



A Very Vintage Christmas
Lessons from the Shepherds
Luke 2:8–21

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Luke 2:8–21

8 And in the same region there were shepherds out in the field, keeping watch over their flock by night. **9** And an angel of the Lord appeared to them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were filled with great fear. **10** And the angel said to them, “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.” **13** And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host praising God and saying,

14 “Glory to God in the highest,
and on earth peace among those with whom he is pleased!”

15 When the angels went away from them into heaven, the shepherds said to one another, “Let us go over to Bethlehem and see this thing that has happened, which the Lord has made known to us.” **16** And they went with haste and found Mary and Joseph, and the baby lying in a manger. **17** And when they saw it, they made known the saying that had been told them concerning this child. **18** And all who heard it wondered at what the shepherds told them. **19** But Mary treasured up all these things,

pondering them in her heart. **20** And the shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all they had heard and seen, as it had been told them.

21 And at the end of eight days, when he was circumcised, he was called Jesus, the name given by the angel before he was conceived in the womb.

Lessons from the example of the Shepherds:

Watch for the Lord

- “And this will be a sign for you: you will find a baby wrapped in swaddling cloths and lying in a manger” (v. 12).
- Watching for Christmas
 - Signs point
 - “Apart from the angelic announcement, this sign could easily be overlooked or mistaken for something other than it is. Without the divine word, who would imagine that in this humble person and place, *Immanuel*, ‘God is with us’?” (James R. Edwards, *The Gospel According to Luke*, 78).
- Watching for Advent
 - We must expect a sign
 - “16 For the Lord himself will descend from heaven with a cry of command, with the voice of an archangel, and with the sound of the trumpet of God. And the dead in Christ will rise first. 17 Then we who are alive, who are left, will be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air, and so we will always be with the Lord. 18 Therefore encourage one another with these words” (1 Thessalonians 4:16–18).
 - Jesus’ return will be glorious, public, sudden, and visible.

Pursue the Lord

- “15 When the angels went away from them into heaven, the shepherds said to one another, ‘Let us go over to Bethlehem and see this thing that has happened, which the Lord has made known to us.’ 16 And they went with haste and found Mary and Joseph, and the baby lying in a manger” (vv. 15–16).
- Pursuing for Christmas
- Pursuing for Advent
 - We must pursue the Lord
 - “11 Since all these things are thus to be dissolved, what sort of people ought you to be in lives of holiness and godliness, 12 waiting for and hastening the coming of the day of God, because of which the heavens will be set on fire and dissolved, and the heavenly bodies will melt as they burn! 13 But according to his promise we are waiting for new heavens and a new earth in which righteousness dwells. 14 Therefore, beloved, since you are waiting for these, be diligent to be found by him without spot or blemish, and at peace. 15 And count the patience of our Lord as salvation, just as our beloved brother Paul also wrote to you according to the wisdom given him” (2 Peter 3:11–15).

- When we pursue the Lord, we extend the light of Christ by shining his light into our dark world.
- But in order to extend light, we must become light.

Wait for the Lord

- “And the shepherds returned . . .” (v. 20a).
- Waiting for Christmas
- Waiting for Advent
 - We must wait for the Lord
 - “8 But do not overlook this one fact, beloved, that with the Lord one day is as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day. 9 The Lord is not slow to fulfill his promise as some count slowness, but is patient toward you, not wishing that any should perish, but that all should reach repentance” (2 Peter 3:8–9).
 - “Advent contains within itself the crucial balance of the now and the not-yet that our faith requires. . . . The disappointment, brokenness, suffering, and pain that characterize life in this present world is held in dynamic tension with the promise of future glory that is yet to come. In that Advent tension, the church lives its life” (Fleming Rutledge, *Advent*, 7).

Glorify the Lord

- “And the shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all they had heard and seen, as it had been told them” (v. 20)
- Glorifying at Christmas
- Glorifying at Advent
 - “9 Therefore God has highly exalted him and bestowed on him the name that is above every name, 10 so that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, 11 and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father” (Philippians 2:9–11).
 - We were created for worship because we were created for God.
 - “To praise you is the desire of man, a little piece of your creation. You stir man to take pleasure in praising you, because you have made us for yourself, and our heart is restless until it rests in you” (Augustine, *Confessions*, i.1).

“And the angel said to them, “Fear not, for behold, I bring you good news of great joy that will be for all the people” (Luke 2:10).

We can have great joy now—Christmas

We can find great joy now—Advent

- Watch for the Lord
- Pursue the Lord
- Wait for the Lord
- Glorify the Lord