



Go, Tell It on the Mountain

How often have we received information that brought us such excitement that we could not wait to share it with others? A new job offer, an answered prayer regarding a sick loved one, a marriage proposal, the triumph of a favorite sports team, the birth of a baby. Phones begin to ring and announcements are sent via email, text message or blog. “Guess what?! You’ll never believe what has happened!”

The emotions that fill us when we act as bearers of such news—the urgency, the overwhelming enthusiasm, the bubbling joy—characterized a group of ordinary shepherds who experienced an unbelievable event late one night. Trying to eke out a living, perhaps rotating who slept and who watched the herds of sheep, these men were simply engaging in a habitual practice that evening. An occasional bleat, a sleepy sigh, the rhythmic snore of another shepherd punctuated the otherwise silent, dark night.

Suddenly, a blinding light from above pierced the darkness and sent a tremor of fear and shock through the sleepy shepherds. A shining being spoke from the brightness, urging them not to be afraid, shouting that good news was at hand. “A baby boy has been born, a Savior, a child who is the long-awaited Messiah! You will know you have found him when you see a baby wrapped in cloths, lying in a manger!” As if the overwhelmed shepherds had not experienced enough surprise for a lifetime, a host of other heavenly beings also appeared, saying, “Glory to God in the highest!”

Perhaps the men turned to each other in amazement, speculating on what had just occurred and how they should respond. Maybe they hesitated briefly, wondering if the townspeople would consider them crazy; or maybe they jumped up and started running, without regard for others’ reactions. Somehow, they came to the conclusion that they *must* go, and thus they hurriedly sought to find the Christ-child.

Finding the baby just as the angel had promised, the shepherds must have experienced deep confirmation, great joy and excitement over the miraculous event. And their reaction? “When they had seen him [Jesus], they spread the word concerning what had been told them about this child,” (Luke 2:17, NIV). This unbelievable event could not be kept to themselves; they had to tell others! The angel stated that this good news would be for all people, and the shepherds refused to keep silent when they witnessed evidence of the good news.

We, too, have met and received such a Savior! God has sent us salvation! Go, tell the news! On the mountain, over the hills and everywhere! Jesus Christ is born!