



message for sinners just like us. Everyone matters to God. And the only announcement of Christ's birth goes out to a bunch of uneducated outcasts. As we briefly look at the shepherds' response, here are some lessons we can apply to our lives so we don't forget the Son this season.

### **1) Attentive .**

The first thing we see about the shepherds is they were attentive to their jobs (Luke 2:8). They were so committed to their career that they never left their work. They not only worked the third shift, they pulled the first and second as well. This was a 24/7 deal for them. We also see from this verse that they were faithful, since they were "keeping watch." It was often the case that the different flocks would come together at night and all come into the same fold. One of the shepherds would literally lie across the entrance to make sure none of the sheep would get out and no predators in, which gives new meaning to John 10:9 when Jesus said: "I am the gate; whoever enters through me will be saved. He will come in and go out, and find pasture."

**Notice that God came to those who were attentive to the jobs they were given to do.** They were not slackers and He met them right where they were. Likewise, whatever God has called you to do, be attentive to it and do it with excellence (Colossians 3:23).

You may be thinking that God doesn't even know you exist and if He does, He's somehow mad at you. You are not insignificant to Immanuel. God will meet you right where you are. You don't have to clean yourself up on your own or act like someone you're not. If you smell like a shepherd, let Jesus wash you up. If your sins are wiping you out, allow Jesus to lift you up. Heaven chooses to bring a message to the messed up, to the low achievers as well as the high. You were created in the image of God as an original masterpiece and the signature of the Creator is inscribed on your soul.

### **2) Awed .**

While they were being attentive to the responsibilities they were given, they were suddenly awed by an angelic announcement in Luke 2:9: "An angel of the Lord appeared to them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were terrified." God meets us where we are but then he brings us to our knees.

God's Shekinah glory lights up the sky and causes them to quake in their sandals. Whenever we come face-to-face with God's holiness, we fall apart because of our sinfulness. Peter had this response in Luke 5:8. They could also have been terrified because they didn't know if this was an angel of judgment or not. Perhaps he had been sent as payback for their bad language and sticky fingers. Maybe their sins were catching up with them and now they would be vaporized. Whatever the case, they were in awe and it would take a lot for these tough guys to be terrified. **Only an angel could terrorize a tough guy!**

When's the last time you were in awe? Do you marvel at the Messiah? Has it been awhile since you hit your knees before Him?

### **3) Accepted .**

The attentive shepherds are filled with awe and now they accept the message of good news of great joy (Luke 2:10-15). The angel calms them down, telling them that he is bringing good news of acceptance, forgiveness and hope. We would have a lot to fear if Christmas never happened. This is literally the word from which we get "evangelize." This is good news of great joy. The Greek word here is "mega" which means exceedingly, large, loud and mighty. It's a superlative of greatest degree. Wycliffe translates it this way: "I evangelize to you a great joy." Let me spell it out for you: joyless faith in Jesus is a contradiction in terms!

This message is for “all the people” notice the word “you” as well. It’s for the whole world but it must also become deeply personal. After getting some more specifics, a whole regiment of rejoicing warrior angels fills the sky, praising God and saying, “Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace to men on whom his favor rests.” We know that they accepted this message because in verse 15 we read, “Let’s go to Bethlehem and see...”

Have you accepted the message and allowed the word of God to work in you? God’s good news is a gift that must be received if you want it to be activated in your life.

#### **4) Acted** .

These shepherds didn’t just accept and enjoy the message they received, they acted upon it (Luke 2:16). The word “hurried off” means they left in haste. This is pretty amazing in itself because shepherds normally did nothing quickly. They were patient men, accustomed to moving slowly through the pastures. The Bible is clear that acceptance must lead to action, or as James 2:17 says: “...faith by itself, if it is not accompanied by action, is dead.” They could have doubted or delayed but instead they decided to act and they moved.

