

## INTRODUCTION

We're going to be talking about "The Lord of Angels." As you know, this month we're talking about angels, God's secret agents, His supernatural helpers, who are sent to assist us and to deliver messages. Today as we talk about, "The Lord of Angels," our attention is going to be firmly on the Lord Jesus Christ. Although our theme today is angels, our topic and our focus is the Lord Jesus Christ as it always should be. Now, there is a fascination about angels and we have discovered it this month as I began preaching on it. I have been receiving so many of these accounts from people who said they believe they have had an encounter with angels. The stories are just amazing! I will share several with you this morning, but through it all Our goal and our task is to keep our eyes firmly focused on the Lord Jesus Christ who has provided us these angelic helpers.

When you think about angels, I hope that you will only look at angels in your spiritual peripheral vision. When you look at a star at night, sometimes when you look right at that star, you cannot see it, but when you look to the side, you can see that star in your peripheral vision. Our focus should be looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith. But, even as we conclude this series and may not say much ever again about angels, be aware in your peripheral vision of the presence of God's ministering spirits. Today, this message is going to go all throughout the New Testament. We're going all the way through the gospel according to Matthew and we'll end up in the book of Revelation, because I want you to see how angels interfaced with the life and ministry of the Lord Jesus Christ.

### 1. ANGELS ANNOUNCED JESUS' BIRTH

There are eight points of contact. The first thing we notice is that angels announced His birth.

Matthew 1:18-21. "This is how the birth of Jesus Christ came about: His mother Mary was pledged to be married to Joseph, but before they came together, she was found to be with child through the Holy Spirit. Because Joseph her husband was a righteous man and did not want to expose her to public disgrace, he had in mind to divorce her quietly. But after he had considered this, an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream and said, 'Joseph son of David, do not be afraid to take Mary home as your wife, because what is conceived in her is from the Holy Spirit. She will give birth to a son, and you are to give him the name Jesus, because he will save his people from their sins.'"

As you study the scriptures, you'll find angels have an interesting ministry in announcing the births of babies. The first time we encounter angels in the Bible is in the book of Genesis, where an angel appears to Hagar and informs her she is going to give birth. Of course, you know angels came to Abraham and Sarah and told them they were going to have a baby. It was an angel who appeared to Manoah, the father of Samson, and told him and his wife they would give birth to a son and this angel even prescribed a diet Samson's mother to eat during her pregnancy. I call one of the angels "a gourmet angel." It could be some of these angels are obstetric angels, because they are so interested in the birth of babies. Of course, an angel appeared to Zechariah, the father of John the Baptist, to announce John's birth. Here in the most familiar birth announcement, angels come to Mary and to Joseph and announce Jesus Christ is going to be born. If we took the

time to read in Luke, you know the angel Gabriel, told Mary, "You're going to give birth to a son and you'll call his name Jesus, for he shall save his people from their sins." Mary said, "The only problem with that is, angel, I am a virgin. I have never known a man. How can I do that?" To make a long story short the angel said, "With God nothing is impossible." By the way, that's one of my favorite Bible promises "With God nothing is impossible."

You know if you went to my home in my study and you took my dictionary off the shelf and you tried to look up the word, "impossible" you wouldn't find it. You know why? Because several years ago I took an X-Acto knife and I cut the word *impossible* out of my dictionary. I just don't believe in it. And by the way, I don't know what the implications are, because the word, "implication" was on the other side of the page. Basically, it means that with God there is nothing He cannot accomplish. Now, Joseph had several options when he discovered his espoused wife, Mary, was pregnant. The Talmud said he had the option of having her publicly shamed. He had the option of having her publicly stoned. That's why they brought the woman caught in adultery to the Lord Jesus and said, "The law says stone her." Joseph could have demanded she be stoned. But, the Bible said Joseph decided he would do neither. He would just put her away quietly but the angel came and said, "No, listen. This is all part of God's plan. She's going to give birth to a son, Jesus."

