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A Heart's Treasure

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A Heart's Treasure

MARK LOVE

I stood in the still, cold, clear night air and marveled at the stars, imagining the heavenly host assembled singing songs of joy. I think the heaviness of fatigue would have turned to a wide-eyed wonder, greater than any caffeine-induced buzz, had I been one of the shepherds in the field the night the angels sang. The language of the King James Version captures the feeling of the scene as the angel announces, “Behold, I bring you glad tidings of great joy!”

The shepherds did not even bother to wash the smell of their work from robes which flapped in the wind of their haste. They burned leather all the way to Bethlehem to find the glorious scene of a Savior born in a barn. Everything smelled the same—the livestock, the swaddling clothes, the shepherds—and it was glorious. The shepherds interrupted each other, stumbling over phrases and sentences, breathlessly reporting to Mary everything they had seen and heard. Everyone gathered in the “church” barn was amazed. Glad tidings, indeed!

Mary was now used to being amazed and so was able to look around and let every word and face sink deeply into that part of her memory closest to the top. Luke says, “she treasured all these words and pondered them in her heart.” They were good for goose bumps years later. The shepherds partied all day and night, “glorifying and praising God.” Some thought they were Pentecostals.

This is the way with glad tidings. They become part of the heart's treasure and burst out into the air with uninhibited praise. “A Savior is born! Who is it that can turn a field and a manger into a sacred place? Praise the God of David who has visited us even in our low estate!”

As I imagined the angels singing shaped notes in the crisp cold air my mind returned to the coffee shop where John told me he wanted to be baptized. Glad tidings of great joy! A Savior born in the heart of a friend. Joy compounded when Meg reported the same good news. My heart is light with praise, burdened with treasure, overcome by the singing of the angels. I called Bruce to have him take the cold edge off of the baptistry water. “Praise God,” he yelled into the phone. Glad tidings. For a minute I thought Bruce was a Pentecostal. May this season when the angels sing cause us to live with ears strained for the hearing of glad tidings. May his word abound in the hearts of our friends and neighbors. Let the party commence!

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