

Christmas Missionaries

Luke 2:8-16

Pastor Eddie Ildefonso

The Christmas narrative from **Luke chapter 2** introduces us to some individuals who we could easily call the **“ORIGINAL CHRISTMAS MISSIONARIES.”**

While the prophets may have told a story about one **who would come**,... **it was the shepherds** that would first proclaim the one... **who had come**.

As followers of Christ.... we should do nothing less this Christmas Season than to be Christmas Missionaries...

We should be telling others the story of the Good News...of Christ who has come to all of us.

There is perhaps no more of an opportune time for our doing this... than in this season in which we especially celebrate the Savior's birth.



Let's look at these original Christmas missionaries. The Shepherds... that first Christmas night.

Luke 2: 8-9

⁸ And there were in the same country shepherds abiding in the field, keeping watch over their flock by night.

⁹ And, lo, the angel of the Lord came upon them, and the glory of the Lord shone round about them: and they were sore afraid.

These shepherds were out in the field and they received a **declaration....**

Notice concerning these first Christmas Missionaries that they received a **DECLARATION.**

I. They Received A Declaration vv. 10-14

Verse 10 says

¹⁰ And the angel said unto them, Fear not: for, behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people.

¹¹ For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord. ¹² And this *shall be* a sign unto you; Ye shall find the babe wrapped in swaddling clothes, 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, good will toward men.

The angels had delivered a message to the shepherdsit was the **declaration** of **GOOD NEWS**.

Next we see that the shepherds were filled with anticipation

Look closely at **verse 15** and watch the excitement of the shepherds come alive as they experience anticipation in their heart.

15 When the angels had left them and gone into heaven, the shepherds said to one another, “Let’s go” (There was no hesitation, because of their great anticipation they said “let’s go”.)

¹⁵ And it came to pass, as the angels were gone away from them into heaven, the shepherds said one to another, “Let us now go” even unto Bethlehem, and see this thing which is come to pass, which the Lord hath made known unto us.

¹⁶ And they came with haste, and found Mary, and Joseph, and the babe lying in a manger.

They had received a **declaration**, a message delivered to them from heaven ...

A MESSAGE of GOOD NEWS ...

A MESSAGE OF JOY....

A MESSAGE THAT WOULD BRING HOPE FOR ALL PEOPLE.

Have you and I received such a declaration?

Haven’t we also gotten this same message?

If we have received this **declaration** then where is our anticipation,????.... where is our excitement not only over a Savior who has come but a Savior who is **COMING AGAIN**.

We ought to be **Christmas Missionaries** in the very finest sensetaking the **declaration** we have heard and received and with great anticipation we should be hurrying to tell others the message.

When we do this just as the shepherds did that very first Christmas night there will be **DECORATION**

Not only did those shepherds go and see **but then they told**.

Those first **Christmas Missionaries** ...the shepherds as they got involved sharing that declaration...they really begin an activity of **decoration**.

Now watch carefully next in these verses ...for the **DECORATION** these shepherds bring.

¹⁷ And when they had seen *it* (Jesus), they made known abroad the saying which was told them concerning this child.

They spread the word....

They really began to spread Christmas cheer.

They began to DECORATE the lives of those they could share with.

Now watch this next part... as the **decoration** begins....It is like they were turning on beautiful Christmas lights with each person that the shepherds told.

¹⁸ And all they that heard *it* wondered (amazed) at those things which were told them by the shepherds.

¹⁹ But Mary kept (treasured) all these things, and pondered *them* in her heart.

The shepherds went about **decorating** Christmas wherever they went...

How did they **decorate this first Christmas...you might ask?**

Not with tinsel or garland.

Not with glass balls or glowing lights but

They spread the word of God's light which had come into the world.

This was their **Decoration of the world with God's Love.**

Are you and I **decorating this Christmas???**

Are we **decorating the lives of all those we can with the light of God's love....by spreading the word.**

Decoration is that which beautifies.

There is nothing that beautifies the world more than God's marvelous love made known to all people throughout your community and then throughout the earth.

Decorating with the message of God's having sent a savior into the world.

When the shepherds went out telling the good news of a savior who was born it caused peoples lives to light up like a beautiful ornament.

V 19 says**"all who heard it were amazed at what the shepherds said to them."**

Lastly see the difference it made in the **Dedication** it had brought to these simple shepherd's lives.

The **dedication** of praise and glory and honor to God that these shepherd's lives now possessed.

²⁰ **And the shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all the things that they had heard and seen, as it was told unto them.**

Sure these shepherds returned to their fields but they returned different.
They returned changed.

Whereas before the shepherds conversations may have been of how many shining stars there would be in the sky....

they now were filled with conversation of the one star of heaven and earth that shined bright with a promise for all.

Their lives became fountains of glory and praise to the God who had brought them salvation.

**They were not only living
They were a living testimony of a changed life.
A life now dedicated to the one thing that really made a difference.**

How is it with you and I.

Surely everyone here today has heard the **declaration** that Christ was born for us but not only that but that He came to die for us and rise again that He might lift us to eternal life...

Haven't we all received that Declaration?

Well what is our anticipation of what in heaven awaits us and are we hurrying to tell others the good news?

Because this will be our greatest **decoration** to decorate the world with God's love through the sharing of Christ....spreading the word of **GOOD NEWS** as the shepherds (**the first Christmas Missionaries**) did that first Christmas.

As people see us now....
Do we show out...
that changed life
a life of **dedication**.... to praising and glorifying God just as those first Christmas missionaries did?

Their lives were changed by God and theirs was a **dedication** to praising and glorifying God with their lives.

Have we reached that point of dedication?

I want to encourage you in this season of special opportunity to take the

DECLARATION you have received and to go out and get involved with
DECORATION spreading the Good News to others....and never grow weary in your
changed life of **DEDICATION** to praising and glorifying God.