

Jesus Came to the Night Shift

by Carter Conlon

Jesus came to the night shift, to bring good news of great joy to those who feel far away from God, to those who are on the lowest rung of the social ladder.

Duration: 39:03

Scripture: Luke 2:8

Topics: "Gods Love", "Salvation Message"

Description

This sermon emphasizes the profound love of God demonstrated through Jesus coming to earth as a baby, reaching out to all people regardless of their social status or struggles. It highlights the message of hope, joy, and freedom that Jesus brings, inviting listeners to open their hearts to Him and experience transformation. The shepherd's experience of encountering the angel and the heavenly host praising God symbolize God's desire to reconnect with humanity and bring peace and goodwill to all.

Transcript

Jesus came to the night shift Jesus came to the night shift and that believe it or not is your hope and that is mine Praise God Luke chapter 2 father. I just thank you Lord for the touch of heaven in this house today I thank you Lord God that You give me the privilege this morning and you give us the privilege of hearing a story that never grows old God Almighty we could hear it a thousand times in our lifetime And it will still spark something in every one of our hearts. It is the greatest truth ever spoken to humanity.

Oh God, I ask in Jesus name for a touch of heaven today In all of our hearts Lord that we would open the door of our hearts and let you begin to speak to us I bless you God for the anointing that gives Those of us who touch this pulpit the ability God to speak your word in a way in which it can be heard And I thank you with all of my heart in Jesus name Amen, special greetings today to all of the online fellowships to those that are with us in North Jersey in the education annex And in other places as well. God bless you. I trust that this is going to be a wonderful Christmas Day for you Luke chapter 2 beginning at verse 8 Now there were in the same country shepherds living out in the fields keeping watch over their flock by night and Behold an angel of the Lord stood before them and the glory of the Lord shone round them and they were greatly afraid Then the angel said to them do not be afraid for behold.

I bring you good tidings of great joy Which will be to all people? for there was born to you this day in the city of David a Savior who is Christ the Lord and This will be the sign to you. You will find the babe wrapped in swaddling cloths lying in a manger and suddenly There was with the angel a multitude of the

heavenly host praising God and saying glory to God in the highest and on earth peace goodwill toward men and So it was when the angels had gone away from them into heaven that the shepherds said one to another Let us now go to Bethlehem and see this thing that has come to pass which the Lord has made known to us And they came with haste and found Mary and Joseph and the babe lying in a manger Now when they had seen him they made widely known the saying which was told them concerning this child and All those who heard it marveled that those things which were told them by the shepherds Verse 8 says there were in the same country shepherds living out in the fields Keeping watch over their flock by night. Now.

It's interesting to note that in Christ's day shepherds stood on the bottom rung of The social ladder of that day the Palestinian social ladder They shared the same unenviable status as tax collectors and dung sweepers people that took Toilet stuff out and got sent it outside of the gate It's only the gospel of Luke that mentions the shepherds the shepherds were the night shift Nobody at the top of the ladder works the night shift. Did you ever notice that? None of the bosses none of the movers and shakers They're all home in bed And when all the movers and shakers of society go home to bed the night shift come out Some of you know what that's all about. I've worked a night shift a few times in my life I get what that's all about and you see these shepherds and the shepherds If you were a shepherd in that day in Israel, it means basically you you couldn't get a job it was a last resort and You know in our Christmas productions, we have the shepherds so nobly standing there They're always standing there with stick in hand looking up Folks, that's not what they were doing.

That's not what shepherds shepherds Listen, if that's the only job you could get that's the night shift That's the low rung on the social ladder most of the time They're probably sitting around a campfire because it was cold at that time of the year and the sheep are not out on the hill Top. I was a shepherd. I had sheep for several years I know I know a little bit about this sheep are afraid of the dark.

I don't know if you knew that or not That's why many of you are afraid of the dark. That's why Jesus called you sheep That's why you have to have a light on in the hall at night and if it goes out you start to panic Sheep are afraid of the dark. And so Typically in my mind shepherds would build a fire.

They'd be sitting around that fire and the sheep would Crowd in in a sense it would come close because there's warmth there. There's light there. There's safety there They don't have to go out and try to find them.

