



The Message to the Shepherds

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Pastor Ryan LaRock

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### An angelic visit to the outcasts

*Let us go now to Bethlehem and see this thing that has taken place, which the Lord has made known to us.*

Luke 2:15b (NRSV)

**A credential and a comfortable income mean nothing when it comes to living out \_\_\_\_\_.**

*In that region there were shepherds living in the fields, keeping watch over their flock by night. Then an angel of the Lord stood before them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were terrified.*

Luke 2:8–9 (NRSV)

- Angels bring \_\_\_\_\_ into \_\_\_\_\_.
- The shepherds inhabit the darkest reaches of society.
- Theophany = \_\_\_\_\_.
- Darkness isn't simply a physical reality but a \_\_\_\_\_ one too.
- Even when the earth feels silent around us, the resonance of God's words can fill the spaces of our deepest void.

## What are the angels saying?

*But the angel said to them, “Do not be afraid; for see—I am bringing you good news of great joy for all the people: to you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, who is the Messiah, the Lord. This will be a sign for you: you will find a child wrapped in bands of cloth and lying in a manger.”*

Luke 2:10–12 (NRSV)

### 1. A \_\_\_\_\_ understanding of God.

- A God who enters into the most vulnerable of conditions.

### 2. The first declaration that Jesus is the \_\_\_\_\_.

- The ones for whom the presence of God perhaps felt the furthest away are the first to receive the good news of God’s deliverance and redemption.

### 3. This good news has a far reach.

- The joy is not exclusive to Mary or Joseph.

## Shepherds as models for living out the gospel life

*And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host, praising God and saying,*

*“Glory to God in the highest heaven, and on earth peace among those whom he favors!”*

Luke 2:13–14 (NRSV)

- The shepherds are recipients of the message of a God who meets us in *all* things.

*When the angels had left them and gone into heaven, the shepherds said to one another, “Let us go now to Bethlehem and see this thing that has taken place, which the Lord has made known to us.” So they went with haste and found Mary and Joseph, and the child lying in the manger. When they saw this, they made known what had been told them about this child; and all who heard it were amazed at what the shepherds told them. But Mary treasured all these words and pondered them in her heart. The shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all they had heard and seen, as it had been told them.*

Luke 2:15–20 (NRSV)

- The shepherds are a reflection of God working through us to restore \_\_\_\_\_ to a weary world.
- As shepherds, we stand on the promise that Christ *will* come again.
- The shepherd’s message to us is, “\_\_\_\_\_.”

Sources consulted: *Feasting on the Word*, ed(s). David L. Bartlett and Barbara Brown Taylor.