

The Truth About Angels – Part 1

Separating Scripture from Superstition and Speculation

Introduction

When we open the pages of Scripture, angels appear from Genesis to Revelation. They stand at the gates of Eden with flaming swords. They ascend and descend on Jacob's ladder. They announced the birth of Christ to Mary and Joseph and they proclaim His resurrection at the empty tomb. In Revelation, they stand as mighty messengers and warriors who carry out the judgments and worship of God.

Angels are not a small or side subject of the Bible. More than 270 references to angels appear throughout the Old and New Testaments. They are called by many names—messengers, ministering spirits, hosts of heaven, holy ones, sons of God, all pointing to their role as servants of the Most High God.

And yet, in many of our churches, angels are rarely talked about, studied or taught. Some shy away from the topic for fear of speculation or superstition. Others assume angels belong only to Bible stories or children's imaginations. Meanwhile, our culture has created its own image of angels—portraying them as winged babies, deceased loved ones, or gentle figures detached from God. But none of these ideas capture the reality of what Scripture says.

Why study angels? Because to understand them is to understand more about the God they serve. Angels point us upward. They remind us of God's holiness, His sovereignty, His protection, and His power at work in unseen ways. The Bible never calls us to worship angels, but it does call us to recognize that these mighty beings are part of God's created order, serving as His messengers and ministers on behalf of His people. Hebrews 1:14 says, *Are they not all ministering spirits sent forth to minister for those who will inherit salvation?*

Why the Church Rarely Talks About Angels

Angels are among the most fascinating beings in Scripture. From Genesis to Revelation, they appear as messengers of God, protectors of His people, and warriors in the unseen spiritual realm. The psalmist reminds us, *"For He shall give His angels charge over you, to keep you in all your ways"* (Psalm 91:11, NKJV). The writer of Hebrews calls them *"ministering spirits sent forth to minister for those who will inherit salvation"* (Hebrews 1:14, NKJV).

Yet despite their frequent presence in the Bible, many churches rarely talk about angels. We hear more sermons on money, marriage, or miracles than on these heavenly servants. Why? Some fear that teaching on angels may lead to superstition or even angel-worship. Others avoid the subject because of the mystery surrounding them. Culture has also clouded the truth with myths and caricatures.

But avoiding the subject leaves a gap in our understanding of God's Word. Angels are not to be worshiped, but they are part of God's creation and His plan. They remind us of His care, His power, and His glory. A balanced, biblical conversation about angels can strengthen our faith, deepen our awe of God, and correct the misconceptions of the world.

Many churches tend to shy away from teaching or conversing much about angels, even though Scripture speaks of them often. Here are a few reasons why:

1. Fear of Misunderstanding or Misuse

- Some worry that focusing on angels can lead to angel-worship, superstition, or unhealthy fascination. Paul warned against the worship of angels (Colossians 2:18).
- Church leaders may be cautious not to give them more emphasis than Scripture intends, keeping the focus on Christ.

2. Theological Speculation

- Angels are mysterious, spiritual beings, and the Bible does not reveal everything about them. Since there are unknowns, pastors may avoid the topic to prevent speculation.

- Preaching and teaching tends to center on salvation, discipleship, and Christian living, which are clearer and more central to faith.

3. Cultural Confusion or Misconceptions

- Society often portrays angels in unbiblical ways (as cute children, winged women, or guardian spirits detached from God). Churches may avoid the subject so that members don't adopt those misconceptions.
- Popular culture sometimes blends angel-talk with New Age spirituality, and pastors may prefer not to risk mixing truth with error.

4. Christ-Centered Priority

- Angels are servants of God (Hebrews 1:14), but they are not the Savior. The heart of the gospel is Jesus Christ, so churches may keep the spotlight there, mentioning angels only when the biblical text requires it.

5. Practical Ministry Focus

- Pastors often prioritize teaching on issues people face daily—marriage, money, prayer, forgiveness, discipleship—so angels may seem “less urgent.”

- Yet, when angels appear in Scripture, they usually point to God's presence, protection, or message, not to themselves. That's a good model for how the church should treat them too.

In short: churches shy away from the topic of angels not because angels aren't real, but because they want to guard against distraction, misbelief, and misplaced worship—keeping Christ central.

However, there is a danger in not preaching and teaching about angels. Ignoring the biblical teaching on angels creates several gaps and risks for the church. Here are the main issues that arise when we don't teach about angels:

The danger in not preaching and teaching about angels

1. Loss of a Biblical Perspective on the Spiritual Realm

Scripture shows us that angels are part of the unseen reality in which God works (2 Kings 6:15–17; Hebrews 12:22).