The virgin birth of Jesus Christ is not some incidental doctrine of our faith. It is absolutely essential to believing in the deity of Jesus Christ. I have told you before but if you want to know an interesting little riddle that can be a tool to open up a witnessing conversation, go to school or go to your job and say to somebody, "Here's a riddle for you. Who was the only baby born who was older than his mother and the same age as his father?" and you know the answer to that? Jesus Christ. He was older than his mother because Jesus said, "Before Abraham was, I am." Jesus Christ has always existed in the form of God the Son and he was the same age as his father, because his father was God Almighty. Whenever you look at those Nativity scenes or see pictures of the Nativity, Mary was the mother of Jesus, but Joseph was *not* the father of Jesus. He took care of Jesus, but God was the father of the Lord Jesus Christ. He was sinless in every respect.

## **2. ANGELS ASSISTED JESUS IN HIS TEMPTATION**

Number two: Not only did angels announce his birth, but they also assisted him in his temptation. Matthew 4 says after Jesus was baptized, he was led into the wilderness and was tempted by the devil. You all know the story. Three times the devil came and tried to tempt Jesus in his time of weakness. He said, "If you are the Son of God, command these stones be turned into bread. If you are the Son of God, cast yourself off the pinnacle of the temple. And then Satan misquoted Psalm 91, about the angels lifting him up and then he said, "If you are the Son of God, bow down and worship me and all these kingdoms will be yours." Three times he tempted him and three times Jesus overcame the temptation. That the same way Jesus resisted temptation is the same way we resist temptation. Three times Jesus took the sword of the word of God that sharp, two-edged sword and he said, "It is written..." "It is written..." "It is written..." and he quoted scripture. I hope you know the best way for you and me to overcome temptation is when we have the word of God hidden in your heart. You see, folks, we don't memorize scripture just so we can check it off on a master completion record. We memorize scripture so

we can stay clean before the Lord. The Bible says, "Thy word have I hid in my heart that I might not sin against thee.

After Jesus completed his temptation and was victorious, we sometimes forget this little part of this experience. Look at Matthew 4:11: "Then the devil left him, and angels came and attended him." Now the King James Version says, "They ministered unto him." I want every one of our ordained deacons to look at that word "ministered" or "attended." It is the Greek word, *diakonos*, from which we get our word, "deacon." That's the role of a deacon, to minister, to care for, and I thank God for all the deacons in our church who understand their biblical role is one of service and ministry. Angels were there assisting Jesus after this time of temptation. That word, ministering or attending could well mean they fed him a meal. After forty days and forty nights without food, Jesus was hungry. Last week we learned how that gourmet angel fed Elijah under the juniper tree. It could be they ministered to Jesus in that way. When you think of the temptation of Jesus, we usually think only of this temptation, but you have to remember the scripture says he was tempted in all points, like as we are, yet he never sinned. Jesus faced many other temptations.

For instance I think the other greatest temptation he faced was at the end of his ministry when he came to the Garden of Gethsemane and the cross was looming large in front of him and he was tempted to take the easy way out. He said, "Father, take this cup from me. Nevertheless, thy will not mine be done." Three times he prayed that prayer and three times he said, "Not my will but yours be done," and the Bible says he faced that temptation, he overcame it and he committed himself to the cross and then the scriptures say, "An angel came and ministered to him after he resisted that temptation." His ministry is bracketed by two times of intense temptation and each time, in both of those cases, angels came and helped him through it.

