

As It Was Told Unto Them Hearing, Seeing, And Praising (Luke 2:15–20)

Series: Luke: An Orderly Account - Dr. Randy White

I. The Lord's Word Sets Them Moving (vv. 15–16)

The Angels Depart; Their Message Remains

- When the angels return to heaven, the shepherds still possess what the Lord has made known. Their next step rests upon His announcement (v. 15).
- “Let us now go” expresses a shared resolve. They encourage one another to visit the place identified by the message they received.
- They speak of “this thing which is come to pass.” The birth is an accomplished event to be witnessed; their believing does not bring it into existence.

They Recognize The One Who Has Spoken

- An angel delivered the news, but the shepherds say, “the Lord hath made known unto us.” They recognize the authority behind the messenger (v. 15).
- The announcement named David's city, the child's identity, and the identifying sign. Their journey has a destination and a reason (Luke 2:11–12).
- Their words express confidence in the report before they arrive. Going to see what God announced need not be treated as suspicious testing.

They Find What Heaven Described

- “They came with haste, and found Mary, and Joseph, and the babe.” Their prompt arrival carries their stated resolve into action (v. 16).
- The child lies in a manger, as the angel had said. Humble circumstances agree with heaven's sign; no added royal display is needed (Luke 2:12, 16).
- The manger now joins three parts of Luke's account: Mary lays Him there, the angel names it as the sign, and the shepherds find Him there (Luke 2:7, 12, 16).
- They arrive after the birth and find the child already there. Luke places the force of this visit in the agreement between the announcement and their discovery.

II. The Lord's Word Gives Their Report Its Meaning (v. 17)

They Have Seen; Now They Make Known

- “When they had seen it” connects their report with the visit. What the Lord made known to them becomes what they make known to others (vv. 15, 17).
- “Made known abroad” describes spreading the report. Luke gives neither the number of listeners nor the geographical extent of their telling.
- Their experience becomes testimony concerning the child. The shepherds pass on a message whose truth does not depend upon their own importance.

The Message Explains The Manger

- Their subject is “the saying which was told them concerning this child.” They communicate more than the fact that they have seen a newborn (v. 17).
- The saying identifies Him as “a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord.” An ordinary observer could see the infant; God's word explains His significance (Luke 2:11).
- David's city and the title “Christ” locate this announcement within Israel's promised hope. The shepherds report what has been revealed at this point.
- Faithful testimony keeps the child central. The greatness of the heavenly encounter matters because of the One whom heaven announced.

III. The Lord's Word Calls For Consideration (vv. 18–19)

The Hearers Marvel At The Report

- “All they that heard it wondered.” The knowledge first given in the fields reaches people who receive the shepherds' account (v. 18).
- The message travels through human witnesses. These hearers need not have seen the heavenly host to hear what was announced about Jesus.
- Wonder acknowledges something remarkable. Luke does not tell us enough to pronounce every listener either a settled believer or an unbeliever.

Mary Keeps The Things She Has Heard

- “But Mary kept all these things.” Luke distinguishes her sustained attention within the wider scene of amazement (v. 19).
- She has received Gabriel's promise, experienced the birth, and now heard the shepherds' report. These are connected matters worth preserving (Luke 1:31–33; 2:7, 17).
- Keeping the words and events gives them a continuing place in her thought. The report is not exhausted by the surprise of first hearing it.

She Ponders What She Has Kept

- Mary “pondered them in her heart.” Her response includes thoughtful consideration, not emotion alone. She weighs the significance of these things together (v. 19).
- Retaining God's word does not require pretending to understand every implication immediately. Luke later joins incomplete understanding with remembrance again (Luke 2:50–51).
- The passage invites more than momentary astonishment: preserve what God has said and give it careful thought. Mary's response supplies the example without condemning every other hearer.

IV. The Lord's Word Becomes Their Reason For Praise (v. 20)

The Shepherds Return Glorifying God

- Their visit ends, but their praise accompanies the return. Luke leaves them “glorifying and praising God” for what they have heard and seen (v. 20).
- The angels had praised God in the fields; now human witnesses praise Him after seeing the sign. Heaven's announcement has produced an answering earthly response (Luke 2:13–14, 20).
- The Lord who made the event known receives the glory. The shepherds' part is to receive, see, report, and praise what He has done.

What They See Agrees With What They Hear

- “As it was told unto them” explains their praise. God's announcement has proved faithful to the circumstances they encounter (v. 20).
- The message and the event belong together: the word identifies the Saviour, and the discovery confirms the sign. Their worship has a definite reason.
- Their praise does not require knowledge of every event still to come. What God has already announced and confirmed gives them reason to honor Him now.
- The movement ends where it began—with the Lord's reliable word. It directs their steps, supplies their testimony, occupies Mary's thought, and gives rise to praise.