

Advent 2022 - Week 3

Shepherds

Luke 2:8-20



THAT NIGHT THERE WERE SHEPHERDS STAYING IN THE FIELDS NEARBY, GUARDING THEIR FLOCKS OF SHEEP. SUDDENLY, AN ANGEL OF THE LORD APPEARED AMONG THEM, AND THE RADIANCE OF THE LORD'S GLORY SURROUNDED THEM. THEY WERE TERRIFIED, BUT THE ANGEL REASSURED THEM. "DON'T BE AFRAID!" HE SAID. "I BRING YOU GOOD NEWS THAT WILL BRING GREAT JOY TO ALL PEOPLE. THE SAVIOR—YES, THE MESSIAH, THE LORD—HAS BEEN BORN TODAY IN BETHLEHEM, THE CITY OF DAVID! AND YOU WILL RECOGNIZE HIM BY THIS SIGN: YOU WILL FIND A BABY WRAPPED SNUGLY IN STRIPS OF CLOTH, LYING IN A MANGER."

SUDDENLY, THE ANGEL WAS JOINED BY A VAST HOST OF OTHERS—THE ARMIES OF HEAVEN—PRAISING GOD AND SAYING, "GLORY TO GOD IN HIGHEST HEAVEN, AND PEACE ON EARTH TO THOSE WITH WHOM GOD IS PLEASED." WHEN THE ANGELS HAD RETURNED TO HEAVEN, THE SHEPHERDS SAID TO EACH OTHER, "LET'S GO TO BETHLEHEM! LET'S SEE THIS THING THAT HAS HAPPENED, WHICH THE LORD HAS TOLD US ABOUT."

THEY HURRIED TO THE VILLAGE AND FOUND MARY AND JOSEPH. AND THERE WAS THE BABY, LYING IN THE MANGER. AFTER SEEING HIM, THE SHEPHERDS TOLD EVERYONE WHAT HAD HAPPENED AND WHAT THE ANGEL HAD SAID TO THEM ABOUT THIS CHILD. ALL WHO HEARD THE SHEPHERDS' STORY WERE ASTONISHED, BUT MARY KEPT ALL THESE THINGS IN HER HEART AND THOUGHT ABOUT THEM OFTEN. THE SHEPHERDS WENT BACK TO THEIR FLOCKS, GLORIFYING AND PRAISING GOD FOR ALL THEY HAD HEARD AND SEEN. IT WAS JUST AS THE ANGEL HAD TOLD THEM.

Luke 2:8-20 NLT

Advent 2022 - Week 3- Day 1

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Read Luke 2:8-20

Read verse 8 and extract the following details: Who, what, when, where, how. (It's one sentence but it contains a lot of information)

Turn in your Bible and read 1 Samuel 17:34-35. David was a shepherd and describes the types of encounters he experienced while keeping watch over his father's sheep. Keep these details in mind when you Luke 2:9.

Record Luke 2:9 here:

What was the reaction of the shepherds to the angel of the Lord?

Depending on what translation of the Bible you are using the reaction is quite different of what we may expect from men keeping guard at night. Shepherds were prepared for bears and lions to pounce on their flocks in the dark hours of the night, but the glory of the Lord had them terrified. I can relate. My training as a nurse prepared me how to respond if my patient was in crisis. I knew what to do and how to do it quickly when needed. Fear was not my first response, but this was not the same. This was divine. Here, in an ordinary field the extraordinary

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Read Luke 2:8-20

occurred. Ellicott's Commentary for this verse reads, "What had been the privilege of patriarchs and priests was now granted to shepherds, and the first proclamation of the glad tidings was to those who were poor in their outward life as well as in spirit." It is safe to say that the "angel of the Lord appear{ing} among them, and the glory of the Lord shine{ing} around them was far different from anything these men had experienced.

What words did the angel use to greet the shepherds in verse 10?

These words may sound familiar from the time spent studying Joseph and Mary. Jesus used similar words with the disciples in Matthew 14:27 saying, "Don't be afraid," he said. "Take courage. I am here!" Today, we can trust these words for ourselves as we remember that God is with us. As we watch over our flocks, day and night, there is not a moment that passes when the Lord is not present. The extraordinary, ever-present and ever-loving God who sent His Son to save us sent the good news to ordinary men like you and me.