Sometimes when you hear angel stories like we've been talking about this month, you think it's something supernatural and amazing and miraculous—sometimes it's just very common, ordinary experiences. One lady wrote me a letter. She has two sons who are very, very active little boys. She talked about how one Sunday morning she was trying to get them ready for Sunday School. Her husband was out of town and she got one of them dressed and cleaned up and set him over to the side. Then, she started working on the second son to get him dressed for church and while she was dressing the second son, the first son got up under the bathroom sink and somehow got involved in all the grease on the pipes underneath the sink and got wet and dirty. She turned back to re-dress him and while she was dressing number one son again, the second one went outside and jumped in the dirt in his Sunday clothes. When she finally got both of them in front of her, she said she was about ready to lose her temper and she was tempted to scream and to execute judgment on them at that moment, but this lady said in that moment she said, "Get thee behind me, Satan!" Because she was tempted to just blow her cool. She said once she resisted that temptation, it was as if she could feel somebody putting hands on her arms from behind saying to her "Settle down. Calm down. Take it easy." I think sometimes when we resist temptations, the angels do for us what they did for the Lord Jesus Christ. They help us.

### **3. ANGELS WERE AFFIRMED IN JESUS' TEACHING**

Here's a third area of contact in the life of Jesus with angels: They were affirmed in his teaching.

Jesus said a number of things about angels. He said, for instance. "There is joy in the presence of angels over one sinner who repents." Jesus taught in Luke 16:22 that angels escort the souls and spirits of the righteous into heaven, but there are two verses in Matthew I would like you to look at. Turn to Matthew 18:10. This is what Jesus had to say about angels. Little children came to Jesus and the disciples tried to keep those children away but Jesus rebuked them. "See that you do not look down on one of these little ones. For I tell you that their angels in heaven always see the face of my Father in heaven." Remember I told you last week that I don't know if you can find a real strong doctrine for one guardian angel that stays with a person all their lives, because angels are shuttling back and forth to heaven, but there is the *idea* of guardian angels and Jesus said these little children have angels who are looking into the face of the Father. What's the point of that? It tells us something about the nature of the Father. One of the very first songs I learned in Sunday School was:

*Jesus loves the little children  
All the children of the world  
Red and yellow, black and white  
They are precious in his sight.  
Jesus loves the little children of the world."*

These angels are looking into the face of God, because God loves the little children. We ought to remember what Jesus said. "Let the little children come unto me for of such is the kingdom of heaven."

Let's go on and look at another teaching of Jesus about angels. Turn to Matthew 22:29. Let me set this up for you. Some smart-aleck lawyer tried to trip Jesus up and asked Him a preposterous question. He said, "Jesus, there was a man who had a wife. He died. They didn't have any children. She married his brother. That brother died. She married the other brother. That brother died. It went on until she had married seven brothers and they all died." Now, the question I want to ask is why somebody along the way didn't say, "What in the world is she putting in their oatmeal?" But the lawyer said, "Finally the woman died. Whose wife will she be in the resurrection?" Then he sat back and chuckled. Jesus used this as an opportunity to teach him something about the afterlife and about angels and about ourselves. Look at verse 29. "Jesus replied, 'You are in error because you do not know the Scriptures or the power of God.'" By the way, folks, that's the balance you find and must maintain. You must know the word, but the word alone is not enough—you must know the power of God. There are a lot of people who are talking about the power of God and they want to see all kinds of miracles, but you have to know the word. It takes the word AND the power or you will be in error! This is what he said verse 30 "At the resurrection people will neither marry nor be given in marriage; they will be like the angels in heaven." He didn't say they *would* be angels. "They will be *like* the angels in heaven." In a parallel passage in Luke 26, He also said, "They will be like the angels because they will not die."

We learn some things about angels here. First of all angels never die. There is no such thing as an angel funeral. There is no such thing as a baby angel. Apparently, angels are created and they never get old. They stay the same. They don't die. We also learn here that angels do not marry. You never find Mr. and Mrs. Angel but some people have misinterpreted this and they say,

“Does that mean when I get to heaven, I won’t know my spouse?” “Does it mean that in heaven I won’t have a husband and I won’t have a wife?” That’s not what Jesus is saying. I happen to believe the Bible teaches that when we get to heaven, we will know each other. I believe I will know my wife as my spouse. Jesus didn’t say there wouldn’t be any marriage relationships. What he is saying here is, “There won’t be any *weddings* in heaven.” There won’t be any new marriages just as the angels do not have any weddings there will be no new marriages in heaven. That is what he is talking about. We had three weddings here yesterday. In heaven there won’t be any weddings whatsoever. We will be like the angels but he teaches us about angels in that we learn that they don’t marry they don’t have those kind of relationships.

