

Group/Individual Study

Series: Christmas Hope Wherever you are : Busy in Bethlehem

Passages: Luke 2:8-18

REFLECT on the message heard Sunday, 12/17

1. Read Luke 2:8-18. Shepherds had a hard time worshipping God in that day. Even though they guarded many of the animals used in worship at the temple, they themselves couldn't enter because they were believed to be "unclean" because of their jobs. Why do you think God chose them to be the first to hear about Jesus and worship Him?
2. The next worshippers of the baby Jesus were the wise men. What do you know about them that might make them as unlikely worshippers as the shepherds were? What point do you think God would have us take from the fact that Jesus' earliest worshippers were shepherds and wise men?
3. While being a shepherd might have made it hard to "get all cleaned up and be welcome at the temple," shepherding does have some time and space to reflect on things. How do you think a job as a shepherd played into David's faith? How do you think it played into the songs/psalms he wrote?
4. By contrast to the reflective space the shepherd's work afforded them, the town of Bethlehem was bursting at the seams with activity. There were so many people coming into town for the census, that Joseph, Mary, and Jesus had almost no room at all. Is your life more like jam-packed Bethlehem or the quiet fields of the shepherds this Christmas? What could you do to create room to experience Jesus during this season?
5. As fun as Christmas busyness can be, it can also displace spiritually encountering Jesus. Are there any parts of the Christmas busyness facing you that you can opt out of or scale back on -- so you'll have space for experiencing Jesus?
6. We are all a bit like the shepherds, with spiritual "dirt and grime" that should make us unfit to worship the King. Yet He has spread a table of salvation before us. Spend some time thanking and praising Him for this.