

What Do You Do with the Most Important Message in the World?

Intro:

1. When my children were born, I announced their birth to everyone. I was overjoyed!
2. So why are we so reluctant to share the greatest birth announcement in history? The shepherds weren't!

Luke 2:8-20

I. v8-14 - They Received the Revelation

A. What was the revelation?

1. **v10** - It was **Good news**.
 - a. The gospel is called the "good news". **ILL: The Syrian Courier's Victory Announcement.**
 - b. Our "good news" message is that Lord Jesus (God with us) was born - lived a perfect life - died on the cross for your salvation - & was gloriously resurrected paving the way for your resurrection!
2. **v10** - It was of **Great Joy** - both now & eternally.
 - a. The Lord said, **The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy; I have come that they may have life, and have it to the full.** - Jn 10:10.
 - b. Abundant life begins at your new birth & lasts forever! That should bring you joy!
3. **v10** - It was for **everyone** - regardless of race, nationality, family, social or economic status.
4. **v11** - It was **Christ the Lord**.
 - a. In announcing the Lord's birth to Mary, Gabriel said, **The virgin will be with child and will give birth to a son, and they will call him Immanuel" — which means, "God with us.** - Matt 1:23.
 - b. The message of Christmas is not Santa, or Christmas shopping or stocking by the fireplace.
 - c. The message of Christmas is not even stables, or shepherds or wise men.
 - d. The message of Christmas is **God is now with us!**
5. **v13-14** - It was **praise to God & peace to mankind**.
 - a. This is the message of praise to the One who would love you this much - **But God demonstrates his own love for us in this: While we were still sinners, Christ died for us.** - Rom 5:8.
 - b. This is the message of peace because the Lord brings peace to a confused life - **The mind of sinful man is death, but the mind controlled by the Spirit is life and peace.** - Rom 8:6.
 - c. But this peace is for the ones who have Lord Jesus in their lives - **Let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts, since as members of one body you were called to peace.** - Col 3:15.

B. But how do we, like the shepherds, receive this revelation?

1. You open your heart to the word of God - **Rom 10:17 - Consequently, faith comes from hearing the message, and the message is heard through the word of Christ.**
2. You have to accept this word by faith. **Eph 2:8 - For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith.**

II. v15-16 - They Searched for the Savior

A. How did the shepherds respond to this revelation?

1. **v15** - They felt an urgent need to back up their new faith with actions!
2. **v16** - They hurried off (KJV - went with haste) - they had to see the baby right now!
 - a. Not likely they herded the sheep to Bethlehem. They ran!
 - b. Finding Jesus was their top priority!

B. How do you respond to the revelation? Do you put your faith into actions?

1. Christian baptism should be your initial response.
 - a. The first 3000 to hear the gospel in **Acts 2:41** - **Those who accepted his message were baptized, and about three thousand were added to their number that day.**
 - b. The Samaritan's response in **Acts 8:12** - **But when they believed Philip as he preached the good news of the kingdom of God and the name of Jesus Christ, they were baptized, both men and women.**
 - c. The Ethiopian's response in **Acts 8:38** - **And he gave orders to stop the chariot. Then both Philip and the eunuch went down into the water and Philip baptized him.**
 - d. Paul's initial response in **Acts 9:18** - **He got up and was baptized.**
 - e. Cornelius' family's response in **Acts 10:48** - **So he ordered that they be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ.**
 - f. Lydia's response in **Acts 16:15** - . . . she and the members of her household were baptized.
 - g. The Philippian Jailer's response in **Acts 16:33** - . . . then immediately he and all his family were baptized.
 - h. The Corinthian's response in **Acts 18:8** - . . . Many of the Corinthians who heard him believed and were baptized.
 - i. The Ephesians' response in **Acts 19:5** - **On hearing this, they were baptized into the name of the Lord Jesus.**
2. After your baptism you begin to grow in your personal relationship through Bible study, fellowship & prayer. **Col 3:1-2** - **Since, then, you have been raised with Christ, set your hearts on things above, where Christ is seated at the right hand of God. Set your minds on things above, not on earthly things.**

III. v17-20 - They Made Known the Message

A. How did they do it?

1. **v17** - **Spread the word** (γῠωπιζω) = (KJV) "made known", to know something by experience.
 - a. A witness in court testifies only to what he has personally seen, heard or experienced.
 - b. Your witness is to testify to what you have seen, heard or experienced with the Lord!
2. **v18 & 20** - They created such an interest in what they had heard & experienced that those who heard them wondered & marveled!

B. Who else witnessed this way in the NT?

1. One prophet - John the Baptist.
2. One biblical scholar - Paul.
3. The rest were common folks: fishermen, soldiers, merchants & an IRS man.

C. How can you make known the message?

1. First: personally experience the Lord Jesus through Bible study, fellowship, devotions & prayer.
2. Second: Allow fruit to develop in your life through obedience to the Holy Spirit (**Gal 5:22-23**).
3. Third: Let the Holy Spirit spill over from your life to affect others. **II Pet 3:15** - **But in your hearts set apart Christ as Lord. Always be prepared to give an answer to everyone who asks you to give the reason for the hope that you have.**

REMEMBER: The first century Christians, under persecution, proclaimed Lord Jesus everywhere they went. If you have something better than the world has to offer, let them know it!