

PASTOR'S LETTER DECEMBER, 2020



On a Sunday before Christmas Reverend Billy Graham was walking down Highland Street in Mt Holly, North Carolina on his way to see a parishioner. However, he wanted to post a parcel urgently so he asked a young boy where he could find the post office. When the boy had directed him, Reverend Graham thanked him and asked, 'If you'll come to the Church this evening, you can hear me telling everyone how to get to heaven.'

The boy replied, 'I think I'll skip your sermon. If you don't even know your way to the post office, how will you lead me to heaven?'

Christmas Eve is the culmination of all the preceding Advent worship services, represented by the lighting of the Advent wreath, as we seek to find our way to heaven through the Christ child. In fact, in some of the older traditions, families will set up their nativity scene in one location of the house with the shepherds and three wise men in other locations, slowly moving them closer to the nativity scene as Christmas draws near. Even in the manger, you will not find the baby Jesus until early Christmas morning.

One of my favorite Christmas stories is about the shepherds. Here were the lowliest of the lowest people, dirty, stinky, poor shepherds, and they did not need anyone's help to find the Christ child who laid in the manger. These shepherds were the scum of the earth. In the Talmud, it is written that shepherds were not allowed in the courts to be witnesses and instructs that no one should help the heathens or shepherds. Still, they were the ones to whom the angels came first to tell of the good news of Emmanuel and they were the first ones who found the baby Jesus, wrapped in swaddling clothes.

This beautiful story declares that all people, no matter who they are, what they do for work, the amount of money they have in their bank account, the color of their skin, the language they speak, or even their IQ; in God's eyes, all people are equal and should be treated as such.

This Christmas season; let us remember that the shepherds, the "forgotten ones," people of "low regard," were God's special people, indeed God's honored guests at Christmas. God cares for the poor and so should we. Let us love and care for all God' children.

Merry Christmas,
Brett