They'll come to where the light is. Isn't that wonderful? Jesus talked about us you and I that if we truly are people who can hear him, we will approach the light We won't be afraid to come to his light Now they're sitting around that campfire And what are they talking about? How I hate this job probably most of them. What do you talk about on the night shift? When you're done cleaning the floor drying the dishes, whatever it is you have to do You know, what are people on the night shift talk about? Taxes the Romans are gathering us just to tax us.

We're taxed to death I wish somebody else would pay the taxes instead of us having to pay taxes Probably talking about oppression in that society because Roman culture was a dominant culture and it was trying to impose its will on the rest of the known world it Esteemed its own value system to be superior than the thought of all other cultures And so there was a despising in Roman culture for the religion of Israel and the Israelites They they considered it inferior These people who believe in God in a sense are they they have nothing else to do if they were more intelligent they would think the way we do and of

course they would they would get their will imposed on a society by Oppressing that society So they're probably talking a little bit about oppression Roman soldiers and some of the current events of the day of how they've gone into villages arrested people without warrant held them Without justification all the things that Rome was prone to do What else do you think they were talking about around that campfire? It's all young guys who can't get jobs I know for sure. They're talking about girls. I'm absolutely convinced of that Guys have a tendency to do that when they get together and girls you have a tendency to talk about guys, too When you get together, so don't look so holy and pious this morning.

I Was teaching out at summit International School of Ministry not teaching I was I was out there last year and Pastor Teresa said there's a whole bunch of guys Here that just want to meet with you. They want to have a theological discussion with you I said, okay. I'm okay with that.

So we got together in the evening and they they all came to One of the houses there you sat around the living room in a big big circle and there's lots of guys there and so they had this one guy this one guy had a Notebook with all these theological questions in it and he's asking them He's asking me these questions in order, but he ever been somewhere and you feel the conversation is not the conversation This guy was just put up front to do this. They weren't really interested in In you know all these things and so finally after about 15-20 minutes of this Nobody else is asking any questions only this one guy and so finally I said guys What do you really want to talk about? Then a strange silence came over the room and one guy in New Yorker finally somebody with courage He says girls we want to talk about Girls One guy had the courage to break the ice and I said, okay I said look it I don't know much more than you do about girls But I've gleaned a little a few things and I said just when you think you got him figured out they come at you with Some new angle and throw you all into Confusion again, but we talk about girls and so I'm trying to tell you that most likely this is what's going on The they these young men or older men would have felt like they were the bottom of the social structure they They they probably are not even known if they even attend any of the local Synagogues of their time and they would have felt about as far away from God as you can get There's some people here like that this morning you feel that way too as well You feel far away from God you wonder what you're even doing here if I wouldn't have been coerced into this If I wouldn't be invited I wouldn't have come I feel so far away from God and I look around I see all these people That look so holy you know if the shepherds would come into the synagogue and they'd see the Pharisees in their nice robes and the People who could eloquently speak and eloquently pray and and they they have none of that. That's not what their life is about It's not where they live They would have felt so alienated so outside of the whole of the religious system of their day And I'm sure they didn't know much about God except one thing that every person in Israel knew Even the reflection of God would kill you if there was any sin in your life.

Everybody knew that they all knew the history of Israel they all understood that when Solomon built the temple and When the Shekinah glory of God the only tangible visible presence of God on the earth at that time Was behind that veil was a thick curtain where God's presence dwelt if you walked into the presence of God and You had sin in your life. You died even the high priest died Walking behind that veil you had to be ceremonial ceremonially cleansed You had to as much as the law provided be free from the stain of sin and they would know even in the Old Testament when an angel appeared a messenger appeared to Gideon and Called him to enter into this incredible battle that he would win for the honor of God Gideon Knew in his heart. He said alas There was a sudden fear came into him I've I've been in the presence of somebody who's been in the presence of God and just The reflection of God's presence off of that person is enough to kill me Gideon knew that that's why the Lord came to him And said don't be afraid Gideon.

