

Go Tell It on the Mountain

Message 3 of 4 in the series: "Something to Sing About"

"While shepherds kept their watching over silent flocks by night, behold throughout the heavens they're shown a holy light. **Go tell it on the mountain, over the hills and everywhere**; Go, tell it on the mountain, that Jesus Christ is born!

The **shepherds** feared and trembled when lo! Above the earth rang out the angel chorus that hailed our Savior's birth. Go tell it on the mountain, over the hills and everywhere; Go, tell it on the mountain, that Jesus Christ is born!

Down in a lowly manger, the humble **Christ** was born, and brought us **God's salvation** that blessed Christmas morn. Go tell it on the mountain, over the hills and everywhere; Go, tell it on the mountain, that Jesus Christ is born!" African American Spiritual Song (1865)

A. Singing is an important part of the Christian life.

"Let the message about Christ, in all its richness, fill your lives. Teach and counsel each other with all the wisdom he gives. **Sing psalms and hymns and spiritual songs to God with thankful hearts.**"

Colossians 3:16 (NLT)

"I will sing to the Lord as long as I live. **I will praise my God to my last breath!**" Psalm 104:33 (NLT)

Life Application: We need to sing hymns and spiritual songs to help us worship God with our hearts as well as our heads.

"'Love the Lord your God **with all your heart** and with all your soul and with all your mind.' This is the first and greatest commandment." Matthew 22:37-38 (NIV)

B. Jesus' birth was such Good News that angels burst into song.

"Now there were in the same country shepherds living out in the fields, keeping watch over their flock by night. And behold, an angel of the Lord stood before them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were greatly afraid. Then the angel said to them, 'Do not be afraid, for behold, I bring you **good tidings of great joy which will be to all people. For there is born to you this day in the city of David a Savior, who is Christ the Lord.** And this will be the sign to you: You will find a Babe wrapped in swaddling cloths, lying in a manger.' And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host praising God and saying: 'Glory to God in the highest, And on earth peace, goodwill toward men!'"

Luke 2:8-14 (NKJV)

1. The angels sang because the baby born in Bethlehem was "Christ the Lord."

a. "Christ" (Greek) = "Messiah" (Hebrew) = "Anointed One." Many prophecies in the OT described the coming Christ (Messiah), but nobody was sure how they all fit together. "This salvation was something even the prophets wanted to know more about when they prophesied about this gracious salvation prepared for you. **They wondered what time or situation** the Spirit of Christ within them was talking about when he told them in advance about Christ's suffering and his great glory afterward." 1 Peter 1:10-11 (NLT)

- The Christ would be a descendant of Abraham. (Genesis 12:1-3)
- The Christ would be born of a virgin. (Isaiah 7:14)
- The Christ would be born in Bethlehem. (Micah 5:2)
- The Christ would be a mighty prophet like Moses. (Deuteronomy 18:18)
- The Christ would be a great priest like Melchizedek. (Psalm 110:4)
- The Christ would be a great king like David and a descendant of David. (Isaiah 9:6-7 & 11:1-4)
- The Christ would be a suffering servant. (Isaiah 53)
- The Christ would defeat the devil. (Genesis 3:15)

b. In the days when Jesus was born, people all throughout Israel were expecting the Christ (Messiah) to appear at any time.

"At that time there was a man in Jerusalem named Simeon. He was righteous and devout and was **eagerly waiting for the Messiah to come and rescue Israel.** The Holy Spirit was upon him and had revealed to him that he would not die until he had seen the Lord's Messiah."

