

A Shepherd's Faith

- *Luke 2:15-20*

- **What a wonderful time of the year. The Christmas season is in full swing, the plays & the parties are taking place all around us, & we are just 2 short weeks from celebrating the birth that changed the entire world forever. This was the greatest event ever come to man, the birth of God's Son.**
 - When you think about significant events, we typically think of Presidential visits or Kings traveling to a visiting country, and you often see elaborate & expensive preparation being made for their visit.
 - But in the ushering in of the very Son of God, we see no special parade, no grand events, just a humble manger surrounded by farm animals.
 - Many times President's & others famous dignitaries will have an elaborate guests list that surrounds them with only the most well-known.
 - But not the Christ-child. With Mary & Joseph by His side, He was only greeted some time later by a few wise men & some lowly shepherds.
- **And though we could talk about the gifts the wise men brought, or the angelic host that surrounded that stable, this morning what I would like to focus on is something that isn't often looked at, the Shepherd's Faith.**
 - Though these shepherds had very little, if anything, to offer Christ, I want us to look at their example of faith this morning, & may it challenge us today as well as in the coming year.
 - Though lowly in the eyes of men, the shepherds were the very ones given the announcement from the angels of the birth of Christ.
 - And through their actions & their response, I believe we see an attitude of humbleness & great faith as they came to see the Christ-child. Let's look at these 3 actions after the angels announced the Saviors birth.

1. THEY BELIEVED THE TRUTH (vv.15-16)

- "And it came to pass, as the angels were gone away from them into heaven, the shepherds said one to another, Let us now go even unto Bethlehem, and see this thing [saying] which is come to pass, which the Lord hath made known unto us".
- The shepherds' faith is the first thing we see about them in our text. Their faith is in the fact that they believed what the angels said about the birth of Christ. They believed the heavenly revelation given to them. They were not skeptics or doubters; but they were believers in Divine truth.
 - This is a unique kind of faith ...

a. The Uniqueness of Their Belief

- i. The faith of the shepherds was a big exception to the norm. You have to remember that they were told of the birth by the angels & they immediately believed the truth & came to find the Christ-child.
- ii. To find this kind of faith in Divine Revelation, even today, is uncommon among men. Many do not believe & seek the truth of the Savior in this present world.
 1. The Bible records that there are few who will genuinely trust & follow after God.
 - a. Matthew 7:13-14 – "Enter ye in at the strait gate; for wide is the gate, and broad is the way, that leadeth to destruction, and many there be which go in thereat. Because strait is the gate, and narrow is the way, which leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it."
 2. When Jesus Christ was on earth, the majority of the people were opposed to Him. He had His followers, but the closer He got to the cross the fewer He had. The shepherds were among the minority who truly believed.
 3. But though the shepherds faith was remarkable, what about you this morning? This story has been told for generations. We have more physical proof of the validity of scripture today than we have ever had. Yet, the question remains, "Will you trust in the One who came to be born in a manger so that He could die

for your sins? Will you believe in Him today?" That's what this Christmas season is all about.

b. The Response of Their Belief

- i. Not only did they genuinely trust in Christ, they came quickly.
 1. The Bible says specifically that they, "made haste". They didn't waste any time. They understand the severity of the matter. They didn't want to miss this divine appointment, so they left all that they had & came to kneel before the Savior.
 2. Give me just a second here. One of the greatest joys & yet one of the things that many struggle with is trusting Christ and putting Him first in their life.
 - a. These shepherds were obviously in the fields for a reason, they were tending their sheep.
 - b. But we don't see where they herded their sheep together to come see Christ b/c they would have taken an extremely long time.
 - c. Instead they left all of their possessions and they came quickly to Christ.
 3. If there is one thing I would challenge you to do today, it would be to come to Christ, and come quickly. The shepherds wasted no time. They set aside any & everything that would distract them, and they came to find Christ.
 - a. Perhaps you are here this morning & you have promised yourself time and again that "one of these days", and you have still not accepted Christ.
 - b. Let me encourage you today to come to Him. Come to Him while you still have the opportunity.
 - c. Christ came to save the world from their sin, and many are in hell today who had every intention of one day coming to Christ. But they waited too long.
 - d. Why don't you come quickly to Him today?
- ii. And as they came, they didn't come hoping ... they came believing!
 1. They did not say, "Let us go to Bethlehem to see *if* this thing has come to pass." That would have shown lack of faith. It would have revealed their doubt and unbelief.
 2. But instead they said let us go and "see this thing which *is* come to pass." The "is" really indicated the quality of their faith.
 3. This morning, you can come not just to give it a try or hope that Christ might deliver you. You can come with the full assurance of the Word of God that every promise He has made, He will keep.
 4. "Pastor, did their faith pay off? Was it worth them leaving everything to find Christ?"

c. The Reward for Their Belief

- "And they... found Mary, and Joseph, and the babe lying in a manger" ([v. 16](#)).
 - i. Faith gives many great rewards. Because the shepherds believed, they were not disappointed when they sought out the scene described to them by the angels.
 - ii. The world may mock our faith, but the reward which comes because of our faith more than compensates for any reproach we might receive from the unbelievers for our faith.
 1. We have several young people that are being baptized this morning. There will come a day, perhaps it has already come, where they will be tested in their faith. They will be rejected & criticized b/c they have chosen to follow God. But young people, any rejection you may receive on this earth will more than compensate when we stand before God one day. I had much rather be accounted for my faith, than my unbelief, b/c while faith gives many blessings, unbelief robs mankind of many blessings.

2. We find one example of this in Matthew 13:58 – “He [Christ] did not many mighty works there because of their unbelief”. What wonderful things could have happened in Nazareth had they only believed in Christ.
- iii. What is our reward today for our faith? It is not only the peace from knowing our sins have been forgiven, but the greatest blessing is eternal life in heaven.