

**Sermon Series:** *Come Behold the Wondrous Mystery*

**Sermon title:** *The Shepherds*

**Scripture text:** Luke 2:8-20

Clearwater Bay International Baptist Church

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S.C. Brown, Pastor

Thank you for your prayers as I studied this week. I struggled so much this week trying to find out what the main point of this passage was. I really kept asking the Lord, “Why did you bring the shepherds to the birth of Jesus?” “Why them?”

It wasn't until 4:30am on Saturday morning that I finally figured it out.

**Let's pray.**

Here in this well known Christmas passage, we behold a wondrous mystery.

The most important person to ever be born...  
God the Son, the second person of the  
Trinity....becoming flesh and dwelling among us.

The King of the Universe.  
The ONE who controls every molecule in all of the  
galaxies has become a human baby.  
The ONE who spoke Quasars into existence with a  
word...is wrapped in rags.

The Savior,  
The Christ,  
The Lord...is in a feeding trough.

It is a mystery.  
It is not what we would expect.

### **Why did God do it this way?**

As Darrell Bock says, it's a "*Study in contrasts between how God did it and how we would've done it.*"

Our world today is infatuated with self and promoting self. Life for many today is a gallery of pictures, posts and snapshots of how interesting our lives are. Our value these days is deeply tied to the projection of our story and the number of people who "Like" us.

To be honest, it seems most of the world is screaming for acceptance and applause.

**Yet**, when God entered the world....he chose to do it quietly and humbly.

He didn't post his arrival on Facebook or Instagram or WeChat moments and no prophet was shouting it out in the city streets.

The small village of Bethlehem... slept.  
Jerusalem, the holy city, knew nothing of it.  
In Rome,..... there was silence.

But the Bible records that there are some people there to see this wonder or wonders.

## **Shepherds!**

Why Shepherds? People who keep sheep.

They are there in the fields doing their job....looking after the sheep....protecting them, making sure they get grass and water.

God chooses and uses common ordinary shepherds to be the first eyewitnesses to who Jesus is...

**nobody special, just ordinary people.**

They would be (besides Mary and Joseph) the only witnesses of the birth of Jesus.

## **Why them?**

*Some* like to suggest that they were despised people. Outcasts from society. Unwanted, dirty, poor loners who nobody loved. And the reason they are there at the birth of Jesus is so that we know Jesus loves the poor and dirty.

Well, Jesus surely loves the poor but there isn't much evidence that Shepherds were despised people even if they were probably dirty.

After all, most Bible heroes and the Patriarchs were shepherds!!

Adam, Abel, Abraham, Issac, Jacob and his 12 sons, Moses, David....and even God himself in **Psalm 80** is called *the Shepherd of Israel* !

So, it doesn't seem to be because they are poor and despised.

So Why shepherds?

**\*Because if it was anyone else we might be looking at them and not at Jesus.**

Because they were so common, they weren't going to steal the limelight.

But God chooses shepherds, not the business leaders.  
Go chose shepherds, not the government leaders.  
God chose shepherds not the smartest and brightest.

God is jealous for his glory.

Here in this most important moment in Earth's history, God wanted to make sure our eyes are on Jesus and not others.

We are meant to see Jesus and his glory.

The angel's announcements to the shepherds point us the right direction.

“Glory to **GOD** in the highest, and on earth peace..among those with whom he is pleased....or with whom his favor rests.”

Glory to **GOD** and not to shepherds or wise men or Mary and Joseph.

The ONE who lays in the manger is the ONE we are supposed to see because of who he is.

“For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, who is Christ the Lord.

**Savior.**

Oh, how we need a **Savior**. We need a deliverer. Because we have all messed up our lives. We have all willingly indulged in nastiness, we've cheated, we've stolen, we've hated, and we've all shook our finger at God and said, “I will do as I please.” And we can't stop. We need a Savior. Someone to take our punishment. Someone to forgive us. Someone to release us. Someone to bring us peace.

And this Savior is the **Christ, the King**. We need a king to rule over us. A king who is gracious and compassionate. We need a wonderful counselor. We need someone to fight our battles against the enemy and win.

And as the angel said, He is the **Lord**.

The Savior we need to deliver us and the King we need to rule over us is God himself.

And he has come in human flesh.

**This is good news that brings great joy!**

**JOHN 1:**

In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. 2 He was in the beginning with God. 3 All things were made through him, and without him was not any thing made that was made.

**HEBREWS 1:**

Long ago, at many times and in many ways, God spoke to our fathers by the prophets, 2 but in these last days he has spoken to us by his Son, whom he appointed the heir of all things, through whom also he created the world.

**COLOSSIANS 1:**

15 He is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn over all creation. 16 For by him all things were created, in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or rulers or authorities—all things were created through him and for him. 17 And he is before all things, and in him all things hold together. 3 He is the radiance of the glory of God and the exact imprint of his nature, and he upholds the universe by the word of his power.

9 The true light, which gives light to everyone, was coming into the world. 10 He was in the world, and the world was made through him, yet the world did not know him.

14 And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we have seen his glory, glory as of the only Son from the Father, full of grace and truth.

## **LUKE 2:**

“Fear not, for behold, I bring you good news of great joy that will be for all the people. 11 For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, who is Christ the Lord. 12 And this will be a sign for you: you will find a baby wrapped in swaddling cloths and lying in a manger.”

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In sending common Shepherds, God seems to be saying something to all of us.

We are common.... and if we were honest this morning, we might admit that we struggle with it.

Do you feel it?

The pull to be greater?

...To break out of obscurity and commonness.

The world screams at us to be *valuable*.

The world shouts at us to be *ornate*.

The world tells us that we need to be *decorative*.

“What you are is not enough”...says the culture.

But, we are just **jars of clay** and we know it and we struggle with it.

We are not the boss, just a worker.

We aren't the head teacher, just an assistant.

We don't have our PhD, just a Master's.

We aren't published here and there, just teaching day in and day out.

We aren't the pastor of a BIG famous church, just a normal one.

God wants to be glorified in and through our lives and he doesn't want us to steal the show...to steal his glory. And most of us would.

Out of love, he keeps us common and humble because we are so wicked that if he exalted us, we would try to rob his glory.

In fact, let's look at **2 Corinthians 4:3-7**

**3 And even if our gospel is veiled, it is veiled to those who are perishing. 4 In their case the god of this world has blinded the minds of the unbelievers, to keep them from seeing the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the image of God. 5 For what we proclaim is not ourselves, but Jesus Christ as Lord, with ourselves as your servants for Jesus' sake. 6 For God, who said, "Let light shine out of darkness," has shone in our hearts to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ. 7 But we have this treasure in jars of**



clay, to show that the surpassing power belongs to God and not to us.

Which is the same as saying, **We are common and ordinary on purpose, so that we bring glory to Jesus Christ and not to ourselves.**

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How beautiful it was that God used the shepherds like he did!

Common people who:

- heard the good news and and received it with joy...
- beheld Jesus
- and went about glorifying and praising God for what they had seen and heard.
- and disappeared into obscurity.

Let me ask you a question this morning....

**Are you content?**

Are you content to be like the shepherds....a normal person.....who does that?