You're not going to die And so now it makes sense in verse 9 The angel of the Lord stood before them and the glory of the Lord shone around them and they were greatly afraid Of course, they would be afraid They would feel like they're going to die in the presence of God They suddenly all the wrong of their life would come to the surface all the wrong thinking The you know, it's funny We all know what to do, but there's always something in our lives that we're not willing to do or we haven't done it yet And now the presence of God has come they have this inner knowledge That if I stand in the presence of God, there's a reflection of God with sin in my life I'm going to die and they had every reason to be afraid at that moment in time But listen to the message of the angel the angel said to them do not be afraid now you see folks God can choose to stay his hand of judgment God can choose and For everyone who's here today God has chosen. You're not just lucky God chose to stay his hand God chose to spare you God chose to have you alive here this morning. God chose to bring you here today God chose to have you in a place where his presence is and yet Speaks to you the way the angel spoke to these Men these shepherds and said do not be afraid.

I bring you good news of great joy Which shall be to all people? It's good news And it's news when it's received in the heart brings the human person into a place of great joy David the psalmist said I was sinking in a place where I could not get out of my own strength and God Lifted me up and set me upon a rock He set me on a place of solidness in my life and put a new song in my heart And he said many will see it and begin to fear and start trusting in God. I bring you good news of Great joy, which will be to all people Not just the elect few Not just the holy not just people who know their Bibles As they knew it at that time but to all people To the big people to the little people to the night shift to all people good news of great joy and Then he goes on to say this For there is born to you this day in the city of David a Savior who is Christ the Lord and This will be the sign to you You will find a babe wrapped in swaddling cloths Lying in a manger. This will be the sign that this news is for you This will be the sign that God has not rejected you This will be the sign that you've not gone down too far and somehow God can't reach you This will be the sign that you've not offended God with your conversation your lifestyle your indifference even to his presence This will be the sign you will find God in the form of the weakest among us a baby God God Who created the universe by the word of his mouth God who spoke and said let there be light God who took dust on the? From the ground breathed into it and out of that dust was created a man called Adam our forefather God God God Almighty God comes to this world in the form of a baby Not a 15-foot angel.

He didn't come down in a chariot of fire He could have he took Elijah to heaven in the chariot of fire But he comes to the earth as a baby as the weakest among us And not just a baby you imagine Mary what are you doing Mary? I'm changing God's diaper For real He came to the earth God God God in human form as a baby Wrapped in rags He's showing us that he's willing to take to himself All the weakness of our condition and all the rags that we have wrapped around our lives All the all of our filth those rags probably weren't that clean All of our failures all of our disappointments Even our best attempts to be good. Remember that prophet Isaiah said all of our righteousness is it means our good works I like filthy rags in the sight of a holy God So God comes down in the in the form of that Which is the weakest among us a newborn baby can't feed himself and or herself a newborn baby Can't walk a newborn baby can't travel a newborn baby can't change themselves a newborn baby Can't do anything and the thought that God Comes down to the earth as a child as a baby To show you and I that he's not offended with our weakness Not offended with our struggles. He's not offended by our trials not offended with our questions It's not offended In in a manger lying in a manger a Manger, you know, it sounds like pristine and when we when we Do these plays and charts we we have this nice clean straw.

Look at I've been a shepherd. I've had a barn. I Mean it's it's filled with animal manure and urine it stinks in this manger it's it's It stinks no matter how you look at it And he comes to us To experience our weakness to wrap himself in the rags of humanity may I put it that way And he comes to us in the places of our deepest filth and failure There's there's no lower he can go Where else can he go? Tell me how much lower could he get? God in a human form God willing to tell us I am I'm willing to indwell you in all of your weaknesses and all of your struggles and all Of your trials all your rags all your filthiness in every place that you've found yourself that you shouldn't be it I'm willing to indwell you and be God to you.

This is good news of great joy to all people Jesus Christ comes as a child comes in a place of filth comes wrapped in the rags of humanity Comes to those who are on the night shift You see the whole thing is not just some pretty little Christmas play. It's God trying to speak to us To say I love you so much. I'm coming to get you where you are I'm coming to get you where you found refuge.