#### **4. ANGELS WERE AVAILABLE AT JESUS’ DEATH**

Let’s hurry on here and learn some more about how angels touched the life of Jesus. Number four: Angels were available at his death. We read this very familiar passage of scripture in Matthew 26:52. On the night before Jesus was crucified, he was in the Garden of Gethsemane and the mob comes to arrest him. Simon Peter pulls out his sword to defend the Lord Jesus and notice the reply in verse 52. “‘Put your sword back in its place.’ Jesus said to him. “‘For all who draw the sword will die by the sword. Do you think I cannot call on my Father, and he will at once put at my disposal more than twelve legions of angels? But how then would the Scriptures be fulfilled that say it must happen in this way?’” Jesus said, “Peter, if I so chose to do it, I could call seventy-two thousand angels from heaven to come and rescue me.” You remember we have learned angels are mighty warriors. The book of Isaiah tells us one angel in one night killed a 185,000 Syrian soldiers; Seventy-two thousand angels to kill almost ten billion people—more than the world’s population. I happen to believe those angels were poised on the ramparts of heaven ready to come forward saying, “Come on, Jesus. Call us! How dare those people torture you and brutalize you like that. Call for us, Jesus!” but he never did. Do you know why? Jesus loves you so much he was willing to suffer and endure the agony of a cross. That’s how much he loves you. The angels were available however.

#### **5. ANGELS WERE ACTIVE AT THE RESURRECTION**

But that’s not the end of the story. We also learn angels were active at His resurrection. We can read about it Matthew 28:1. Of course we recognize this as Easter Sunday morning. “After the Sabbath, at dawn on the first day of the week, Mary Magdalene and the other Mary went to look at the tomb. There was a violent earthquake, for an angel of the Lord came down from heaven and, going to the tomb, rolled back the stone and sat on it. His appearance was like lightning, and his clothes were white as snow.” Have you ever wondered why in artistic depictions angels are often seen with a halo? It’s something to describe the Shekinah glory, the brightness that seems to be representative of their character. “His clothes were white as snow.” I tell you whiter than Tide detergent can ever get it clean. “The guards were so afraid of him that they shook and became like dead men. The angel said to the women, ‘Do not be afraid, for I know that you are looking for Jesus, who was crucified. He is not here; he has risen, just as he said. Come and see the place where he lay. Then go quickly and tell his disciples. He has risen from the dead and is going ahead of you into Galilee. There you will see him. Now I have told you.’”

Isn’t it interesting to see how all throughout the life and ministry of Jesus, angels were there?

Even at the tomb of the Lord Jesus there was an angel who came down. I hope you know that the reason the stone was rolled away was not for Jesus to walk out. He didn't need the stone to be moved away. The stone was removed so we could look in and see that it was empty. I can imagine in my sanctified imagination that big, strong angel came down there and took that 10-ton stone and tossed it aside like a Frisbee. Then he sat on that thing and crossed his legs and waited for the women to come. The Bible says those strong, brave Roman soldiers were so afraid they shook and trembled and became like dead men and they pronounced the first Easter message. "He is not here! He is risen!" but that's not all. Let's see what else.

