

Connection

What could you possibly have in common with the lowly shepherds at Bethlehem?

Content -

Like the little drummer boy in the Christmas song, we may approach Jesus wondering what we could possibly have to offer Him. But, God says don't overthink it; bring who you are.

What would you have done in the presence of the baby Jesus?

Consider this:

Here you are, living life, doing your job, and God gets your attention.

Sometimes you fear, but Good News and great joy overtake fear.

Now you get a chance to respond, bringing you to Jesus,
and sending you out with a deep satisfaction.

Let's look at this in the light of Luke 2:8-20 and the experience of the shepherds on the night Jesus was born.

God gets your attention.

Read Luke 2:9. An angel appeared out of nowhere. As with the shepherds, it's in the middle of doing what we do from day to day that God breaks in. He brings these moments to us, moments when we can't turn away. These are moments of belief. God shows up and says, "I have something more for you."

1. Describe, if you can, a time you knew God was making himself known to you.

Sometimes you fear...

When the angel appeared, the shepherds were terrified. Confronted by God, we can end up in a place of fear. After all, God is awesome. His presence is overpowering.

2. Why would God sometimes need to confront you in a way that makes you afraid?

3. When have you felt fear or worry over a thing you know God wants you to do?

Good News and great joy overtake fear.

Read verses 10-14. The angel says not to fear. Then he tells the shepherds what's going on down in Bethlehem—the Messiah is born! This is the Good News, the “Good Spell (word),” the Gospel. Fear is being confronted with faith. God has made a way, through Jesus.

4. If you only had a moment to tell the reason for your faith, what’s your “elevator pitch” for the Good News of Jesus?

Now you get a chance to respond, bringing you to Jesus...

Read verses 15-16. After the royal proclamation from a “heavenly host,” the shepherds respond. What’s next for them? They bolted into Bethlehem and found the baby Jesus. God’s goal for everyone is that they meet Jesus.

5. Have you met Jesus? If you have, how did that happen?

And sending you out...

Read verses 17-18. The shepherds heard and saw something wonderful that God was doing. Their next move wasn’t in question. They spread the word. It wasn’t an assignment to them; they just went and told the good news about God.

With a deep satisfaction.

Read verses 19-20. Jesus’ mother, Mary, “treasured” and considered all this. The shepherds went back to work “glorifying” God. They saw the beautiful thing God was doing and were deeply satisfied.

6. What beautiful thing has God done in your life this week?

Commitment

When Jesus makes himself known, lives change. He uses us to make himself known, and like Romans 10:15 reminds us, “How beautiful are the feet of those who bring good news!” Here’s one way to think about bringing the good news:

Expect God to work.

Exalt and worship when he does.

Exclaim to another person what God has done.

The shepherds outside Bethlehem took themselves to Jesus. They were nothing special, except to God. Romans 12:1 calls believers in Jesus to be “living sacrifices.”

This Christmas season, what is one thing you can do to live as a “living sacrifice”?