

# Near...

Part 2: A Blue-Collar Announcement  
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## God's options to make his big announcement:

- The Romans, who were in charge of culture
- The religious leaders of Jerusalem, who were in charge of spirituality
- The king, who was in charge of local government
- The celebrities of the day, who were in charge of pop culture

## But God chose... shepherds.

### Luke 2:8-14

<sup>8</sup>And there were shepherds living out in the fields nearby, keeping watch over their flocks at night. <sup>9</sup>An angel of the Lord appeared to them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were terrified. <sup>10</sup>But the angel said to them, "Do not be afraid. I bring you good news of great joy that will be for all the people. <sup>11</sup>Today in the town of David a Savior has been born to you; he is Christ the Lord. <sup>12</sup>This will be a sign to you: You will find a baby wrapped in cloths and lying in a manger."

<sup>13</sup>Suddenly a great company of the heavenly host appeared with the angel, praising God and saying,

<sup>14</sup>"Glory to God in the highest,  
and on earth peace to men on whom his favor rests."

## Before asking these common men to release anything, God releases:

- An angelic messenger and an angelic choir
- An amazing announcement that "God is coming here"
- A Son, a Savior, a Baby...God drawing near

### Luke 2:15-20

<sup>15</sup>When the angels had left them and gone into heaven, the shepherds said to one another, "Let's go to Bethlehem and see this thing that has happened, which the Lord has told us about."

<sup>16</sup>So they hurried off and found Mary and Joseph, and the baby, who was lying in the manger. <sup>17</sup>When they had seen him, they spread the word concerning what had been told them about this child, <sup>18</sup>and all who heard it were amazed at what the shepherds said to them. <sup>19</sup>But Mary treasured up all these things and pondered them in her heart. <sup>20</sup>The shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all the things they had heard and seen, which were just as they had been told.

**To respond to the announcement,  
the shepherds had to release responsibility. (vs. 15)**

*(Continues on back)*

## Releasing their responsibility gave them freedom to:

- Change the location of their “abiding” (vs. 8)

Abide in me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit by itself, unless it abides in the vine, neither can you, unless you abide in me. I am the vine; you are the branches. Whoever abides in me and I in him, he it is that bears much fruit, for apart from me you can do nothing. – *John 15:4-5 ESV*

- Share the story (vs. 17)
- Experience pure joy (vs. 20)

**Draw near to God,  
and he will draw near to you.**

– *James 4:8*

### Small Group Discussion Questions



- 1) If you have ever had a baby, who was the first person you told after the delivery? Why? If not, picture yourself as a parent. Who would you want to tell first?
- 2) Who would you have chosen to receive the announcement of the birth of Jesus? Why?
- 3) What is the significance of the blue-collar announcement of the birth of Jesus to you?
- 4) Is there something you know you have to release to make this Christmas one of joy and peace? What is it? What practical steps would it take to release it?
- 5) What actions or attitudes will allow you to “abide with God” over the next few weeks?
- 6) How can we pray for you tonight?