

The Adoration of the Shepherds

I. Introduction

A. The Annunciation to Mary

1. The Unlikely Recipient
2. The Unnerving Nature
3. The Unimaginable Message
4. The Unparalleled Miracle

B. The Arrival of Jesus

1. God uses the perceived power of empires to his own good ends.
2. God often works in the obscurity of the margins. We must look closely and listen intently to recognize his presence.
3. Jesus came to a place that had no space for him so that he could make space for us in His kingdom.

C. The Angelic Announcement

1. The salvation of Christ is available to all people, especially the obscure, despised, and ordinary.
2. The light and joy of the salvation of Christ drives out our darkness and fear.
3. The salvation of Christ creates praise in Heaven and peace for God's people.

D. Responding to the message of Christmas

1. Dictionary definition of adoration
 - a) deep love and respect: he gave her a look of adoration | it was enough to earn him the adoration of the fans.
 - b) worship; veneration: the Adoration of the Magi.

II. The Adoration of the Shepherds

A. Adoration includes hearing and intentionally moving toward Jesus.

1. Listening

- a) We have all heard the message of Christmas, are we listening!

(1) Guilty of this with my wife (take out the trash; pick up the kids, etc.).

Called on this all the time by my youngest daughter. My body is there, I hear sounds, but I am not listening attentively and intentionally—I am not discerning what's being said.

- b) Hearing is essential to faith
 - (1) Romans 10:17, “So faith comes from hearing, and hearing through the word of Christ.”
 - c) Although the Shepherds heard this message from angels (pretty spectacular), the rest of those in the area (including Mary and Joseph) heard this Gospel message from Shepherds (slightly less spectacular). One of the things that prevents our culture (and some within the church) from hearing the message is that it often comes through fairly unspectacular mediums.
 - d) “While hearing but not really hearing is bad for a marriage, it is absolutely destructive of our relationship with God. The Bible exists in an extraordinary ignorable form. It’s teachers and preachers are often uninteresting, but we can’t let that keep us from listening. The Scripture contains infinitely valuable treasure, greater than the gold and silver in all the deep place of the earth.”¹
2. The shepherds have a desire and intention to go and see, coupled with the action. There is an immediacy to their journey.
 - a) Luke 2:16, “And they went with haste and found...”
 - (1) *Found*— “to learn the location of something by intentional searching— ‘to find by searching, to look for and find.’”²
 - (a) Lift and look don’t stand and stare.
 - b) The Shepherds journey to see these things should be every person’s journey to see what God is up to in Jesus.
- B. Adoration includes sharing and worshipping.
1. They Shepherds listened well; they overcame their fear, and went into the world proclaiming what they had seen and heard.
 2. Sharing

¹ Timothy Keller, *Hidden Christmas : The Surprising Truth Behind the Birth of Christ* (New York: Viking, 2016), 104.

² Johannes P. Louw and Eugene Albert Nida, Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament: Based on Semantic Domains (New York: United Bible Societies, 1996), 328.

- a) Luke 2:10-12, “Fear not, for behold, I bring you good news of great joy that will be for all the people. ¹¹ For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, who is Christ the Lord. ¹² And this will be a sign for you: you will find a baby wrapped in swaddling cloths and lying in a manger.”
 - b) Telling others about what has been revealed to you about who Jesus is and what He has done.
 - c) We love to talk about the things and people we adore.
3. Worshiping
- a) “[Glorify] refers to verbally giving honor to God for his acts.”³
- C. Adoration includes includes treasuring and pondering.
- 1. Mary’s private response is treasuring and pondering.
 - 2. *Treasured*—“to exert mental effort in storing information so as to have continual access and use of it—‘to cause oneself to be fully aware of, to keep in mind, to remember...An equivalent of ‘to keep in mind’ may be ‘to keep thinking about’ or ‘to continue to think about’ or even ‘not to stop thinking about.’”⁴ With the added nuance that this word incorporates the emotions and the heart as well. “The treasuring is not so much a technique as an attitude.”⁵
 - 3. *Pondered*—“to give careful consideration to various implications of an issue—‘to reflect on, to think about seriously, to think deeply about.’”⁶
 - a) What does this message mean? How does it fit with what I know to be true? How does it fit in with the rest of Scripture?
 - 4. Luke 2:19, “Mary kept all these things to herself, holding them dear, deep within herself.” (The Message)

³ Darrell L. Bock, *Luke*, 2 vols., *Baker Exegetical Commentary on the New Testament*, vol. 3 (Grand Rapids, Mich.: Baker Books, 1994), 224.

⁴ Johannes P. Louw and Eugene Albert Nida, *Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament: Based on Semantic Domains* (New York: United Bible Societies, 1996), 345.

⁵ Keller, 107.

⁶ Johannes P. Louw and Eugene Albert Nida, *Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament: Based on Semantic Domains* (New York: United Bible Societies, 1996), 349.

5. “Thus, we return to a crude manger each Christmas to look again at a story quickly told but never forgotten. Mary’s pondering was contagious. Now the whole world ponders this glorious epoch of redemption.”⁷
6. Read Dietrich Bonhoeffer, *The Mysteries of God*

⁷ Calvin Miller, *The Christ of Christmas : Readings for Advent : 31 Days of Devotions*, 1 vols. (Nashville, Tenn.: Broadman & Holman, 2002).

7. Bibliography

Bock, Darrell L. *Luke*. 2 vols. *Baker Exegetical Commentary on the New Testament*, vol. 3. Grand Rapids, Mich.: Baker Books, 1994.

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