

A Mismatch Made in Heaven

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Would you wear jogging shoes with a tuxedo?

Eat hot dogs on fine china?

Haul trash in a luxury car?

Or feed pearls to pigs?

These mismatches can't compare with the first Christmas, when angels sang to shepherds. Few have had the privilege of seeing an angel. Fewer still have viewed a multitude of them. As far as we know, only once have humans enjoyed a concert sung by a celestial choir.

For this unique occasion, we would have supposed a more worthy audience: the most powerful—presidents, princes, and potentates—together with the most pious—priests, prophets, and professors of sacred Scripture. Instead, God chose scruffy shepherds.

The residents of heaven appeared to earth's lowliest. Glorious and radiant beings gave a never-to-be-repeated performance to those who smelled of sheep. God's holy messengers announced the birth of the King of Kings to those despised as unclean. To top it off, "the glory of the Lord shone around them" (Luke 2:9).

These privileged shepherds show us how the story can be for everyone. God does not esteem the mighty or the worldly-wise. Instead, His Word reveals that God honors the poor in spirit. For whether covered with titles or tatters, they realize their need. God also responds to those who mourn for their sins. Those who push their own purposes miss His blessings, while the meek—who submit to His will—gain them. Whoever hungers and thirsts for righteousness, God fills. These are desperate enough to know their need for God and His forgiveness. For such, the angel's pronouncement of the Savior's birth was truly "good news of great joy" (v. 10).

The shepherds gained God's favor. Not only did they enjoy heaven's music, afterward they received a far greater honor. They were the first, after Mary and Joseph, to behold the Son of God as a baby lying in the manger.

Humanly, shepherds and angels don't fit together. Yet, in God's eyes, they form the perfect match. While on earth we may never hear an angelic choir, we can know the Jesus whom the shepherds saw. We simply need their heart for God.

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