- They went and saw. The first thing they did was bounce to Bethlehem. They wanted to see the baby with their own eyes. A baby born in a smelly stable would not have been a problem to men who were used to the scent of sheep. Check out this irony. Unclean shepherds came to a smelly stable to see the Holy of Holies lying on a bed of hay. Many commentators point out the possibility that they were taking care of sheep that were going to be sacrificed in Jerusalem’s Temple. If that was the case, it’s no accident that they leave their sheep behind to visit the Lamb of God. A millennium earlier, David kept watch over his father’s sheep in this same pasture and now they see the Son of David born in the City of David.
- They left and shared. It’s striking that they don’t pull up a bale of straw and make themselves comfortable. They didn’t hang around the manger because they knew that they were now managers of the message. Notice that the message they shared had nothing to do with seeing the amazing angels and there’s no reference to Mary’s magnificence or Joseph’s job. They came to see Him and now they head out to herald the good news (v. 17). The word “spread” means to “make known in such a way that people can understand.” We’re here today because they couldn’t keep quiet.

In what area is God calling you to some action? It’s not enough to just say you have faith, or to feel good about something; there comes a time that after seeing, we must be involved in sharing.

#### **5) Adored** .

What’s cool here is that the shepherds went back to their same boring jobs but they weren’t the same on the inside. They returned to where they started and were attentive again. Notice that they didn’t write a book or go on a speaking tour or launch a ministry called “A Shepherd’s Story.” After Christmas we have to go back to the same routine but now we can do so with rejoicing. We are to rejoice right where we are. Yes, it’s possible to have joy in our jobs even if they’re junky. Look at Luke 2:20: “The shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all the things they had heard and seen, which were just as they had been told.” They don’t just wonder about what they saw, they worship Him who they saw.

A clear evidence of conversion is always adoration. Someone has observed that many of us worship our work, work at our play and play at our worship. When a person is genuinely converted he or she will praise God. Allow yourself this Advent

Season to adore Immanuel as you glorify and praise Him for all you have seen and heard. You can return to the same place tomorrow but not as the same person.

## **Conclusion**

Do you want to take on the role of the shepherds? Or, will you just plant yourself like a tree and be as unmovable as a rock? The shepherds were changed forever by what they saw and you can be as well if you follow their example:

- Be attentive to what God has called you to do
- Be awed by God's message to you
- Accept the gift of good news
- Act on what you know to be true
- Adore Immanuel 24/7

The shepherds had to personalize their response. Jesus was born to the whole world but He was born "to you." Christmas is real history but it must become your story (Luke 2:11).

We close with three questions:

- Is He "Savior" to you?
- Is He "Christ" to you?
- Is He "Lord" to you?

Corrie Ten Boom once said: "If Jesus were born one thousand times in Bethlehem and not in me, then I would still be lost." It's time today to make sure that Jesus is born in you. You can do that right now by praying this prayer:

"I'm in awe of you. Thank you for loving me even when I feel like a loser. I don't understand how you can accept me when I don't measure up. I confess that I am a sinner and I want to turn from the way I've been living. I need you to be my Savior. You are the Christ, the Son of the Living God. I desire to live under your lordship for the rest of my life. Thank you for not only being born but for dying in my place and rising again so that I can be born again. I now receive the gift of salvation and forgiveness by asking you to come into my life. Make me into the person you want me to be. I want to act on what I know to be true and enable me to adore you for the rest of my life. I want to exhibit your joy even when life is junky. In the name of Immanuel, the babe in Bethlehem, I ask this. Amen."

## ***Is the Baby Born in You?***

### ***Smile! You're a Shepherd***

Years ago on an episode of "Candid Camera," Allen Funt and the crew pulled a colossal hoax on some of the smartest and most promising college students in America. Having put together a supposed aptitude and career assessment survey that was taken by several hundred students at one of America's Ivy League schools, the students were called in to have their results interpreted for them by an "expert." Of course the "expert" was actually Allen Funt posing as an expert. A group of four young men were brought in to hear their results. They were the cream of the crop in American undergraduates...future Senators, Presidents, brain surgeons, etc. They were being groomed to be world class leaders, and were well on their way. Allen Funt began by really building them up: "Gentlemen, I'm honored to be in your presence. You truly excelled in this aptitude survey."