I'm coming to get you in your failure I'm coming to get you in your struggles your trials your questions your Disappointments all of those things that have come into your life That have caused you to be on the night shift You know, you can actually be in the administrative office and still be on the night shift in your heart You still hate where you are Still wonder what life is all about still be complaining about everything. It's all around you but suddenly suddenly Suddenly a messenger stands before you just as I am today saying I have something for you I have something that's great news of great joy, and it's for you No matter where you find yourself today. This message is for you.

You cannot go so far away that God can't meet you And only 30 years later Jesus steps into the synagogue He's now it's his turn to read from the scriptures and he takes the role of the Prophet Isaiah Opens it up in that place and says the Spirit of the Lord is upon me Because he's anointed me to preach the gospel to the poor now, it makes sense In other words God my father sent me for the sake of the poor those who don't have strength They have no resource. They can't get out where they are. They can't change their heart.

They can't change their lives He has sent me to heal the brokenhearted Disappointments that have come into your life Words that have been spoken over you that wounded your heart. He sent me Jesus said to heal Wherever your heart has been broken and to proclaim liberty to the captives freedom From whatever has held you down. Whatever has found a lodging place in your life, and you can't get rid of it He said I came to give sight to the blind I came to show you a way out of your dilemma You find yourself in a place.

You can't get out of God the Father sent me to show you a way forward in life and to set free those who are oppressed Those who allowed something of darkness into your life and you're oppressed in your dreams You're oppressed in your daytime thinking there are things in your life that you know shouldn't be there and you fight this inner Secret war constantly inside and there is a cry in your heart. Will I ever get free from this? You've tried pills. You've tried booze.

You've tried everything that you can try But you can't get free Jesus said I was sent to set you free from oppression and to proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord in other words to tell You now is the time of your freedom not tomorrow not next year Not next month not some other time not some other generation now now is the time of your freedom Scripture tells us he took the scroll he put it away He went back sat down in his chair and everybody's looking at him because they'd never heard anybody speak these words this way Before there's something in the way he spoke them and he said to them today This scripture is fulfilled in your hearing today This is the day of your redemption This is the day when all these promises

and everything God came to do through his Son can be yours This is the day It's an amazing. I wish I would have been there But I'm thankful. I'm here I'm thankful that I'm getting to be the messenger today to proclaim to you.

This is the day of your freedom This is the day. You don't have to wait till tonight. You'd have to wait till tomorrow or next week.

This is the day This is the day the Luke chapter 2 after all of this and suddenly there was with the angel a Multitude of the heavenly host praising God and saying glory to God in the highest and on earth peace goodwill towards men suddenly, I Have this picture in my mind. I Know pastor David's getting a thousand plays going as he likes to do drama and stuff on Sunday night And as I speak, it's he sees all these scenarios, but I I see all these created heavenly beings and angels there There's a veil that separates heaven from earth folks. We can't see them They can see us but we can't see into the heavenlies and they're pressing against that veil and it's as if the veil They push through it somehow And not only is one angel Not only has one angel appeared and no harm has come to the shepherds But now the scripture says there's a multitude of the heavenly host They're not just angels.

There's all kinds of created beings in heaven you read the book of Ezekiel you'll see a few of them there or revelation and They're praising God In other words, God has made a way for mankind to be reconnected with heaven again He's made a way through his son Jesus Christ and suddenly there's a multitude of the heavenly host praising God It's as if they can't contain their joy any longer There's been something going on on the other side of the veil You know folks the Bible says the angels in heaven rejoice over one sinner One sinner one person that says God if you're if you came to get me and I'm coming I'm giving myself to you I'm gonna give you what you came for you came from my heart you came from my life and my future you came to Forgive my past and set me free from my present. And so Lord if that's what you came for. I Acknowledge that you are my God and my Savior I open my heart to you and the Bible says the angels Jesus says the angels in heaven start to rejoice Now we see part of that in this passage of Scripture.

They the heavenly hosts suddenly appeared and They started singing glory to God in the highest and on earth peace and goodwill towards men glory to God In other words only God Could have done this only God could have bridged this gap because the angels don't forget would know the distance Between fallen humanity and a holy God. I don't think it can be measured They would have known how far he had to come to get us They they would have the writer of Hebrews says God's love for you And I is a mystery that the angels desire to look into they can't fully Understand why God so loves us But he does He loves you. Do you understand that today? He loves you.