Luke 2:25-26 (NLT)

“About that time some wise men from eastern lands arrived in Jerusalem, asking, ‘Where is the newborn king of the Jews? We saw his star as it rose, and we have come to worship him.’ **King Herod was deeply disturbed when he heard this, as was everyone in Jerusalem.**”

Matthew 2:1b-3 (NLT)

2. The first people to hear the Good News about Jesus were shepherds.

- a. God sent angels to proclaim the birth of Jesus to shepherds to reinforce that it was indeed Good News for all people. Shepherds in those days were not wealthy, powerful, or well-educated. Because they spent a lot of time living outdoors with their flocks, they were often dirty, smelly, and ceremonially unclean. Jesus Christ came to seek and save us, no matter who we are or what we’ve done. “good tidings” = “evangelion” (Greek) = “godspell” (Anglo-Saxon) = “gospel.”

“The Spirit of the Sovereign Lord is upon me, for **the Lord has anointed me to bring good news to the poor**. He has sent me to comfort the brokenhearted and to proclaim that captives will be released and prisoners will be freed. He has sent me to tell those who mourn that the time of the Lord’s favor has come...” Isaiah 61:1-2a (NLT)

- b. The shepherds near Bethlehem may have been guarding sheep slated to be sacrificed at the temple in Jerusalem. The need for spotless, year-old lambs was never-ending.

“These are the sacrifices you are to offer regularly on the altar. Each day, offer two lambs that are a year old, one in the morning and the other in the evening.” Exodus 29:38-39 (NLT) If so, then these shepherds met, in person, “The Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world!”

John 1:29b (NLT)

“Under the old covenant, the priest stands and ministers before the altar day after day, offering the same sacrifices again and again, which can never take away sins. But **our High Priest offered himself to God as a single sacrifice for sins, good for all time**. Then he sat down in the place of honor at God’s right hand.” Hebrews 10:11-12 (NLT)

3. The first people to tell others the Good News about Jesus were shepherds.

“When the angels had returned to heaven, the shepherds said to each other, ‘Let’s go to Bethlehem! Let’s see this thing that has happened, which the Lord has told us about.’ They hurried to the village and found Mary and Joseph. And there was the baby, lying in the manger. **After seeing him, the shepherds told everyone what had happened and what the angel had said to them about this child**. All who heard the shepherds’ story were astonished, but Mary kept all these things in her heart and thought about them often. The shepherds went back to their flocks, glorifying and praising God for all they had heard and seen. It was just as the angel had told them.” Luke 2:15-20 (NLT)

Life Application: God loves to use nobody’s to tell others the Good News about Jesus.

“Remember, dear brothers and sisters, that few of you were wise in the world’s eyes or powerful or wealthy when God called you. Instead, God chose things the world considers foolish in order to shame those who think they are wise. And he chose things that are powerless to shame those who are powerful. God chose things despised by the world, things counted as nothing at all, and used them to bring to nothing what the world considers important. As a result, no one can ever boast in the presence of God.” 1 Corinthians 1:26-29 (NLT)

Life Application: We are the current generation of nobody’s God wants to use to tell others the Good News about Jesus.

“This same Good News that came to you is going out all over the world. It is bearing fruit everywhere by changing lives, just as it changed your lives from the day you first heard and understood the truth about God’s wonderful grace.” Colossians 1:6 (NLT)

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Quotations to consider:

“I will sing of mercy and justice; To You, O Lord, I will sing praises.” Psalm 101:1 (NKJV)

“...I heard the voices of thousands and millions of angels around the throne and of the living beings and the elders. And they sang in a mighty chorus: ‘Worthy is the Lamb who was slaughtered—to receive power and riches and wisdom and strength and honor and glory and blessing.’ And then I heard every creature in heaven and on earth and under the earth and in the sea. They sang: ‘Blessing and honor and glory and power belong to the one sitting on the throne and to the Lamb forever and ever.’” Revelation 5:11-13 (NLT)

“Come, let us sing to the Lord! Let us shout joyfully to the Rock of our salvation.” Psalm 95:1

“Everyone will share the story of your wonderful goodness; they will sing with joy about your righteousness.”
Psalm 145:7

“Praise the Lord! Sing to the Lord a new song. Sing his praises in the assembly of the faithful.” Psalm 149:1