Pause and use the next page to write a prayer. Invite God to meet you in the every day, ordinary things that you do. Ask the Lord to open your eyes to the glory of God!

Father,

Amen

Advent 2022 - Week 3- Day 2

Shepherds

Reread Luke 2:8-20

The angel has given a reassuring greeting in verse 10 and then confirms several details for the shepherds in verses 11&12.

What words did the angel use to greet the shepherds in verse 10?

What two names are given for Jesus in verse 11?

What is the sign the shepherds are to look for in verse 12?

Who appears in verse 13? What are they doing? And what message do they proclaim?

In just a few short verses we've learned a lot from this divine messenger of the Lord. Hold on. The angel is departing and we are about to witness how the shepherds respond to all they have seen and heard. **Verse 15 reads,** "When the angels had returned to heaven, the shepherds _____ to each other, "_____ ____ to Bethlehem! _____ this thing that has happened, which the _____ has told us about."


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Read verse 12 again and allow a picture to develop in your mind and give it a title. We might entitle it, "Ordinary Meets Extraordinary" or "Earthly Greeted by Heavenly." This was a divine exchange. Look closely at the shepherd's response. First, they turn to one another to discuss what has happened and then to make a plan of action: Together, they would go and see for themselves what the Lord proclaimed.

According to verse 16, when did they go to Bethlehem to find the baby wrapped in cloth, lying in a manger?

Think about a time when you last hurried somewhere. Write the first time you think about noting where you went and why you rushed. Then, consider a time when you felt the Lord calling you to go somewhere and/or do something. What was your pace? How confident were you following the Lord's call?

We will talk more tomorrow about God's timing, but for now, pause and pray for courage and confidence to move where God leads.



We are not out of the
way of
Divine visits,
when we are employed
in an honest calling,
and abide with God in
it. Let God have the
honour of this work;
Glory to God in the
highest.

MATTHEW HENRY'S CONCISE
COMMENTARY

Advent 2022 - Week 3- Day 3

Shepherds

We've observed and learned from a purposed and holy pause in Joseph's life. Joseph allowed time for emotions to be laid aside and God's Holy message directed his path during an uncertain time. Mary also paused when she waited several days before going to visit Elizabeth. But here we witness the shepherds as they make haste. They do not delay, and this leaves me asking why? I admit that do not have all the answers, but when I look back at our passage to consider the words of God's messenger a sense of urgency rises in my spirit.

"...I bring you good news that will bring great joy to all people." Luke 2:9

We live in a world that needs good news. Not just good news- The Good News of Jesus! The shepherds had been given good news that would have great results for all people- JOY! Joy that was like no other because, "The Savior--yes, the Messiah, the Lord-- has been born in Bethlehem, the city of David! This was long awaited and now it was coming to pass. The shepherds must *follow where God leads*. Their steps would be hurried so they would see for themselves the sign ~ "...a baby wrapped in snugly strips of cloth, lying in a manger."

Timing is everything and God's timing is perfect.

Maybe you find yourself like me, when you know it's time to step out in faith, but you are still unsure when to pause and when to forge ahead. I once asked my Pastor

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how I would know where, when, and what to do for the Lord. His answer serves me well today and I pray it will you also. Pastor Randy didn't complicate matters. He simply said, "Jodie, if you can answer yes to these three questions, you are safe to move forward. Does what you are doing align with God's word? Does it glorify the Lord? And will it add to the number of believers in the Kingdom?"

This is one reason that it is so important that we stay in God's word. In order to know if our steps align with God's word, we must first be in the word so that then, the word can be within us. When we consume the scriptures daily, we are nourished deeply by the message of God. As we digest the words of God, He will guide us and assure us of His perfect timing.

Knowledge and wisdom await those who treasure the word of God (Proverbs 2:1-11). We may not have all the answers today, but Immanuel is with us every day and "He guards the paths of the just and protects those who are faithful to him" (Proverbs 2:8).

Friends, we have the invaluable word of God at our disposal. We can trust that God will lead us and guide us just as He did Joseph, Mary, and the shepherds.

Advent 2022 - Week 3- Day 4

Shepherds

Reread Luke 2:16-19

Record verse 17 here:

Underline who the shepherds told and circle when they told everyone what had happened.

Why do you think it was important for the shepherds to tell everyone about the details of "what the angels had said to them about this child." As a reminder, look back at the angel's message to the shepherds.