He loves you no Matter where you are or what you found yourself doing. He loves you He loves you with the love that can't be measured. There's no human instrument that can measure it He says through the prophet Isaiah to his people at that time a nursing mother could forget her child, but I can't forget you Because I've engraved you on the palms of my hands when those nails went through the palms of Jesus hands your name Was there and it was engraved in the hand of God and he can't forget you God Loves you God loves you if you cannot hear anything else.

I say today hear this God Loves you with a love that you can't fully comprehend He loves you so much he would come to the earth walk among us for 30 years Allow himself to go into public ministry knowing it was going to take him to a cross Allow himself to be spit on the Everlasting God beaten whipped bruised and battered beyond human recognition Scripture says he was so beaten up. He was no longer Recognizable

as the physical Jesus if you had known him, you wouldn't recognize him He was so bloodied so battered so bruised so rejected so mocked so hated so scorned And he did it to get you back again He did all that for you he went to the cross because he loves you He would have done it if it was only you that would have ever received him. He still would have done it It's not a numbers game with God it's about you That's why he went to a cross to get you to get you No matter where you are No matter what shift you're working in no matter where you've fallen no matter what kind of a stable you've wound up in No matter what kind of rags are wrapped around your mind your heart your head your life your body No matter where you are.

He came to get you That's who God is. That's why the angels burst through the curtain. They knew this they understood this They understood his actions They didn't fully understand the depth of his love.

I don't know if anybody can maybe one day The Bible says when we see him we will know as we are known suddenly there be an explosion of knowledge in our hearts and in our minds about this whole mystery of God creating us we walking away from him and Instead of justly destroying us which he could have done because he is holy and sin cannot dwell in his presence Instead of doing that he came to the earth He came in the weakest form imaginable a baby He came in the lowliest place imaginable a stable He came to the people were not the big people of society the lowest on the rung of that time the shepherds Because his message was It's good tidings of great joy to all people Don't you let anybody tell you that God doesn't love you and can't reach you and will not bring you home to him self again And so it was when the angels Had gone away from them into heaven that the shepherd said one to another let us go to Bethlehem and see this thing which has Come to pass which the Lord has made known to us Let's go That's got to be what's in your heart folks the first time. I ever heard this message. I was 24 years old And in my heart, I said God if this is this true Is it possible that you died for me is it possible that that heaven can be my home when I die is it possible That I can have a new life that I can be free from the cords that bind me that I can be free from the things in my heart and in my Life that have become so much part of me.

I can't get rid of them Is it is it possible and just as the shepherds ran? I ran to the gospel of John and I read it and I prayed before I read it I prayed as an unsaved man and I opened the gospel of John and I said Jesus if this thing is true Show it to me and I read it and I saw it. Oh God, I saw it. I Saw what I've been telling you.

I saw that not only could I be forgiven. I could have a new life. I Saw that I could become the husband and father.

I'd always wanted to be us I saw that that God could change my life now some changes happen right away and some take a little bit of time But they do happen by the grace of Almighty God and They came with haste and they found mace Mary and Joseph and the babe lying in a manger and My challenge to you today my brother. My sister has come with haste Come with haste don't delay. Don't put the day off if in your heart, you know that what you're hearing is true come with haste come with haste I Pulled over on the side of the road May 12th 1978 on the way to work.

I had just run out of arguments. There was nothing more to say No more religious arguments. I could present against the truth of that I have both heard and read and seen and I pulled over in the side of the road and I prayed a simple prayer Lord Jesus if this is true Actually the guy who had shared with me was a Christian cop and the Royal Canadian Mounted Police His name was Irv and I remember my prayer Lord if what Irv has told me is true then I open my heart to you and I invite you to come into my life and be my

Lord and my Savior and As I've shared so many times with so many people.

I didn't feel anything. You don't have to feel fuzzy Don't have to see anything be nice to see an angel or two saying hey you did a good thing, you know I didn't see angels. I didn't feel fuzzy.

