

# The Shepherd's Wife

## Part 3

December 15, 2024

Luke 2:8-20, Hebrews 12:2, John 3:30, Revelation 7:10

### **DAY 1: Christmas and "the shepherd's wife"**

1. This Sunday, we'll watch a video of "historical fiction." It is the story of a fictional shepherd's wife who heard what her husband witnessed on Christmas night.
2. It is important to remember that the figurines that are part of the Nativity sets and scenes we enjoy at Christmas represent real people. They were not just characters in a story but individuals whose lives were deeply impacted when they saw Jesus and witnessed His Majesty that first Christmas.
3. Likewise, the lowly shepherds tending sheep were not just props for a decorative piece in our homes; they were real people with real lives and families who experienced something...real.
4. And for the shepherds who were present in the Christmas story, they told everyone they crossed paths with the good news they had witnessed first-hand. The shepherd's wife in the video recounted part of that "good news." It is good news that needs to be shared with everyone.

*Luke 2:8 And there were shepherds living out in the fields nearby, keeping watch over their flocks at night. <sup>9</sup> An angel of the Lord appeared to them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were terrified. <sup>10</sup> But the angel said to them, "Do not be afraid. I bring you good news that will cause great joy for all the people. <sup>11</sup> Today in the town of David a Savior has been born to you; he is the Messiah, the Lord. <sup>12</sup> This will be a sign to you: You will find a baby wrapped in cloths and lying in a manger."*

*<sup>13</sup> Suddenly a great company of the heavenly host appeared with the angel, praising God and saying, <sup>14</sup> "Glory to God in the highest heaven, and on earth peace to those on whom his favor rests."*

*<sup>15</sup> 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."*

*<sup>16</sup> So they hurried off and found Mary and Joseph, and the baby, who was lying in the manger.*

*<sup>17</sup> When they had seen him, they spread the word concerning what had been told them about this child, <sup>18</sup> and all who heard it were amazed at what the shepherds said to them. <sup>19</sup> But Mary treasured up all these things and pondered them in her heart. <sup>20</sup> The shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all the things they had heard and seen, which were just as they had been told.*

5. What strikes you from this Christmas account in Luke?

## DAY 2: The shepherds tell their story

1. The shepherds told and kept on telling a good news story that was worth sharing with everybody everywhere.
2. When a person witnesses the majesty of God, it is a story worth telling. When God does anything in a person's life, it is a story worth sharing with others.
3. God wants us to share our stories about Him and how He has impacted, and changed our lives from the inside out.

*Hebrews 12:2 Let us fix our eyes on Jesus, the **author** and **perfecter** of our faith... NASB*

4. Jesus is authoring your faith story so that He can receive glory for Himself.
5. That means that ultimately, your story is not so much about you. Instead, it is about living a life that points back to the birth, life, death, and resurrection of Jesus.
6. That is what we see the shepherds doing in the birth narrative of Jesus' story. They were telling their version of the story of what they witnessed that focused on Jesus.
7. Even though you have a main role in the story of your life, the true star of the script is the author and perfecter of your faith story...Jesus. So, if you were hoping to star in your movie...SORRY! John emphasizes this point.  
*John 3:30 "He must become greater; I must become less."*
8. More of Jesus and less of me is a good thing!
9. One of the most effective ways to tell others about Jesus and the story of the Gospel is to share your story. That's what the shepherds did in Luke 2. As a result of sharing their story, it likely impacted the spouses and family members they were close to, as was represented by the shepherd's wife in the video. And she, in turn, then told the story and how it impacted her husband, herself, and their relationship.
10. When you think about God's story in your life what things come to mind?

### **DAY 3: Putting your faith story together**

1. Stories are powerful and have a way of impacting lives. Any good story has a **beginning**, a **turning point**, and a **conclusion** that leads somewhere important.

a. In our shepherd's story, the **beginning** was them out in the fields keeping watch over their flocks by night.

b. The **turning point** was when the angels showed up with the good news of great joy about the Savior being born that they were invited to see as He lay in the manger in the City of David. As they went and found the Christ-child wrapped in swaddling clothes in the manger, they witnessed His Majesty, just as the angels had told them.

c. The **conclusion** led them to leave the manger while praising God and telling everybody this good news that had been shared with them. That was their story; they shared it freely and joyously because it was their personal experience.

2. As you consider ways to share your own faith story with others, consider three short chapters:

a. What was your life like **before** you became a Christ-follower? Jot down a few thoughts.

b. **How** did you become a Christ-follower? Jot down a few thoughts.

c. What has happened in your life **since** you became a Christ-follower? Jot down your thoughts.

3. That's your story. That's sharing the good news. That is what is known as evangelism. Evangelism is the spreading of the Christian gospel by public preaching or personal witness. It's sharing your story of how you became a follower of Jesus and what life was like before and after that decision.

4. Evangelism is about investing in people relationally and inviting them into **conversations** about Jesus. It is God who draws all people unto Himself. It is God who does the saving. The name of Jesus means "God Saves." The angels told the shepherds to go to Bethlehem because a Savior had been born to save the world from their sins.

5. God gives us a speaking role in the faith stories of other people who do not yet have a relationship with Jesus.

## **DAY 4: Making your faith story YOUR faith story**

1. When you share your faith story, sometimes people will listen and be open; other times people may not respond that way. Regardless, remember...

*Revelation 7:10 Salvation belongs to our God.*

2. The conversation is **your** part. Someone's conversion is **God's** part.

3. As we have opportunities to share our faith stories, just as the shepherds did, remember your story has three mini-chapters. Before + How + Since.

a. **Before:** Write out 2-3 sentences that describe your life before Jesus saved you.

b. **How:** Write down how you became a Christian.

c. **Since:** Write out 2-3 ways God is changing your life since coming to Jesus.

4. Smoothing out your faith story:

a. Avoid your "churchy" language

For example: instead of saying: "I asked Jesus into my heart." Perhaps say: "I asked Jesus to be in charge of my life."

b. Keep it short: 3 minutes or less

c. Practice telling **each** mini-story out loud, with your notes.

d. Keep it short, simple, and clear.

e. You are not practicing a sales speech. You are preparing for a conversation.

f. Ask God to give you an opportunity to at least share one part of your faith story this week.