2 Kings 6:15-17, says, 15 And when the servant of the man of God arose early and went out, there was an army, surrounding the city with horses and chariots. And his servant said to him, "Alas, my master! What shall we do?" 16 So he answered, "Do not fear, for those who are with us are more than those who are with them." 17 And Elisha prayed, and said, "Lord, I pray, open his eyes that he may see." Then the Lord opened the eyes of the

young man, and he saw. And behold, the mountain was full of horses and chariots of fire all around Elisha.

Hebrews 12:22 says, 22 But you have come to Mount Zion and to the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, to an innumerable company of angels,

If churches stay silent, believers may live with little awareness of the spiritual dimension that Scripture clearly affirms.

This can make faith feel only “earthbound” and reduce the sense of God’s majesty, mystery, and power.

2. Cultural Misconceptions Fill the Void

When the church does not teach, pop culture does—through movies, TV, music, and folklore.

Society portrays angels as cute babies, women with wings, or even as loved ones who died. These ideas, while sentimental, are not biblical.

Without teaching, people adopt distorted or false beliefs, which can lead to superstition or misplaced devotion.

3. Missed Encouragement and Comfort

Angels are shown as God’s agents of protection, guidance, and comfort (Psalm 91:11; Matthew 18:10; Acts 12:7).

Psalm 91:11 *For He shall give His angels charge over you, To keep you in all your ways.*

Matthew 18:10 *“Take heed that you do not despise one of these little ones, for I say to you that in heaven their angels always see the face of My Father who is in heaven.”*

Acts 12:7 *Now behold, an angel of the Lord stood by him, and a light shone in the prison; and he struck Peter on the side and raised him up, saying, “Arise quickly!” And his chains fell off his hands.*

If believers never hear this, they miss the encouragement that God actively cares for them through His angels.

A biblical understanding of angels strengthens trust in God’s providence and assurance of His presence.

4. Unbalanced Theology

Angels are not the center of the gospel—Jesus is—but they are part of God’s revealed Word.

Neglecting this part of Scripture is essentially leaving out portions of God’s revelation. Paul said, “I did not shrink from declaring to you the whole counsel of God” (Acts 20:27).

By skipping angels, we risk an incomplete theology and miss lessons God intends us to learn.

5. Vulnerability to False Teachings

Some false religions (like New Age practices or cults) elevate angels improperly.

If believers are uninformed, they are more likely to fall into deception—worshiping angels (Colossians 2:18) or seeking angelic experiences instead of seeking God.

Colossians 2:18 *Let no one cheat you of your reward, taking delight in false humility and worship of angels, intruding into those things which he has ^[a]not seen, vainly puffed up by his fleshly mind,*

Solid teaching helps keep the church grounded: angels are God's servants, not rivals to Him.

In summary:

Not teaching about angels results in spiritual ignorance, cultural confusion, missed encouragement, weak theology, and vulnerability to false teachings. A biblical, Christ-centered understanding of angels doesn't distract from Jesus—it magnifies Him, because it shows how even the mightiest heavenly beings exist to serve God's purposes.

The Reality of Angels

From stained-glass windows to modern TV shows, angels capture human imagination. Some see them as mythical figures or symbols of goodness, but the Bible presents angels as real, personal beings created by God. They are not the invention of folklore but part of God's divine order.

Key Scriptures

1. Psalm 91:11 – “For He shall give His angels charge over you, to keep you in all your ways.”

- Angels are entrusted by God with protective care over His people.

2. Hebrews 1:14 – “Are they not all ministering spirits sent forth to minister for those who will inherit salvation?”

- Angels are servants that minister on behalf of believers.

3. Colossians 1:16 – “For by Him all things were created that are in heaven and that are on earth, visible and invisible... whether thrones or dominions or principalities or powers. All things were created through Him and for Him.”

- Angels are part of God's creation, made by Christ and for Christ.

- They exist to glorify God and serve His purposes.

Teaching Points

1. Angels Are Real, Not Imaginary

- The Bible references angels over 270 times (Old and New Testament).
- Patriarchs (Abraham, Isaac, Jacob), prophets, apostles, and even Jesus Himself interacted with angels.
- Their reality is not based on superstition but on divine revelation.

