

- Rev. Grant Mangold, www.RiversideChurchIowa.com

WORDS OF WOW !

Expecting a Christmas present delivered by drone this year? Even God used supernatural envoys in the delivery of His greatest Christmas gift - the angels who announced the birth of Jesus Christ. And He has commissioned YOU to share this good news. Let's look at four wow aspects of the Christmas message.

1- You are GIVEN amazing good news of great joy. How can you keep silent? In Luke 2 the angels proclaimed "*unto you is born a Savior, who is Christ the Lord*" and named Jesus. It's the heart of the gospel. You need saving from sin and can't save yourself. The promised Savior has come. Christ means *Messiah*, anointed one of God, come to seek and save the lost. Lord refers to His divine authority, the sovereign God over all things. He who made man has been made man. The name Jesus, Yeshua, means "*Jehovah saves.*" God Himself is our Savior, Christ, Lord, Jesus. That's Good News! Great joy!

Even simple shepherders understood the profound meaning of this proclamation. How did they respond? Luke says, "*They found Mary, Joseph and the baby, and made known what had been told them about the child. And all who heard it wondered at what the shepherds told them... And the shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all they had heard and seen.*" They could not keep silent!

2- You are COMMANDED to share this good news. How can you keep silent? Jesus commissioned His followers to go make disciples (Matt 28:19), and preach the gospel (Mark 16:15), that "*repentance and forgiveness of sins should be proclaimed in My name to all nations. You are witnesses of these things. And behold, I am sending the promise of My Father upon you*" to be "*clothed with power from on high*" (Luke 24:47). And "*you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you, and you WILL BE My witnesses, in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria and to the end of the earth*" (Acts 1:8). It was a command and a promise. The rest of the book of Acts tells how it was fulfilled.

Jesus says, start right where you are, in your Jerusalem, and be My witness. Tell what you know, have seen, heard and experienced. About Jesus. In John 14:15 He said, "*If you love Me, you will keep My commands.*" Then He promised the Holy Spirit to indwell and empower, to enable you to obey.

3- You are EMPOWERED to speak this good news. How can you keep silent? John 15:26 says, "*when the Helper comes, whom I will send to you from the Father, the Spirit of Truth, He will bear witness about Me. And you also will bear witness.*" Scripture shows the Holy Spirit's ministry explicitly involves speaking the Good News. And why it's so important. Romans 10:17 says "*faith comes from hearing, and hearing through the word of Christ.*" The apostle asks, how shall they believe in Him of whom they have never heard? And how are they to hear without someone proclaiming? After all, how did YOU come to faith?

Someone shared Christ with YOU! The great preacher CH Spurgeon said, "You have never truly found Jesus if you do not tell others about Him." Think about it. The Holy Spirit regenerates you to saving faith - the most significant reality of your entire life. Becoming a child of God, sins forgiven, assured of heaven. Wow! Then it's your greatest privilege to share the Good News. And the Holy Spirit equips you.

4- You are BLESSED for telling others about Jesus. How can you keep silent? Timothy was timid, but God chose him and Paul trained him, because "*God gave us a Spirit not of fear but of power and love and self control, therefore do not be ashamed of the testimony about our Lord*" (2 Tim 1:8) and "*preach the word, be ready in season and out of season*" (2 Tim 4:2). It's always open season for sharing the gospel. And God will give you divine appointments to share the Good News. Be ready. Be His envoy.

We've seen the who-what-when-where-why-how - and the wow - of the Good News. "*The sharing of your faith will become effective for the full knowledge of every good thing that is in us for the sake of Christ*" (Philemon 1:7). Pastor Sinclair Ferguson says, "You may feel very shy, but when you do bear testimony to Christ, you discover that you GROW. Your understanding is strengthened and your joy and assurance are increased - because you have entered more fully into obedience to Christ." Another wow!

So step out in faith. Say "*Merry Christmas!*" to everyone. Share what Jesus means to you. Enclose tracts in your correspondence. Check out e3resources.org. Give creative gifts that include the Good News. It seems every hobby or interest has associated ministries to help you share the "words of wow" about Christ. Trust and obey. Spread the Good News about Jesus all around you - in His name, by His power!