## **6. ANGELS ANTICIPATED JESUS' RETURN**

The next one is angels anticipated his return. Now for this message, we're going to have to leave Matthew but we're coming back to it. Turn to Acts chapter 1. You can tell all we're doing today is talking about the life and death and resurrection of Jesus. Jesus died, he was buried, after three days and three nights he came back alive and the Bible says for forty days he remained on the earth appearing to over five hundred people but at the end of that forty-day period he ascended back into heaven. I want you to see what the angels said when He ascended back into heaven in Acts 1:10. "They [the disciples] were looking intently up into the sky as he [Jesus] was going, when suddenly two men dressed in white stood beside them." Now, we recognize them as angels because of their garments "Men of Galilee," they said. "why do you stand here looking into the sky? This same Jesus, who has been taken from you into heaven, will come back in the same way you have seen him go into heaven." The disciples stood there and they watched Jesus ascend up into the sky and I can imagine they looked at him for as far as they could like people watching the shuttle as it takes off and trying to keep their eye on it until it becomes just a tiny speck of light in the sky. Then, finally, their attention was drawn away by these two angels that said, "Men, why are you looking up into the sky? This same Jesus that you see going back is going to come back again" and they predicted and anticipated and announced the second coming.

## **7. ANGELS WILL ACCOMPANY JESUS AT THE SECOND COMING**

Notice these first six points of contact are all past tense. Those are things that have already happened. That's history, but the next two are things that will happen in the future. Number seven, angels will accompany him at his second coming. Now people may not agree on all the whens and whys and wherefores of the second coming of Jesus Christ, but we do know he is going to return and his angels are coming with him. Look what Jesus himself had to say about his second coming.

Matthew 24:30, 31. "At that time the sign of the Son of Man will appear in the sky, and all the nations of the earth will mourn. They will see the Son of Man coming on the clouds of the sky, with power and great glory. And he will send his angels with a loud trumpet call, and they will gather his elect from the four winds, from one end of the heavens to the other."

Jesus himself said, "When I come back in my power and glory, I'm going to send my angels and they're going to be the ones who will gather to me all those who are mine who are the elect." So, they're going to come with him.

## 8. ANGELS WILL ACCOMPLISH HIS JUDGEMENT

And the final thing, number eight, goes along with number seven. Angels will accomplish His judgment. If you really want to read about angels, you have to go to the book of Revelation, because Revelation mentions angels more than any other book in the Bible—over seventy-one times. But look with me right now in Matthew 13:37. Jesus is telling the story of what we call the wheat and the tares. I encourage you to read this whole story, because all we're going to read is the application of it.

Matthew 13:37-42. "The one who sowed the good seed is the Son of Man. The field is the world, and the good seed stands for the sons of the kingdom. The weeds are the sons of the evil one, and the enemy who sows them is the devil. The harvest is the end of the age, and the harvesters are angels. As the weeds are pulled up and burned in the fire, so it will be at the end of the age. The Son of Man will send out his angels, and they will weed out of his kingdom everything that causes sin and all who do evil. They will throw them into the fiery furnace, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth."

Now, that's the bad news but the good news is verse 43. All of us who know the Lord Jesus as our personal Savior.

Matthew 13:43. "Then the righteous will shine like the sun in the kingdom of their Father. He who has ears, let him hear."

Now the judge is the Lord Jesus Christ, but you might say his bailiffs are his angels. He will send them forth to execute his judgment and all the unrighteous will be gathered up by the angels and judgment will come upon their lives, but I'm here to tell you, folks, that God is not willing that any should perish but that all should come to repentance. In chapter 24 Jesus said hell was prepared for the devil and his angels. God didn't prepare hell for you—he wants everyone to be saved. I hope you have trusted the Lord Jesus Christ with your heart so when the future judgment comes, you will not be in that number who will have judgment executed upon them.

Turn to Revelation 20. I want you to see how an angel will be the one who executes judgment upon the fallen angel Satan, himself. Not a whole army of angels, not a battalion, not a legion—but one single angel.

Revelation 20:1-3. "And I saw an angel coming down out of heaven, having the key to the Abyss and holding in his hand a great chain. He seized the dragon, that ancient serpent, who is the devil, or Satan, and bound him for a thousand years. He threw him into the Abyss, and locked and sealed it over him, to keep him from deceiving the nations anymore until the thousand years were ended. After that, he must be set free for a short time."

