

The Shepherds Said – Let's Go
By Roy Goodlet

For a bunch of guys who hung around sheep day and night, the concept of visiting a baby born in a smelly stable would not have been a big deal. In fact, they might have felt right at home. But, what should they do about what the angels told them? You might be thinking that the decision to go into Bethlehem would be an easy one, and maybe it was, but for some of us we might consider how much time it would take us away from our sheep, and what might happen if a wolf came while we were away?

One preacher said they were, "Simple people who were willing to simply believe what God told them and to simply do what God commanded them. When they heard the news, they didn't seek out the religious professionals for a second opinion. They simply accepted what the angels told them. When they were invited to visit Bethlehem to see the newborn Messiah, they didn't worry about who was going to watch their sheep. They didn't get bogged down in debates about how they were going to find one small baby in such a large town. They simply obeyed and went."

The shepherds chose to believe what they were told. The belief of the shepherds in the message of the angel is shown in their words. They did not say, "Let us go and see if these things are true" but "let us now go ...and see this thing that has come to pass."

They weren't going to take an angel's word for it. This was the hope they had been waiting for, and they were going to get to be the first ones to see it. They wanted to see the baby with their own eyes. And if they had waited until morning, they would have missed it. When a baby decides it is time to be born, your personal schedule doesn't mean a thing.

They could have doubted or delayed but instead they decided to act and they moved. If they had doubted, God's big announcement would likely been given to someone else. Our story might have been about the tax collectors first seeing the baby, or the baker at the inn. But, it didn't happen that way. These shepherds didn't just accept and enjoy the message they received, they acted upon it.

The announcement is for the tax collector and baker as well, but God chose the shepherds to experience it first. God is interested in all of mankind not just a select few. All are welcome before His manger. All are welcome before His throne of Grace. God gives his grace freely to all who will come and see their Savior.

Roy Goodlet is a retired minister and a member of Murphy Church of Christ. Email him at royfcc@yahoo.com.