



# TRANSFORMED

DEVOTIONS CONNECTING TEENS TO CHRIST

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. On the eighth day, when it was time to circumcise the child, he was named Jesus, the name the angel had given him before he was conceived.

*Luke 2:8-21*

## Hope for the holidays: Jesus is for all

They were dusty, dirty, and smelled like a flock of sheep. These shepherds were the first visitors to praise Jesus as the Savior, and they came just as they were. When Mary and Joseph saw them coming, they didn’t roll their eyes and shut the door. No, they welcomed them into the humble stable where the Savior of the world was lying in a *manger*. Can you believe it? —A feeding trough for animals like sheep. Mary, Joseph, and the shepherds worshipped Jesus together. Later the Wise Men, a rich and elite crew, did the same.

Christianity isn’t a private party. It isn’t a table reserved for the cool kids. The angels went out to the country among the shepherds to tell them the good news. They also clearly told them that this message wasn’t only for shepherds. The news that the Savior has been born is “good news that will cause great joy for all the people.”

Middle school, high school, and college can be vicious. Girls can be mean and exclusive for any which reason they choose. Guys can be combative instead of welcoming. It’s hard to fit in, and you might feel like nobody cares about you at all.

At times we might think that even the salvation Jesus brings is just as selective—that so-and-so (or maybe, you) is not “good enough” for the gospel. But that is wrong, sinfully wrong. Jesus is for everyone. “The Lord saves” is the meaning of his name. He saves people coming from every tribe, language, and people. The wise men and the shepherds. The cool kids and the rest of us. He saves us from our sin. There is another seat at the table. Will you join in? Will you welcome another?

**Prayer: Jesus Christ, as I ponder your great love for all people, including me, I worship you. Whether or not I mean much to the world doesn’t matter. I know of your love which matters more to me than all the world. I am moved to praise you with the angels, “Glory to God in the highest heaven, and on earth peace to those on whom his favor rests.” Amen.**