

The Legacy of the Shepherds

The Legacy of Christmas — Week 5

Devotional

Day 1: The Shepherds' Invitation

Reading: Luke 2:8-20

Devotional:

The narrative of the shepherds in the field on the night of Jesus' birth highlights God's intentional invitations. Shepherds, though considered lowly and of humble status, were chosen to witness the birth of Christ. This intentional choice was not random but served to signify that the message of Jesus was for everyone, regardless of their societal status. The shepherds' immediate response was to go and see what the Lord had told them, demonstrating faith and eagerness to witness God's promise fulfilled. Their story teaches us about the inclusivity of God's kingdom and the importance of faith-filled responses to His call.

Application:

- **Reflect** on how God may be inviting you into His narrative today. Are there areas in your life where you feel unworthy of His attention? Remember, He includes everyone.
- **Think back** to moments when you sensed an invitation from God. How did you respond? Pray for a heart that quickly responds to God's promptings.
- **This week, intentionally look for opportunities to share the joy and good news** with someone.

Day 2: Essential Workers

Reading: 1 Corinthians 1:26-29

Devotional:

The shepherds were essential workers in their time, responsible for the welfare of their communities through their care of sheep. In a similar way, God calls each of us, regardless of occupation or social status, to roles that are essential in His kingdom. The Apostle Paul reminds us that God uses the lowly and overlooked to demonstrate His power and glory. Every role, no matter how humble, can be used by God for His purposes when approached with a mindset of service and humility.

Application:

- **Reflect** on your own life: How does your current role or occupation serve others? Offer your work to God as a service to Him this week.
- **Write down one way you can demonstrate humility and service** in your daily tasks, whether at work, home, or community.
- **Pray** for God to give you opportunities to serve with humility and kindness this week.

Day 3: Humility and Leadership

Reading: John 10:11-15

Devotional:

Jesus, the Good Shepherd, exemplifies the ultimate model of leadership through humility. He laid down His life for His sheep, demonstrating a selfless commitment to those He leads. His life redefines leadership as service and sacrifice rather than power and prestige. This redefinition challenges us to examine our own leadership approach—whether at home, work, or church—through the lens of Christ-like humility and care.

Application:

- **Reflect** on your own leadership roles. How can you adopt the model of Jesus' shepherd leadership in your context?
- **Identify a person in your life who needs encouragement or support.** Reach out to them this week, offering help or simply listening to their needs.
- **Pray** for humility in your leadership, asking God to help you serve others with genuine care and sacrificial love.

Day 4: Shepherding Others

Reading: 1 Peter 5:1-4

Devotional:

Peter exhorts church leaders to shepherd God's flock with willingness and eagerness, not for selfish gain but as examples to others. This call isn't limited to formal roles of church leadership but extends to all believers called to guide and nurture others in faith. Shepherding means living with integrity, caring for others, and protecting the vulnerable. It is a calling to be attentive and proactive in the spiritual well-being of those around us.

Application:

- **Reflect** on your spiritual walk and identify areas where you can be more involved in shepherding others.
- **Choose someone in your community to check in on this week**—offer them words of encouragement or a helping hand.
- **Meditate on the qualities of a good shepherd** listed in 1 Peter 5, and **pray** for God to develop these qualities in you.

Day 5: Discipleship as Shepherding

Reading: Matthew 28:19-20

Devotional:

Jesus' Great Commission calls us to make disciples, which inherently involves shepherding. Discipleship is about more than just sharing the gospel; it's about walking alongside others, teaching, guiding, and nurturing growth in their spiritual journey. It is a long-term commitment to the spiritual health and maturity of others, exemplifying patience, persistence, and love as Jesus did.

Application:

- **Reflect** on who in your life you could disciple or mentor spiritually. What initial steps can you take to engage with them?
- **Join** a small group as a means of community discipleship and shared growth.
- **Spend time in prayer** asking God to strengthen your relationships as opportunities for discipleship and mutual encouragement.