

The Shepherds' Gospel

Luke 2:8-20

1. Introduction.
2. Review of 2:1-7 – The earthly perspective and birth.
 - a. The entire passage is framed out with the theme of weakness.
 - i. Jesus was not born among royalty.
 - ii. He came in humility (c.f., Psa. 113; Phil. 2).
 - b. There is much hope built into the passage.
 - i. The point is to show God's faithfulness.
 - ii. God's desire is to be praised for this faithfulness and tender mercy (c.f., 1:78).
 - c. The point to understand is that Christ came at the fullness of time, but He came in weakness so that He might serve the weak.
3. Vss. 8-20—The heavenly perspective and response.
 - a. The scene immediately shifts to a field in the same region that was about 2 or 3 miles away (8).
 - i. The shepherds were most likely hired hands.
 - ii. The angel is a mighty creature.
 1. Angels almost always represent divine pronouncement or war.
 2. The angel immediately gives a word not to be afraid.
 - iii. God's purpose in coming to mere shepherds is to convey the idea that God comes to the weak, not the mighty.
 1. Shepherds were despised by the Romans.
 2. Shepherds were not considered great by the Jews.

- iv. Glory coming in the midst of darkness is a theological theme illustrating the reality of what happens when God shows up to a darkened heart.
- b. Heaven erupts (9-14).
 - i. A host of angels appear, not to declare war, but peace.
 - ii. The host sings.
 - 1. The Gospel according to Isaiah (Isa. 57:2ff.).
 - 2. “peace” is a judicial declaration of justification.
 - 3. “with whom He is pleased” is a statement of divine election—a reference to those with whom God finds pleasure.
 - 4. All of creation is in view with the song—both heaven and earth.
 - 5. God’s peace and pleasure with a person comes only through His Son—the one with whom He is well-pleased (Luke 3:22).
- c. The shepherds’ reaction (15-18).
 - i. There’s urgency with the shepherds.
 - ii. The point is that upon hearing the good news, it always demands a response. Either a person will be filled with wonder and gratitude, or a person will remain unchanged.
- d. Mary’s reaction (19).
 - i. Treasuring.
 - ii. Pondering.
- e. The Shepherds response.
 - i. The Shepherds go back to normal life, but they go back changed and glorifying God.
 - ii. The point being illustrated is that praising God is always the natural response to seeing God for who He is—faithful to everything He says He will do.

4. Conclusion.

- a. The Gospel bids you to come.
- b. Cast your hope upon the work of Jesus Christ – the fullness of God’s faithful Word.

Small Group Question

- 1. What stood out to you in this sermon?
- 2. Why did Jesus come in the manner He came, namely, weakness?
- 3. Why did the Shepherds go back praising and glorifying God?
- 4. When’s the last time you overtly shared the Gospel with a person? What was their response?