

Sermon Discussion Questions

Blessed Invitation

Luke 2:8-21

Dec 14, 2019

Getting Started:

The invitation of God is a message of inclusion towards the least and last, all the while causing every person to feel first and foremost. The shepherds are the proof of this statement!

Share with us about a time you were invited to be part of a group, or invited to a party, or invited to work with a company or organization. Why did this invitation feel so significant or special to you?

Going Deeper:

The Appointment with the Shepherds:

Reputation of Shepherds: *“And in the same region there were Shepherds out in the field, keeping watch over their flock by night.”* (Vs. 8)

Revelation to the Shepherds: *“And an angel of the Lord appeared to them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were filled with great fear.”* (Vs. 9)

Shepherds were considered dirty, unspiritual, and often untrustworthy. You didn't want your daughter to grow up and marry a shepherd. With this kind of reputation, we can wonder why God chose this group of people to reveal the great news to. Perhaps, just as Jesus was born in a manger (a feed trough), in an out of the way place (not a king's palace), the message was first delivered to those whose job was to feed sheep in an out of the way place.

Why do you think God chose shepherds to hear the message?

What keeps you from sharing the Gospel with people you think are dirty, unspiritual, and unworthy?

The Astonishment of the Shepherds:

Respect by the Shepherds: *“And the angel said to them, “Fear not, for behold, I bring you good news of great joy that will be for all people. (Vs. 10)*

Redemption for the Shepherds: *“For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, who is Christ the Lord.” (Vs. 11)*

These shepherds had a very unique job. They weren't just ordinary shepherds. The location of their flock tells us that they were between Jerusalem (where the Temple was located) and Bethlehem (where Jesus was born). The lambs in their flock were used for the daily Temple sacrifices, where a lamb was sacrificed as a substitute and payment for the sins of the people. When the angels tell these unique shepherds that 'a Savior has been born for you' the Shepherds understood that Messiah had come. It was 'good news of great joy for all people'. **Who does God want you to share the Christmas message with?**

The Amazement of the Shepherds:

Radiance around the Shepherds: *“And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host praising God” (Vs. 13)*

Rejoicing with the Shepherds: *“Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace among those with whom he is pleased!” (Vs. 14)*

Just in case the shepherds had any lingering doubts, God turns on the light and sound show in a way that would leave the Trans-Siberian Orchestra in the dust! The glory all points to God, and peace is promised to those with whom God is pleased.

Wouldn't you want to make sure you were on the right side of God?

Is there anything you need to do to get on the right side of God?

Is there something you need to confess or repent from?

The Adjustment of the Shepherds.

Readiness in the Shepherds: *“Let us go over to Bethlehem and see this thing that has happened, which the Lord has made known to us.” And they went with haste...* (Vs. 15-16)

Realization through the Shepherds: *“And when they saw it, they made known the saying that had been told them concerning this child.”* (Vs. 17)

The Christmas hymn ‘O Little Town of Bethlehem’ has these beautiful words: ‘Yet in thy dark streets shineth the everlasting light, the hopes and fears of all the years are met in thee tonight.’ The shepherds became evangelists, telling the good news of a Savior who was born! Remember that Mary and Joseph have already been told about this amazing child they would be bringing into the world, so this wasn’t news to them. It was everyone else who had gathered to celebrate the birth of a new baby who were shocked to hear that this was a very special child, the Messiah! **Who was it that told you about Jesus as Savior? Have you ever gone back and thanked them for being a bold evangelist who shared the good news with you?**

The Acknowledgement of the Shepherds:

Reception towards the Shepherds: *“And all who heard it wondered at what the shepherds told them. But Mary treasured up all these things, pondering them in her heart.”* (Vs. 18-19)

Return of the Shepherds: *“And the shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all they had heard and seen, as it had been told them.”* (Vs. 20)

Take Away: The gift that the shepherds give Jesus is the very gift we are called to give Jesus is _____.

Those who had been considered unworthy and untrustworthy became the first heralds of the greatest message ever - God has sent His Son to be our Savior! If God can use a shepherd, He can use you too. Take every opportunity this Christmas season to tell the wonderful story of a Savior who has come to save us all.

Prayer: