

Hearing the Message; Answering the call!

December 14, 2014

When I read the accounts written by the disciple, Matthew, and then Dr. Luke, I focused on the response that each character gave to the news that the Messiah had indeed come to earth. Each person that had encountered with this information responded just as people do today. Zacharias didn't believe the messenger though he was an angel sent from heaven to deliver the news to him. Though he was a priest and a godly man, and knew the Scriptures, he couldn't fathom that what was being told to him could possibly happen. Thus he was told that he would be dumb and unable to speak until the child was born.

Mary, the mother of Jesus, questioned about the possibility of her bearing a son when she hadn't been intimate with any man. "How can this be"? She wondered. As soon as the angel told her that the Holy Spirit would overshadow her and she would have a son that was great and he would sit on the throne of his father, David," Mary responded with "Let it be according to your words."

Joseph, Mary's husband to be, didn't accept her account that this baby that she was carrying was the Son of God. He was filled with questions on how he could divorce Mary privately and not ruin her reputation. He didn't want to disgrace her. However, the dream in which an angel told him not to fear to take Mary as his wife for the child that she was carrying was the Son of God and Joseph was to name the son, Jesus, for He will save his people from their sins. This dream came to him while he was pondering on what to do and he was convinced that Mary was to be his wife and the child that she was carrying was truly the Son of God.

Elizabeth, Zacharias's wife, was filled with the Holy Ghost as soon as Mary greeted her. The baby leaped in her womb and he was filled with the Holy Ghost just as the angel had said would take place. She believed the message that Mary's baby is the Son of God. She and Mary both praised and honored God for their role in the plan of God.

The innkeeper made the decision not to give a room to the young couple who were standing at his door. He gave them a place in the stable where the animals were kept. Jesus was laid in a feeding trough after his birth.

The shepherds heard the wonderful news of the birth of a King of Israel from an angel who was sent from God to give them the wonderful news of the birth of the Messiah. A host of angels joined the chorus of praising God and saying "Glory to God in the highest heaven and on earth peace to those on whom his favor rests." The shepherds were overjoyed and they ran into the city and found the baby just as the angels had spoken to them. They spread the word concerning what they had seen and heard about the child. The shepherds returned glorifying and praising God for all the things they had heard and seen which were just as

they had been told by the angels. All who heard it was amazed at what the shepherds said to them.

But Mary treasured up all these things and pondered them in her heart.

Some time elapsed and wise men from the East came to Bethlehem seeking the King for they had seen his star and had brought gifts and wanted to see him and worship him. They asked King Herod if he could tell them where the newborn king was. King Herod called in the chief priests and asked them for details about the child that was prophesied about in the Old Testament. They told him that the prophet said the Messiah would be born in Bethlehem, in the city of David.

The wise men left after King Herod had told them to search diligently for the child and when they had found him, return and give the news to the king so he could also go and worship him. They followed the star and it led them right to the house where the young child was living with his parents.

They opened their gifts and gave him gold, frankincense and myrrh. They were also warned by a dream not to return to Herod for he was seeking information so he could destroy the child. They found a different route home.

When King Herod realized that the wise men saw through his deception, he was enraged and reached out to destroy all the baby boys throughout the region who was two years old and younger. He went by the time that he first encountered the wise men from the East. There are those who hear the message of Jesus Christ. It is called the gospel for it is good news for those who grasp the message, understand the truth and desire to know the Savior of the world. But there are those who don't believe, who won't receive, who mock and close their minds to the possibility that a Savior God came to this earth to bear the sin of the world on his shoulders so that mankind could have eternal life.

There are those who spread the message wherever they go and they are overjoyed that they have found the Lord and they have a relationship with him.

There are others who are skeptic and it takes time for them to have the message sink into their hearts.

There are others who say they believe in God but they seek to destroy the faith of those around them. They try to keep others from obeying the truth just as they refuse to accept the love of the truth in their hearts.

Some, like the innkeepers, have no room in their hearts for the message of salvation. They are caught up in their worldly pursuits and their pride and self-importance and they have no desire to give any room for the Christ Child.

The Bible says that one day every knee will bow and every tongue will confess that Jesus Christ is Lord. If we reject him, he will reject us and will refuse to acknowledge us to God.