That is just a brief little furlough from his prison, because then he is going to be thrown back in there. I like the way the King James Version says it. "That old angel is going to come with a chain he is going to wrap up Satan throttle him put him in the bottomless pit and shut him up."

That's a good place for an AMEN! "and shut him up!" Don't you look forward to the day when the devil will be shut up once and for all and God will use his angel to do that?

What does all this mean? Jesus taught about angels. Angels ministered in the life of Jesus and so we need to believe in them and we need to look for their ministry as we serve the Lord Jesus.

## CONCLUSION

Many of you know Jerry Gardner who is in our church. I want to close by reading a story he wrote to me about how he believes he had angel protection. He writes:

"On October 13, 1984, I was a flight engineer on a restored World War II Navy PBY amphibious seaplane. We were on an early morning 7:30 A.M. flight off the coast of Texas near Harlingen. We had ten people on board of which three were crew members. We did a low pass over the water and our pilot misjudged our distance over the water and hit the water in a nose-down attitude. This caused the nose gear doors to rip open and act as a speed brake and catch water. The water caused the plane to explode apart. Everything tried to stop at once. The engines ripped off their mounts and continued to go forward; the propellers ripped off the engines and continued to go forward; the cockpit completely separated from the rest of the plane and rolled underwater. The tail section ripped off and raised into the air like a giant whale.

This all happened in seconds. I had no warning of this, no warning over the intercom. All I heard was a loud sound and I blacked out. I woke up in my compartment with only my head out of water, but water and fuel were pouring down on me and filling the compartment. There were over three hundred gallons of gasoline right above me. It was dark and I couldn't see very much. All I could think of was that this was the end and I was going to die. I began thinking about my wife and daughters. Then I noticed a bright glow to my left. That morning was very overcast with no sun shining. There shouldn't be a light there, but I immediately turned toward it. I don't remember anything after that. I don't even remember swimming underwater, which was the only way to get out, I would assume, until I was sitting on top of the floating wing and above my compartment by myself with not a person around or a sound to be heard.

It was after a few moments that another crew member, the pilot, popped out of the water in front of me. I pulled him up on the wing with me. His legs were broken in several places as well as many other injuries. A few minutes later we heard someone else yelling and saw one of our passengers back in the tail section which was floating about a hundred yards behind us. Only the three of us survived. We stayed on the wreckage for about an hour and a half before some fishermen took us to shore where we could get to a hospital for treatment. To this day I feel in my heart that the Lord wasn't ready for me to die and had other plans for me. I believe that the light or the glow that I saw was a signal or a sign of passage out of the wreckage. It must have been an angel! If it hadn't been there, I would have died. That was the turning point in my Christian work and activities. I will always do the Lord's work and go and do whatever He commands."



I hope that will be your response that as you learn of God's working in our lives through his Holy Spirit through his ministering spirits that your desire will be to obey Him and to serve Him.

Let us pray. Lord, I just want to thank you for your word which is so true and helps us understand not only who we are, but who you are and if there is one here today, Lord, that has never accepted you as personal Savior and Lord, I pray that this will be the day that they say an everlasting "Yes" to your free gift of eternal life. Lord, thank you for sending your wonderful, marvelous angels but we don't pray to angels. We know angels can never save us. We pray to you because you are the only one who can redeem us and we make this prayer in Jesus' name. Amen.

## OUTLINE

Angels interfaced with the life and ministry of Jesus Christ:

1. ANNOUNCED HIS BIRTH
2. ASSISTED IN HIS TEMPTATION
3. WERE AFFIRMED IN HIS TEACHING
4. AVAILABLE AT HIS DEATH
5. ACTIVE AT THE RESURRECTION
6. ANTICIPATED HIS RETURN
7. WILL ACCOMPANY HIM AT THE SECOND COMING
8. WILL ACCOMPLISH HIS JUDGEMENT



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For the Joy...  
Pastor David Dykes