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Christmas Characters: The Shepherds

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Luke 2:8–20 (NIV): And there were shepherds living out in the fields nearby, keeping watch over their flocks at night. An angel of the Lord appeared to them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were terrified. But the angel said to them, “Do not be afraid. I bring you good news that will cause great joy for all the people. Today in the town of David a Savior has been born to you; he is the Messiah, the Lord. This will be a sign to you: You will find a baby wrapped in cloths and lying in a manger.” Suddenly a great company of the heavenly host appeared with the angel, praising God and saying, “Glory to God in the highest heaven, and on earth peace to those on whom his favor rests.”

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

What the Lord values, based on the shepherds’ story:

Value #1: The Insignificant

1 Corinthians 1:26–28 (NLT): Remember, dear brothers and sisters, that few of you were wise in the world’s eyes or powerful or wealthy when God called you. Instead, God chose things the world considers foolish in order to shame those who think they are wise. And he chose things that are powerless to shame those who are powerful. God chose things despised by the world, things counted as nothing at all, and used them to bring to nothing what the world considers important.

Value #2: The Overlooked

1 Samuel 16:7 (ESV): “...For the Lord sees not as man sees: man looks on the outward appearance, but the Lord looks on the heart.”

Value #3: The Misunderstood

Luke 2:17 (ESV): And when they saw it, they made known the saying that had been told them concerning this child.

Value #4: The Responsive Heart

Luke 2:20 (ESV): And the shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all they had heard and seen, as it had been told them.