



Christian Life Fellowship

Becoming fully devoted followers of Christ



No Excuses

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Introduction:

We continue with our series, NO EXCUSES, through the Advent season.

We have talked about God offering no excuses and sending Jesus; we talked about Mary offering her being for the miraculous to take place. Last Sunday we talked about the innkeeper offering a small place for Mary to give birth and we talked about the magi not offering any excuse for coming to worship the King of Kings and present their treasure to him. At this point we have talked about making ourselves available and making a place for Christ through our giving of finances, time and place. Today we will be focused on giving place to Christ by telling others about Christ.

This morning we are going to look at the shepherds. The shepherds were common people. They were doing their job. They didn't ask to see angels, to hear the announcement of Christ's birth; they simply wanted to do their job. They did not offer any excuse when they found the things as the angels told them. They were amazed and excited.

Luke 2:15 - 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."

Luke 2:17-18 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.

The shepherds gave no excuse for telling what they had seen and heard. Today we are going to talk about offering no excuses when it comes to telling others about Jesus coming. This is an area where we need to get past our fear, past our shyness, past our insecurities.

Everyone wants to hear good news. When someone is going to get married, when someone is going to have a baby, when someone graduates from school or when someone gets a promotion at work everyone wants to know about it. Good news demands that someone tell it. Good news is not something that you keep to yourself.

I. Make sure you have the facts straight before you share the story.

There is nothing more embarrassing than to share something with someone else only to find out later

that what you shared wasn't true, or it wasn't like you thought you heard it. We have all played the game called "gossip" where we share something that someone tells us. Without checking on whether we

heard accurately or if what we send on is the truth, we pass it on.

The shepherds decided to check out this announcement for themselves. They did not want to just take someone else's word for things; they wanted to see for themselves what the Lord had told them about. Usually we don't want to just take someone else's word for things. We want to experience things ourselves. Before you tell the story be sure you believe it. Even though the shepherds might have been skeptical, they believed what they had seen and heard.

When you tell someone what you believe, they have the opportunity for the miraculous to take place; to be-believe.

II. People will think I am crazy.

The shepherds were not crazy. If someone told you they were doing their job, and they saw an angel, and it spoke to them and told them about a baby being born in a specific city, you might think they were crazy. But if then they told you they went looking and found the baby exactly as this being told them they would find it, you might think differently about them.

So often we use the excuse of not sharing the good news with other people because of the fear of what they might think of us. If people want to think you are crazy for telling them the greatest news ever, then so is it. When we credibly tell people what it is that we have experienced, they can think whatever they like. At least in our time we have scripture and the written word of God to back up what we believe and what we have experienced.

We should not let our fear keep us from sharing the truth as God gives us opportunity. Be enthused about what you share. I don't think the shepherds were probably very animated people. They did their job. They sheared their sheep, they assisted in the birth of young lambs, they kept predators away, and they led the sheep to places to feed and rest and sold the sheep and wool at market. It was their lively hood and it was probably pretty mundane. This particular night was different. The events that took place that night certainly impacted the boring, routine night out on the hillside for the shepherds.

They could not keep quiet about what they had seen and heard.

III. It is not politically correct to share what I believe in these times.

In the day when Jesus was born, people had to be aware of political correctness. I cannot imagine the challenge today to be as great as it was in those days. Jesus was born at a time when the Roman Empire was doing everything it could to keep the Jewish people from organizing and gaining influence in government. When talk was circulating that the king of the Jews had been born, it is no wonder that King Herod made the decree that all male children under the age of two years were to be killed. He did not want any rival kings to deal with. So the thought was to kill any possibility before this new king could get established and gain political power and clout.

Remember the angel told the shepherds they brought good tidings of great joy that would be to all people. So I suppose that the shepherds wanted to be careful as to who they shared the good tidings with about the birth of Jesus as king.

There are people today in our world who think that it is wrong for Christ to be brought into the public; into the market place. There are people who do not want the influence of Jesus in their life or in their world. They want no symbols, no signs, and no scriptures. They want nothing spoken or written that would tell who Jesus is or what He came to do. They hide behind the excuse of separation of church and state.

We are compelled to share the truth. There should be no excuses when it comes to telling people what we believe and what we have experienced. How does the message get told unless those who believe it are willing without excuse to speak up? Last Sunday afternoon when we had a group of about 18-20 people from CLF caroling at the local grocery store, we were taking Christ into the marketplace. Last night when we went to some local taverns to share with the patrons there, we were taking Christ into the market place. God did not send His son into the world to condemn the world, but that the world through Him might be saved.

IV. People will not listen.

At times people have to earn the right to be heard. However, people will usually listen to a story. One of the best examples we have is Christ Himself. He told stories to people and they listened and responded to His teachings.

In [Luke 2: 17-18](#) - we read that all who heard what the shepherds had to share were amazed.

It is truly amazing that God would risk sending His Son into a hostile world to show His love to His creation. It is truly amazing that God would love without boundaries and be willing to assume the penalty of death for my sin and your sin.

IV. Telling others brings joy.

Conclusion:

There are still people who need to hear. How can they hear unless someone tells them the story? How can the miraculous take place in someone else unless we are willing to share what we have heard and seen? The miraculous takes place when we share the story with others. We should willingly seek opportunities to give Christ a place in our speech by sharing the good news with others.

Here is the challenge: take the next step. Make a commitment to share with others what you have heard and seen about Jesus. Some of you come from families where Christ is not served or loved. Some of you need to share the story with your friends, with neighbors or with co-workers.

Use the couple of days we still have before Christmas to share the good news. See what miraculous thing God might choose to do through your speech. Offer no excuses for not sharing and see what God might do with your giving Him your being, place, resources, worship and speech.

“Heaven is still waiting to pour promise into earth’s most unlikely place.” [Jack Hayford](#) – *“The Christmas Miracle”*

The shepherds glorified and praised God for what they had seen and heard. It was exactly as they had been told by the angel. I have had the joy of sharing the good news with people and after they had heard the message, they decided to check it out for themselves. What joy comes from telling the story?

[Luke 2:20](#) - The shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all the things they had heard and seen which were just as they had been told.

Praising and glorifying God were the result of sharing what they had heard and seen. The potential for the miraculous to take place happens when the good news is communicated.