2. Angels Are Created by God

- They are immortal but not eternal like God. Only God has no beginning.
- Psalm 148:2, 5 - 2 Praise Him, all His angels; Praise Him, all His hosts! 3 Praise Him, sun and moon; Praise Him, all you stars of light! 4 Praise Him, you heavens of heavens...5 Let them praise the name of the Lord, For He commanded and they were created.
- Like humans, they are created beings — but unlike humans, they are spirit beings without physical bodies.

3. Angels Serve God's Purposes

TVC STUDY NOTES

- They obey God's commands, not their own agendas.

Psalm 103:20 - 20 Bless the Lord, you His angels, Who excel in strength, who do His word, Heeding the voice of His word.

- They serve as messengers

Luke 1:26–28 - 26 Now in the sixth month the angel Gabriel was sent by God to a city of Galilee named Nazareth, 27 to a virgin betrothed to a man whose name was Joseph, of the house of David. The virgin's name was Mary. 28 And having come in, the angel said to her, "Rejoice, highly favored one, the Lord is with you; [a]blessed are you among women!"

- They Serve as protectors

Daniel 6:22 - 22 My God sent His angel and shut the lions' mouths, so that they have not hurt me, because I was found innocent before Him; and also, O king, I have done no wrong before you."

- They serve as worshipers

Isaiah 6:2–3 - 2 Above it stood seraphim; each one had six wings: with two he covered his face, with two he covered his feet, and with two he flew. 3 And one cried to another and said: "Holy, holy, holy is the Lord of hosts; The whole earth is full of His glory!"

- Their service demonstrates God's order: everything created has a role in His plan.

4. Angels Are Not to Be Worshiped

- Because angels are real and powerful, some are tempted to exalt them.

Colossians warns against “worship of angels”. Please note, as prayer is a form of worship, we are not to pray to angels.

Colossians 2:18 - 18 Let no one cheat you of your reward, taking delight in false humility and worship of angels, intruding into those things which he has not seen, vainly puffed up by his fleshly mind

Angels refuse worship.

Revelation 22:8–9 - 8 Now I, John, saw and heard these things. And when I heard and saw, I fell down to worship before the feet of the angel who showed me these things. 9 Then he said to me, “See that you do not do that. For I am your fellow servant, and of your brethren the prophets, and of those who keep the words of this book. Worship God.”

Application

- **Confidence:** Knowing angels are real gives us assurance of God’s unseen care and protection.
- **Balance:** While we appreciate their ministry, we keep our worship fixed on Christ.
- **Awareness:** Angels remind us that God is working in both the visible and invisible realms.

TVC STUDY NOTES

The reality of angels is not meant to shift our focus away from God but to deepen our confidence in His care. If angels exist to serve God and minister to us, then surely our God is both powerful and personal — orchestrating both the seen and unseen for His glory and our good.

Names, Titles and Phrases for Angels

The Bible actually uses a wide variety of names, titles, and descriptive phrases for angels, reflecting their roles and character. Here's a comprehensive list with references:

General Names

Angels (Hebrew mal'ak, Greek angelos) — “messenger” (Genesis 19:1; Luke 1:26).

Genesis 19:1 - Now the two angels came to Sodom in the evening, and Lot was sitting in the gate of Sodom. When Lot saw them, he rose to meet them, and he bowed himself with his face toward the ground.

Luke 1:26 - Now in the sixth month the angel Gabriel was sent by God to a city of Galilee named Nazareth,

Heavenly Host / Hosts of Heaven — God's angelic army (1 Kings 22:19; Luke 2:13).

Ministering Spirits — angels serve God and believers (Hebrews 1:13-14).

Hebrews 1:13-14 - But to which of the angels has He ever said: “Sit at My right hand, Till I make Your enemies Your footstool”?

14 Are they not all ministering spirits sent forth to minister for those who will inherit salvation?

Sons of God — heavenly beings in the OT (Job 1:6; Job 38:7).

Job 1:6 Now there was a day when the sons of God came to present themselves before the Lord, and [a]Satan also came among them.

Holy Ones — emphasizing their purity (Daniel 4:13; Psalm 89:5–7).

Daniel 4:13 “I saw in the visions of my head while on my bed, and there was a watcher, a holy one, coming down from heaven.

Stars of Heaven — symbolic image for angels (Job 38:7; Revelation 12:4).

Revelation 12:4 His tail drew a third of the stars of heaven and threw them to the earth. And the dragon stood before the woman who was ready to give birth, to devour her Child as soon as it was born.