we behold your glory receive the offering of your people gathered before you open our hearts and our mouths praise your great salvation same Jesus Christ our Lord.

Please kneel now to pray and the Tippet family will lead us in prayer. Amen. as we come together in God's presence let us pray to the Lord saying Lord have mercy for the whole people of God that each one may be a true and faithful servant of Christ let us pray to the Lord for our Sunday school especially our Sunday school teachers let us pray to the Lord for our families and friends that the Lord will give them joy in all that they do let us pray to the Lord

Lord for those who are lonely sick hungry persecuted or ignored that the Lord will comfort and sustain them let us pray to the Lord Lord have mercy for our country that the Lord will help us to contribute to its true growth and well-being let us pray to the Lord Lord have mercy for the whole human family that we may live together in justice and peace let us pray to the Lord Lord accept all our prayers through Jesus our Lord please sit for the notices good morning and good morning and welcome to St. John's especially to all of you who are newcomers if you are a newcomer and would like to know more about life here at St. John's please fill out this orange card that's in the pew in front of you and someone will be in touch with you also please take the bulletin home there are a number of announcements there that are worthy of note but that I can't take the time to go over all of them a couple of notices that's better the opening doors to Cambodia will be shown tomorrow evening at 7.30 in the Trendle Lounge so for those of you who would like to hear that it's tomorrow at 7.30

[25 : 13] Wednesday evening the parish prayer focus will be held at 7.30pm in the Trendle Lounge and there's a Thursday at noon Bible study series starting this week at 12 noon and the next potluck feed and frenzy supper is here at the church Sunday October 6th for 99 cents and a plate of food you can share in fun and fellowship it's that time of year again when we are approaching Thanksgiving and the decorating party takes place next Saturday at 10 o'clock if you could be here at 10 o'clock with your flowers especially sunflowers corn stalks garden produce squashes pumpkins all that's necessary to try to transform the gymnasium that we're using as a church into a colourful Thanksgiving feast it'll be a bit of a challenge this year so please help out with your time and your produce or both coffee and muffins are provided for those who can attend so that's next Saturday at 5 here in the hall please join us for coffee and tea there's a newcomers luncheon for those of you who are involved in that that will take place in the Trendle Lounge for everyone else please join us for coffee and tea immediately outside the doors thank you our final hymn is hymn number 16 bring to the Lord and this is found in the black

St. John's Songbook which you'll find in the pews number 16 game Amen.

Amen. Amen.

Amen. Amen.

Will you kneel, please? Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen.

[29 : 22] Amen. Now unto him that is able to keep us from falling and to present us faultless before the presence of his glory with exceeding joy, to the only wise God our Savior, be glory and majesty, dominion and power, now and ever.

Amen. And the blessing of God Almighty, Father, Son and Holy Spirit be upon you and remain with you always. Amen. Amen.

Amen. Amen. Amen. Thank you.

Thank you.