

## 2011 ADVENT #2 ANGEL VISITS- THE ANGEL SENT TO SHEPHERDS

### Luke 2: 8-20

One this fourth Sunday of Advent  
 We look at the surprised visit of Angels to the shepherds.  
 My question is: What has surprised you this Christmas?  
 Maybe you don't like surprises.  
 Some people don't ,  
 If not I found this advice...  
 Eat a live toad the first thing in the morning and nothing will surprise you the rest of the day.

I like the perception of a disgruntled little boy was asked:  
 What do you think your mom and dad have in common?  
 He said: Both don't want any more kids.

I was reading an interesting quote –  
 from a book you may have read to your children or grandchildren,

SLIDE----The book is by Dr. Seuss, and is entitled  
 'One Fish, Two Fish, Red Fish, Blue Fish.'  
 The quote is brief:

SLIDE----  
 "From there to here,  
 from here to there,  
 funny things  
 are everywhere."

Funny things are everywhere!

SLIDE----For the Shepherds it was  
 wolves or foxes, thieves or disease,  
 They shared a 3 hour watch day and night.  
 Over their sheep.  
 An important job since,  
 Tending flocks formed the basis of the Palestine economy.  
 Sheep raised on the hillsides,  
 Were destined for the temple sacrifices in Jerusalem  
 Only six miles to the north.  
 And it was a booming business.

But Funny things are everywhere.  
 I'm sure the Shepherds must have thought that.  
 On that first night of Advent

SLIDE----When suddenly an angel appeared.

Shepherds don't spend a lot of time  
 Looking back, or looking forward,  
 They are caught up in the now, in the present.  
 Caring for the sheep,  
 They are busy watching sheep.

SLIDE---**8And there were shepherds living out in the fields nearby, keeping watch over their flocks at night. Luke 2:8**

But Funny things are everywhere  
 Where the past and the future are captured together.  
 The Christ who was to come and the  
 Christ who was to save.  
 Had arrived with power and great glory

**SLIDE---An angel of the Lord appeared to them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were terrified. Luke 2:8-9**

Glory can be also translated Light.  
**And the light of the Lord shone around them.**

No wonder they were terrified,  
 They not only heard from one angel,  
 Whose name we are not told,

SLIDE---But immediately they were surrounded by a multitude of Angels.

This was very unusual.  
 This is one of the only times in the Bible  
 Where an Angel appears and is seen by more than just one person.  
 Zechariah saw one angel  
 Joseph saw one angel  
 Mary saw one angel.  
 But this was a heavenly host, a multitude of Angels  
 Things just got better.

SLIDE---**13 Suddenly a great company of the heavenly host appeared with the angel, praising God and saying, (SLIDE)--- "Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace to men on whom his favor rests." Luke 2:13-14**

This was like winning the Publishers House Sweepstakes.

The angels reveal that  
 Jesus came not just for mankind,  
 But to reveal to heaven and earth  
 To all of mankind and to all the order of angels,  
**The Glory to God in the Highest**

The glories revealed is of the birth of a messiah.  
 The angels weren't in on all the planning.  
 They weren't told the story of a babe in a manger  
 Until it happened.  
 They were called to announce and sing.  
 And sing or chant they did.  
 Not only could they worship God,  
 But they could now worship a Babe in a manger,

**SLIDE----These are the things that even angels long to look into. 1 Peter 1:12,**

On that first Christmas eve,  
 Angels and Mankind become one family.  
 As heaven and earth share in the fruits and benefits.

**SLIDE---For this reason I kneel before the Father, from whom his whole family in heaven**

**and on earth derives its name...that you may be filled to the measure of all the fullness of God. Ephesians 3:14-15,19**

That's what Angel are about.  
To make know to us the fullness of God.  
To bless us and minister to us.

Let me just say this before we leave the Angels.  
They are still with us doing God's bidding.

One lady tells how she took a shortcut home down a dark, abandoned road  
When she noticed a set of taillights ahead of her.  
It wasn't until she was ten feet from the car  
That she noticed it wasn't moving.  
The man had stopped to talk to someone in a car in the opposite lane.  
She slammed on her brakes,  
Gripped the steering wheel and waited for death.  
She said: I heard the tires squeal,  
Then the car suddenly stopped short  
She had missed the other car by an inch.  
Looking around the car.  
She saw that the emergency brake was standing straight up.  
Someone had pull it.  
But it wasn't me.  
She said as she drove off. "Psalms 91 rang in my head"  
**"He will give his angels charge over you, to keep you in all your ways..."Psalm 91**  
Angel are present here to make sure we understand  
Gods goodness and love.

To make sure the Shepherds understand,  
They not only get a prophesy fulfilled,  
Or a make a wish dream come true, But  
They get a immediate sign.  
Like the old saying  
"Proof is in the Pudding."  
Proof was in the manger.

**Today in the town of David a Savior has been born to you; he is Christ the Lord. Luke 2:11**

Zechariah had to go home and wait with his old wife.  
To show signs she was pregnant.  
Mary had to wait for her sign of pregnancy to be verified.  
Joseph had to work through his feelings and prejudices  
And take the word of a dream for his sign to be proved true.

But for the Shepherds  
It was immediate.

**12This will be a sign to you: You will find a baby wrapped in cloths and lying in a manger." Luke 2:12**

It happened the very night they were told the message.

The sign of that angelic Host.  
The sign of a baby wrapped in cloths, lying in a manger.

They respond immediately.

**15When 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."**

They went from being frightful to being faithful.  
"Let's go as fast as we can, that we may see this reconciler of God and man."

Not long ago a man from India who had recently become a Christian was interviewed. He told of the tremendous fear that he had in his life. Fear of fate, fear of the future, fear of the unknown, Fear of his own sin and guilt. But after receiving Christ as his Savior, The fear was replaced by a deep faith in the love and goodness of God.

That is what happened to the shepherds.  
From fear to faith,  
"Come on lets go."  
All delays are dangerous.

This is the point of the Shepherds and Angel  
For us today.  
They give us the greatest advice  
For all who seek a new life.

Don't delay coming to Jesus,  
When you delay  
Your risk your present safety and  
Your eternal happiness.  
Oh friends it doesn't matter how old or young you are,  
The world is at war to win your mind and your soul.

O, what would the damned in hell give  
To have those moment back in which they  
heard the message of salvation,  
and had the possibility of receiving it,  
but delayed  
until it was too late.

Oh Listener be wise,  
And commit yourself to God.  
Come to the manger,  
Come to the savior.  
Come and be at peace,  
And God's goodness will come to you.  
How do we know that?  
The sign of the angel spoke was true.

**So they hurried off and found Mary and Joseph, and the baby, who was lying in the manger. Luke 2:16**

God's sign of the Holy Spirit for your life is also true.

**"As many as received him to them he gave the power to become Children of God." John 1:12**

You come and you will be changed.

The shepherd came and were changed.

From shepherds to messengers of good news

**When they had seen him, they spread the word concerning what had been told them about this child, and all who heard it were amazed at what the shepherds said to them. Luke 2:17-18**

Something had happened to them.

That changed them forever.

They went immediately to the villages and towns

**Verse 17. They made known abroad the saying**

They spoke of what they had seen and heard.

And what had changed them.

The shepherds are our prime example

That When you come to God.

And you allow him to touch your life.

Your life will be changed.

You will not return back to life the way you came.

You will not return back to your computer,

Or to your home,

Back to your spouse

Back to your children. The same way.

But you will have a heart that is filled

With glory and praise to God

For all that he had done.

**20The shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all the things they had heard and seen, which were just as they had been told. Luke 2:20**

Will you open your heart and let Jesus come in?