

THE AFTERCHRISTMAS SPIRIT Luke 2:8-20

Int: “Christmas comes but once a year” and with it the Christmas spirit. But what of the days *after* Christmas? The tree is bare, the presents gone and the family scattered. What then? Perhaps these shepherds give a clue. On the first Christmas night angels came and glory filled the skies. But angels went away and glory faded. What happened in the aftermath of Christmas? Learn from the shepherds that the afterChristmas spirit should be one of

PERSONAL EXPERIENCE

The men wasted no time talking about the angelic announcement or mulling its meaning. As one man they moved to Bethlehem to find the infant King.

In the Christmas season sermons, carols, cards, trees, wreaths and flowers celebrated the Savior’s arrival. But the question of the moment is, Did you make your way to find the Lord Jesus for yourself? Or did you see and hear, only to go back to the campfire and sheep of your routine life?

The afterChristmas spirit calls for personal experience of the Christ!

PROMPT EVANGELIZATION

“Silent Night” is a beautiful carol of Christmas. But was that night really silent? Read the account again! Clearly the first Christmas night was marked not by silence but by speech! On that night God spoke (Heb 1:1-2). The angel of the Lord spoke (Lu 2:10-11). The heavenly hosts spoke (Lu 2:14). When they had seen Jesus the shepherds spoke (Lu 2:17). Hardly a silent night, it was filled with spoken witness!

To think a life can be a witness is wrong-headed. 1) It is *sheer arrogance*. Who is so Christlike? Not me. And not you either! 2) It is *total disobedience*. Jesus commanded his disciples to verbalize the gospel witness. The most beautiful life without verbal witness is at best only an uninterpreted parable.

Even here on the buckle of the Bible belt not everybody has heard the gospel!

The afterChristmas spirit calls for telling the good news to everyone!

PERPETUAL EXPRESSION

The shepherds returned “glorifying and praising God for all the things they had seen and heard.” The grammar makes clear this was their continuous action. It is not that they went back to their flocks and never mentioned the wonderful events again. Day in and day out, all year round, as long as they lived, they kept on thanking and praising God for Christmas!

The after Christmas spirit calls for celebrating Christmas all year long, making it a feature of daily life!