In verses 18 and 19 we see two reactions. What are they?

When we share the Good News with others, we may be afraid of their reactions. I understand. I've been afraid to share my faith numerous times. After I lost my son, I prayed earnestly to the Lord and felt a sense of urgency to tell everyone I encountered about Jesus. I asked my Pastor if I could speak one Sunday morning at our church. Now, may be a good time to tell you that while I am a speaker, I am afraid to speak. So, I don't usually ask for an opportunity, but I am willing to go where the Lord calls, even when I shake in my boots going. My Pastor asked why it was so important that I share and my

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Reread Luke 2:16-19

response was simple, "People need to know Jesus so that no one would perish without him." Everyday there is someone, somewhere, that dies not knowing the hope of Jesus is for them personally. My Ryan knew Jesus personally. Many had poured into him, sharing about the Good News, and he accepted Jesus as Lord and Savior. I hurried, like the shepherds, to tell others about the baby born in Bethlehem because that is aligned with God's Word, glorified the Lord, and I trust, added to the number in the Kingdom.

On Day 2 we were prompted to pray for courage and confidence. We can be confident in the Lord. Timing and outcomes are His. As we care for our flocks may we be found watching for Jesus, hoping in Him, "glorifying and praising God" (Luke 2:20).

Take time today to continue your prayer for courage and confidence to share the Good News and your testimony with others. As you pray, praise God for all He has done in your life and ask that all you do and say be to His glory.



The Shepherds
went back to their
flocks,
glorifying and
praising God
for all they had heard
and seen.



Advent 2022 - Week 3- Day 5

Shepherds



The response of the shepherds teaches me to

Scripture to remember:

The response of the shepherds reminds me to be

Scripture to remember:

The response of the shepherds encourages me to

Scripture to remember:

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Bonus Section



for further study &enJOYment

WEEK 3

PLAY LIST

listen using your favorite music source and
prayerfully reflect, praising God in response

THE SHEPHERD'S SONG (GOD WITH US)
- HEARTS OF SAINTS

"WHAT A SIGHT TO BEHOLD
WHEN AN ANGEL APPEARED
TO THE SHEPHERDS AND SPOKE, "GLORY!"



OH WHAT A GLORIOUS NIGHT-
SIDEWALK PROPHETS

"THE SHEPHERDS WONDERED
THEY COULDN'T HIDE IT, TOLD EVERYONE IN
SIGHT"



GO TELL IT ON THE MOUNTAIN- JOSH
TURNER

"GO, TELL IT ON THE MOUNTAIN, THAT JESUS
CHRIST IS BORN



YOUR CHOICE:



Excerpt from Day 10. Jingle & Joy. Praying Beneath the Tree

Pray for the lost to know Jesus

"For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life. For God did not send His Son into the world to condemn the world, but that the world through Him might be saved." John 3:16-17 NIV


For those who know Jesus December is a time of celebration while others are left wondering and doubting. Perhaps they have heard about Jesus, but don't believe. Perhaps they have not been told. Pray that the Good News will reach their ears. Pray for the lost to know and believe in Jesus.

I am reminded of an encounter I had at a gas pump when I began writing this devotional. A gentleman approached me and asked if I celebrated Christmas and wanted to share with me why I should not. I listened a few moments, shared my faith in Jesus as best I could, and left for my travels. But I didn't leave the same, I left with a burden.

Ask God to give you a burden for the lost this Christmas. A burden that drives you to your knees in prayer for those who haven't accepted Jesus as their Savior. As you pray, also ask God to give you boldness for Him. A boldness that drives you to love others by sharing the Good News with them. Ask for a boldness that helps you embrace them with love.

How can we pray for the lost?

- Pray that the Good News will reach their ears.
- Pray for their hearts to be softened to receive the invitation of salvation through Jesus.
- Pray for them to experience the love of others this Christmas, so that they see Jesus.
- Pray they are not trapped in doubt and are set free accepting the love of Christ for themselves.



Lord,
Thank you for coming into this world to save! Let our hearts be burdened for anyone who does not know you. Help us not to judge but to love. Help us be light and salt for you. Soften hearts to hear about your gift. The gift of salvation freely given to those who believe Jesus is the son of God, born of a virgin, to die on a cross for our sins. Amen

Notes

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