I just went to work. I worked I was on the night shift I worked my shift and I came home. I went to bed But when I got up But when I got up, I remember it as if it was yesterday I've rolled over my feet touched the floor and I knew in my heart that I was going to be a different man I just knew it in my heart.

God had done something in my life And so come with haste and See what God will do for you And the scripture says and when they had seen him they made widely known the saying which was told them concerning this child And all those who heard it marveled at those things which were told them by the shepherds Come with haste In the annex come with haste online fellowships Community fellowships come with haste those that are watching and television in the future come with haste North Jersey come with haste and watch what God will do for you. Watch what he will do for you This is the promise that you too will make it widely known and people will marvel That's what I'm doing today I'm telling you what God's done in my life and some of you are going some maybe a few are going wow, that's Incredible that's called marveling You'll marvel but it doesn't have to be my story or just a few people on this platform. It can be your story You come with haste You open your heart There's got to be something inside of you because you're created by God and in the image of God So when you're hearing the voice of God calling you back to himself again There's got to be something in your heart that says this is true This is true I didn't understand it all back when I was 24 years old But there was something in my heart drawing me towards what I instinctively knew was true And there has to be something in your heart today Because the message is to all people You see there's there's there's no barrier anymore between you.

There's there's nothing can stop you anymore You don't have to clean up your act. You don't have to get it all together. He came to where you are Whatever shift it is you were he came to you That's why Christmas is such a beautiful time Still 2,000 years later Even the hardest heart has to fight stick their fingers in the ears and fight to ignore it Because there's something about it that won't go away So I give you the promise that was given to me if anyone be in Christ he or she is a new creation The old things in your life will pass away God puts a death blow to the the root source behaviors Both physical and mental behaviors in your life.

He puts a death blow to it now It may look like it's alive for a while, but it has been struck a death blow and it will lose its power Over your life the old things pass away behold all things all things All things become new you begin to tell others what God's done in your life You begin to make it widely known I've lived this Been around a good part of the world telling people what I'm telling you today because it's so simple It's so simple It's not complicated you don't have to do 12 of this or 14 of that you just open your heart And say God if what this man is saying today is true Then I open my heart to it now when I prayed that prayer I Didn't want any part of it if it wasn't true. I was not interested in religion at all Didn't want any part of religion, but if this is true if this is you God calling me, then I opened my heart to it And watch what will happen in your life watch what God will do Bow your heads, please my father I thank you for Giving me the ability Lord to deliver your heart today, and what a privilege it is after all these years to Speak your truth on Christmas morning. Oh God I thank you you came to get me a Shepherd a shepherd and you came to get me working the night shift Discontent God I thank you for your mercy Thank you for the promise of life that you give to all who will turn to you I Ask you Lord that you would give The people who are listening today the courage and those who will listen tomorrow the courage Lord Jesus Christ To simply say if this is true.

I open my heart to you Almighty God as my Lord and my Savior I do If there's anybody here that wants to pray that prayer With me today sincerely from your heart I'm just gonna ask you to slip up your hand just join with me all over wherever you are. God bless you Just slip your hand up Praise God Now let's pray together all of us together, please Lord Jesus Christ Thank you for loving us Thank you for loving me So much so That you would come to get me Right where I am in all of my confusion My struggles my secret inner war You would come and get me Because you love me Help me to respond to your love By opening my heart and Inviting you into my life As my Lord and my Savior I Trust you Jesus. I Trust that you will not lie to me Fail me or forsake me.

I trust that you will help me Forgive me and change me And make me into the person That you designed me to be I Thank you for breaking the power and the bondage of all torment all depression every habit every attitude of heart That doesn't glorify you Jesus Christ son of God I Give my heart to you. I Give my life to you And I ask you from this day forward To be my Lord my God and my Savior Thank you for loving me this indeed Will be a Merry Christmas in Jesus name Amen You know I'm gonna ask you to do something just for the sake of those the Bible says the angels in heaven rejoice Over one sinner that gets saved and I know there are people in here who have truly meant that prayer as I know it in My heart you have truly truly meant that prayer this morning. So I'm gonna ask you to do something We're gonna stand and we're gonna give God a shout of praise in this house.

Like we often do at Times Square Church On the count of three. Are you ready? One Two Three

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