

Advent 4
Tell the Story
Luke 2.15-18

When the angels went away from them into heaven, the shepherds said to one another, "Let us go over to Bethlehem and see this thing that has happened, which the Lord has made known to us." And they went with haste and found Mary and Joseph and the baby lying in a manger. And when they saw it, they made known the saying that had been told them concerning this child. And all who heard it wondered at what the shepherds told them.

The Point: There is a truth that a believer must share.

The Question: Are there obstacles to sharing?

Shepherds and women

Jesus changes lives, and the word spreads

A demon-oppressed man (Mark 1.28)

A woman at a town well (John 4.39-41)

A mother receives her son back (Luke 7.17)

Disciples spread the word, and the world chokes

Acts 4.17

Shout from housetops (Matt 10.26.-27)

You have your own story—tell it!

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Let us look into the first witnesses and evangelists of Jesus the Christ. A group of shepherds heard the angel announce His birth. They saw the glory of the LORD shining around them. They listened to a multitude of angles praising God. Something new under the sun! God in person. The angels' titles for this baby will bring joy to the spirits and kindle curiosity in the shepherds' minds: Savior and Christ, deliverer and Messiah. The promised Son of David. Thirty-three years later, a group of women was the first witnesses and evangelists of the risen Christ. God chooses two underclasses of people to be first.

The shepherds spread the news of this deliverer/Messiah, which travels from ears to hearts, preparing the way of the LORD, and faithful souls simmer with hope. Thirty years of rumor and expectation.

Jesus changes lives, and the word spreads. The first act of divine power Mark records in his gospel is Jesus expelling an unclean spirit. The unclean spirit calls Jesus the holy one of God. Jesus commands silence and expels him. The news spreads in Galilee Mark 1.28. John tells of Jesus' interaction with a Samaritan woman. He exposes her secrets to her and gives her hope. She tells others, and the news spreads in Samaria, John 4.39-41. Luke gives an account of Jesus raising a widow's son. The word moves through Judea. This Roman province, once the united kingdom of Israel, has the good news of the deliverer and Messiah: north, middle, and south.

The apostles and disciples spread the word without fear. However, religious leaders try to stop them by command, jail time, flogging, and execution. They remember the great commission and Jesus' command to shout from the housetops.

The shepherds did not stop, nor did the women and generations of disciples, in pain of property loss, imprisonment, and possible martyrdom, stop spreading the word. Tell your salvation story.

Advent: remember the first coming, rejoice in the spirit, and prepare for the second coming and eternal life in the new creation.