

The Shepherds

Luke 2:8-20, Luke 2:1



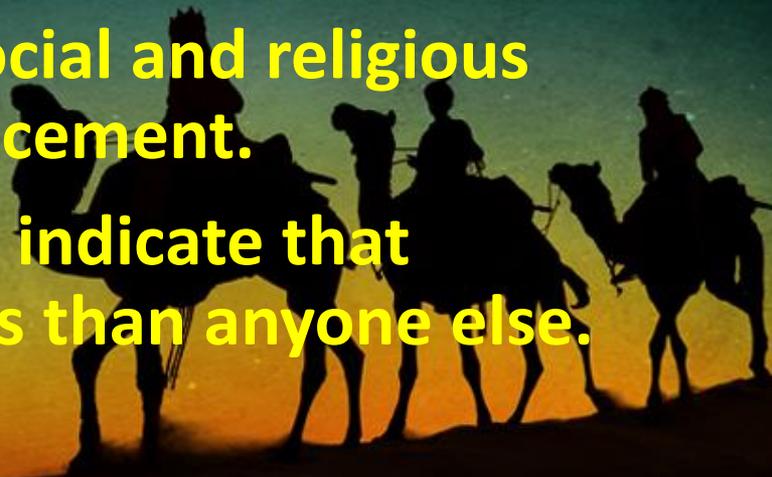
Shepherds

- Shepherds were social and religious outcasts.
- Shepherds were looked on with suspicion.
- Shepherds were not permitted to give testimony in legal proceedings.
- Shepherds did not have much contact with other people.
- Being a shepherd was lonely, wearisome, boring, tedious, and yet sometimes extremely dangerous.



Announcing the Birth of Jesus

- To whom do you announce an event which will literally change the course of history – the birth of God's only Son, Jesus Christ?
- An event like the birth of Christ would logically be announced to the most important people in the nation.
- Only a few poor shepherds, social and religious outcasts, received the announcement.
- There's nothing in scripture to indicate that shepherds were more religious than anyone else.



Why Shepherds?

- **Why did God only send the angels to the shepherds?**
 - **Jesus Himself is later called the Good Shepherd.**
 - **God wanted to show that His love does not discriminate on the basis of class, wealth, or social standing.**
- **God does not show favoritism; He does not give preferential treatment to one group of people over another.**
- **Jesus was not going to be the Savior of only kings and governors, or popes and priests.**
- **God likes to use people who are humble, lowly, and ordinary, because that makes His power and wisdom all the more evident.**



What Does All This Mean To Us

- If you identify with the shepherds, it should be encouraging.
- You may feel like God does not care about someone like you; like you don't fit in.
- The good news is that God loves you, just like He loved those shepherds.
- We are special to God.
- God gave the shepherds the privilege of being the first to hear of Christ's birth.
- The shepherds received this privilege because they were humble, ordinary people with no high opinion of themselves.



Conclusion

- God is inviting you today, just like he invited the shepherds.
- Recognize that in God's sight, you are on the same level as everyone else; you don't have a head start with God.
- You are accepted before God on the same basis as anyone else.
- What did the shepherds do in response to what they had seen and heard, they "*spread the word.*"
- Let's do the same for the sake of all the others who are still waiting to hear the good news.

