

Just Checking In

“Bless the Lord, you His angels, who are mighty, and do His commands, and obey the voice of His word. Bless the Lord, all you His hosts; you servants who do His pleasure.” (Psalm 103:20-21, Modern English Version)

Just checking in. Does the church still believe in the existence of angels? The short and quick answer is “yes.” Angels are non-human creatures made by God during the week of creation. And like His entire creation (which includes our first parents), angels were created sinless (Genesis 1:31). Yet, like human beings, angels were created with a will that is free to reject God. They are spirits (Hebrews 1:14), yet they can make themselves visible to human beings and communicate with them. In fact, “angel” means “messenger” - which is one of the primary jobs of angels (Matthew 1:20-25; Luke 1:11-20; 26-38; Luke 2:9-15; John 20:11-13). And although not human, angels are identified as masculine in gender throughout the Bible – with the only two names of angels revealed in Scripture being male names, Gabriel and Michael. Angels are described as belonging to different groups or classifications – “seraphim” (Isaiah 6:2) and “cherubim” (Genesis 3:24) are mentioned in the Bible, as well as the existence of an archangel (Daniel 10:13; 1 Thessalonians 4:16; Jude 9).

So, besides being bearers of messages from God, what else do angels do? Well, they help and protect human beings (Genesis 24:7; 2 Kings 19:35; Psalm 91:9-12; Acts 5:19-20; Acts 12:7-11). Holy Scripture even says that we have guardian angels (Matthew 18:10; Acts 12:15). Angels are also present for humans at death as well (Luke 16:22). And angels don’t just serve us. They also served Jesus throughout His earthly ministry. They were present at His birth (Luke 2:9-15), following His temptation (Mark 1:13), while He was in the Garden of Gethsemane the night before He died (Luke 22:43), at His resurrection (Matthew 28:2-7), and at His ascension (Acts 1:10-11). And we’re told that the angels will accompany Jesus when He visibly returns on the Last Day (Matthew 25:31).

As the passage above from Psalm 103 tells us, angels also worship and praise God (see also Psalm 148:2; Isaiah 6:1-3; Hebrews 1:6; Revelation 4:8-9; Revelation 7:11-12). The Apostle Paul even seems to be saying that angels are observing us when we publicly worship (1 Corinthians 11:10). My brothers and sisters in Christ, the Bible has much to say about angels. And there are many more passages about them in the Bible than I’ve listed above. So, why would we ever deny their existence or the reality of their work in our lives?

But are there boundaries for us when it comes to angels? Well, of course. For one, we should never confuse angels with human beings. Humans and angels are separate entities. You and I never were angels and will not become angels after we die. The Apostle Paul even made this profound statement: ***“Do you not know that we are to judge angels?” (1 Corinthians 6:3a, ESV)*** - and St. Paul obviously was talking about judging fallen angels when he wrote this verse (2 Peter 2:4; Jude 6). We also are explicitly told in the Bible that we are not to ever worship angels (Colossians 2:18; Revelation 19:10; Revelation 22:8-9). For angels are creations of God – just like the plants, animals, and you & me. And the First Commandment makes it clear that we are not to worship the creation – only the Creator. You and I also ought to only trust what the Bible says about angels. For Christianity isn’t the only religion to talk about angels. And angels also

appear in various mythical writings as well. So, just because others talk about angels doesn't mean that what they say is true – anymore than what other religions or stories say about God is true. We ought to restrict our knowledge about angels (and about God as well) to only what the Bible teaches.

My fellow believers, God created the angels, and He blesses us through their service. Therefore, we should thank the Lord that He provides angels in our lives. While many people sadly doubt the existence of angels (as some even deny the existence of God Himself), we gladly confess that angels are real because the Holy Bible unequivocally affirms the reality of their existence. So, as we look forward to the coming again of our crucified and risen God & Savior and the eternal life He shall give in the resurrection, let us rejoice in all of God's many blessings as we journey through this life - including the existence of unseen but real spiritual beings called angels who also worship and serve the one true God now and forever.

Just checking in. See you at worship.
Pastor