

Conversation Starters

- How do you think God feels about you?
- How does this affect how you live your life?

Discuss

In the early 1st century, shepherds were considered a low class of people and had a poor reputation. Spiritually, they may have assumed God didn't have a high view of them either, yet shepherds were told about Jesus before anyone else. Similarly, our spiritual self-esteem can sometimes feel pretty low when we get God's view of us wrong.

And there were shepherds living out in the fields nearby, keeping watch over their flocks at night. An angel of the Lord appeared to them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were terrified. But the angel said to them, “Do not be afraid. I bring you good news that will cause great joy for all the people. ([Luke 2:8-10 NIV](#))

- What does it tell you about God's character that He went to shepherds first?
- How does this compare to how you think God views you?

The angel's Good News was about Jesus being “Christ,” “Lord” and “Savior.” It was the announcement of God arriving to intersect the deepest needs of our life and saving us from our sin, providing the grace we desperately need. It was good news, because God's grace doesn't flow on the basis of what we do, but on Who God is.

Today in the town of David a Savior has been born to you; he is the Messiah [Christ], the Lord. ([Luke 2:11 NIV](#))

- Where have you seen evidence of God's grace in your life?
- How does this impact how you view God?
- How can this inspire you to show grace toward others?

The shepherds' reaction to all of this was to go and see the newborn baby Jesus for themselves. They pushed past any negative spiritual experiences they had and went to explore what this relationship with God - a God who truly loves them - would look like.

When the angels had left them and gone into heaven, the shepherds said to one another, “Let's go to Bethlehem and see this thing that has happened, which the Lord has told us about.”...The shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all the things they had heard and seen, which were just as they had been told. ([Luke 2:15, 20 NIV](#))

- How does the God who comes to the shepherds compare to false perceptions you may have or heard about God?
- Do you have questions about God that you need to give a fair shot at exploring?
- In what ways can you continue learning more about God’s true character?

Next Steps

Exploring and living out a relationship with God is built on God’s free grace that extends to each of us on a daily basis. Like the shepherds, when we push past any false perceptions we have about God and His grace, we can truly celebrate Christmas for all that it was meant to be. If you’re already in a relationship with God, spend some time reflecting on His grace and offer a prayer of gratitude. If you’re still exploring, take a step this week to honestly explore answers to your questions ([send us your questions](#), or start with the free book below).

Free Book: [Christianity for People Who Aren’t Christians](#) by James Emery White

Dec. 16: [The Prophets: Big Picture Bible Study](#)

Dec. 16: [The Grounds Online Book Club: A Christmas Carol](#)

Dec. 18-23: [The Christmas at Meck Experience](#)

Continued Reading

Read [Luke 2:1-20](#).

Prayer

God, your wisdom and love are unmatched. How you chose to cover our sin and offer us grace is nothing short of amazing. Thank you for Jesus and your unconditional grace and love toward us. Help us to get your grace right, not taking it for granted, but knowing we need it and that you willingly and freely offer it to us daily. Help us to celebrate it and share it with the world, just like the shepherds.