The young men were looking quite self-pleased, and were excitedly anticipating what else they were about to hear from the "expert." Funt continued, "Gentlemen, out of all those who took this survey, you scored way above all the rest...," and then came the kicker. "Gentlemen, you above all the others who have taken the survey have shown a remarkable aptitude for becoming..." Moved to the edge of their seats, Funt finished his sentence, declaring them to be most qualified to become ... "Shepherds!"

The reaction was hilarious: at first the guys weren't sure they had heard the "expert" right. "Shepherds?" they asked. "Did you say shepherds?" One of them asked, "Are there still people

doing that stuff?" Another said, "That can't be right. I hate being around animals!" Another responded, "I'm allergic to wool!" Ultimately they figured out that something wasn't quite right (after all, they were geniuses), and Funt had them look into the hidden camera and encouraged them to "Smile! You're on Candid Camera!"

The truth is that shepherds are not held in very high esteem. You may not know any personally, but the stereotype is they are guys who are uneducated, unsophisticated, and are probably pretty dirty, even stinky most of the time. The same low regard was also the view of the first century population. Shepherds were not accepted in "respectable" circles. Boys who really were on a path to success back then never set out to become shepherds. But God's thoughts are not our thoughts.

It's interesting to note that all through the Bible the lowly, the unpopular folks are deemed special to God. The first to see Jesus after His resurrection was Mary Magdalene, a woman with a notorious past, someone shunned by the high society crowd of that day. Likewise, other than Mary and Joseph, the first people to see the baby Jesus were the unsophisticated, uneducated, and society-shunned shepherds of Bethlehem. While the world slept on that silent night, the Shepherds' lives were forever changed, and their night was anything but silent.

God Bless You!

Bro. Allan

## Opportunities For Service

### Living out Your Spiritual Commitment . . . and Fulfilling Christ's Divine Plan

#### **Sunday, December 13, 2015**

Choir Rehearsal..... 9:00 am

Sunday School ..... 9:15 am

Morning Worship.....10:30 am

Nursery: Volunteers as needed

Ushers: Steven Buckley, Ken Nice, Don Sharp, Fred Kerns

Alternate: Isaac Waters

Evening Worship..... 6:30 pm

#### **Wednesday, December 16**

Youth Study..... 6:30 pm

Prayer / Bible Study .....6:30 pm

Adult Choir ..... 7:30 pm

#### **Thursday, December 17**

O Team.....6:30 pm

#### **Sunday, December 20, 2015**

Choir Rehearsal..... 9:00 am

Sunday School ..... 9:15 am

Morning Worship.....10:30 am

Nursery: Volunteers as needed

Ushers: John Lewis, Gary Yarbrough, Joseph Coats, Isaac Waters

Alternate: Larry McKahan

#### **Monday, December 21**

Food Pantry Day, Patee Park

#### **Wednesday, December 23**

Christmas Eve "Eve" Service .....6:30 pm

#### **Thursday, December 24**

Christmas Eve

#### **Friday, December 25**

Christmas

#### **Up-Coming Events.....**

#### **December 20 — Food Pantry Collection Day**

— Choir Presentation

#### **December 21 — Food Pantry Day at Patee Park Baptist**

**December 23 — Christmas Eve “Eve” Service**

**December 24 — Christmas Eve—Office Closed**

**December 25 — Christmas—Office Closed**

## **GROW Team**

Commit to **GROW!** **Everyone make a contact!** Invite someone to Bible Study and Worship this week. ☺

### **Sunday Nights**

We will have Sunday Evening Service here tonight. Watch the weekly schedule to know when we will meet during the month of December.

### **Wednesday Night Prayer and Bible Study**

We will be meeting this Wednesday at 6:30 pm for Prayer and Bible Study. Plan to attend!

### **THANK YOU**

Thank you for your recent donation to our food pantry. God Bless You, Maggie Wall, Patee Park Baptist Food Pantry

### **The Christmas Card Mail Box**

is in the hallway by the bulletin boards. If you would like to share cards with your church family, you may place them in the box throughout the month of December. We suggest you use the money you save on postage to contribute to the Lottie Moon Christmas Offering.

**CHRISTMAS CHOIR PRESENTATION**  
**DECEMBER 20TH**  
**10:30 AM WORSHIP**

**Patee Park Food Pantry**  
**Collection Day**  
**December 20**

Donated items may be placed in the basket in the hallway. You may donate monetarily as well. Thank you for supporting this ministry of our church.

### **Help Adopt a Family**

The Lydia Ladies invite others to join them in adopting a family for Christmas. It is a family associated with our church. We are researching clothing sizes, needs, etc. You may contact Marcia Hart for more information. Donations of any kind, including money, are acceptable.

**CHRISTMAS EVE “EVE”**  
**SERVICE**  
**Wednesday**  
**December 23 6:30 pm**

## *For the Record-*

### Attendance: December 6, 2015

Sunday School.....	45
Visitors.....	4
Total.....	49
Contacts Made.....	9
Morning Worship.....	51
Children's Worship .....	12
Sunday Night .....	N/A
Wednesday Night .....	21

### Financial Record:

Weekly Budget.....	\$ 2,040.52
Offering Received...	\$ 3,289.80

### Offering Received by Mail:

### December Counting Team:

Don Beavers and Jordan Lane

### December Van Driver:

Mike Green

Remember to call 232-3747  
before 8 am if you need a ride.

### December Member Birthdays:

03 ... Brent Fortune  
08 ... Madeline Swink  
09 ... Allison Adkinson  
11 ... George Ferbert  
15 ... George Burgess  
16 .. Addison Leichti  
16 ... Doris Richardson  
19 ... Jessica Kirkpatrick  
20 ... Leona Reynolds  
20 ... Brenda Burgess  
23 ... Joseph Coats

### December Anniversaries

Bill and Alva Lou Schottel  
December 22, 1962

George and Maxine Ferbert  
December 31, 1955

### Prayer Requests ...

Flo Conard—health issues  
Betty Anslinger—upcoming surgery  
Buddy Means—Mary Sharp's nephew  
Lois Ulmer—Elvera's daughter-in-law  
Maxine Stark—friend of Conard's  
Kenneth Hoenshell—friend of Conard's  
Maxine and George Ferbert

Bill Haskins—recovery  
Joyce Izer—Praise the Lord for healing!  
Stacy Gray—cancer treatment  
Muriel Elder and Family  
Linda Rails—Doris' Richardson's sister  
Grant Schottel—advanced training  
Henrietta Caballero—Brigida's Sister  
Austin Chalfant—Abby's nephew  
Gary and Marilyn Singleton—health  
Bob Barquist—cancer  
Louanne Laurence—Joyce's Mother  
Lester Buck Kathryn Beavers  
LoLeta Middleton Dorothy Post  
Allen Jennings Ann Riddle  
Jim Winans Jozy Winans  
Nellie Reynolds Leona Reynolds  
Kevin Duty Kenny Duty  
Madeline Swink Bobby Griswold  
Lois Pace Susan Patten  
Debbie Sands Sue Higgins  
Brenda Burgess Judy Anderson  
Carolyn Houts Roscoe Lane  
Keon McKahan Dorothy Post  
Missionaries Don and Diane Combs  
Nickolay Nazaruk, Peski 2 Church  
David and Deborah Grace  
Jeanette Swackhamer—Beja People  
Our Nation and Leaders  
Our Military Service people  
**Today's Prayer Requests ...**

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#### **Our Nation and our Leaders ...**

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#### **Five More New Families...**

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