

Saturday, 8/23 at 4:00 | Sunday, 8/24 at 9:00

Shepherding the Sheep

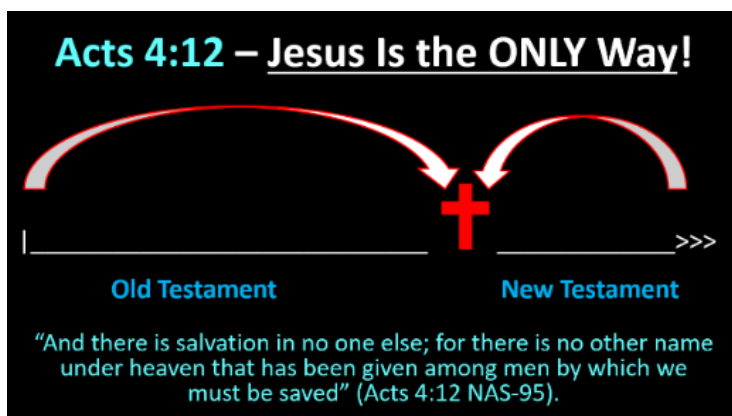


At Bethlehem Parma

Part 1 | Text: NAS 1995

Introduction

Dear Members of Bethlehem: JESUS is the Good Shepherd – He ♣lived for us, ♣laid down His life for us, and ♣was raised victorious! He is the **only way to heaven** for you, for me, for all! Let's view and understand this important image:



Please keep reading to better understand ♣my role in your life and ♣the great importance for me and you to keep ➡trusting in Jesus, ➡doing God's word, and ➡living in continual repentance!

Welcome to My World

Many years ago, I ✦faithfully attended church and Bible Class, ✦served as an usher, *and* ✦*thought I was a Christian.*

Then, in my later 20's – *by the Holy Spirit working through the Bible*, my trust was transferred **from** myself **to** Jesus.

Then, *as the months went by*, I became more open to God's plan for my life – **never** imagining it would lead to serving as a pastor, a shepherd. // **Ephesians 3:20** "Now to [God] who is able to do exceeding abundantly beyond all that we ask or think, according to the power that works within us..."

The Ultimate Shepherd and The Under-Shepherd

Jesus is the **Ultimate Shepherd** – *perfect in every way*, but I am an **under-shepherd** *serving under Jesus*. I cannot live without sin, but – *by God's grace* – I am a repentant and forgiven child of God! ***It is my greatest desire for us to be with God forevermore!***

Since Jesus' return is drawing closer every moment, *it is critical for us to be ready:*

- **1 Thessalonians 5:2** "...the Lord will come just like a thief in the night."
- **Mark 13:33** "Take heed, keep on the alert; for you do not know when the *appointed* time will come."

Difficult for Me – Good for You

Shepherds should be diligent to rightly and fully know, live, and teach God's word:

- **Be Accurate** – **James 3:1** Let not many of you become [Bible] teachers, my brethren, knowing that as such **we**

will incur a stricter judgment. // All pastors / under-shepherds should be *as hardworking as possible* to rightly handle God's word of truth!

- **Warn Unrepentant Ones** – **Ezekiel 3:18** “When I [the LORD] say to the wicked [unrepentant man], ‘You will surely die,’ and you [Ezekiel – a speaker of My word] do not warn him or speak out to warn the wicked from his wicked way that he may live, that wicked man shall die in his iniquity, but **his blood I will require at your hand** [Kretzmann: “as having caused the slaughter of an immortal soul by his negligence.”] // Warning **unrepentant ones** is DIFFICULT – *because they think they are fine*, but IMPORTANT – *because they will perish without repentance*.
- **Identify Sin** – **Galatians 5:19-21** “...the deeds of the flesh are evident:
 - [Lust and sex outside of marriage]: immorality, impurity, sensuality,
 - [Sins related to godlessness]: idolatry [idol worship], sorcery,
 - [Sins related to personal hatred]: enmities [hostilities], strife [discord], jealousy, outbursts of anger,
 - [Sins related to taking sides]: disputes, dissensions [divisions], factions [sects], envying,
 - [Sins related to partying]: drunkenness, carousing and things like these... **those who practice** [do, commit] **such things will not inherit the kingdom of God.**
- **Tell the Full Truth** – **Acts 20:26-27** [Paul said to pastors he had trained:] **...I am innocent of the blood of all men.** [Why?] For I did not shrink from declaring to you the whole purpose of God.” // It is **vital for all shepherds** to

teach **God's full truth** and **vital for all people** to *faithfully*
✦hear, ✦understand, ✦believe, and ✦apply!

Conclusion

That is Part 1 of *Shepherding the Sheep at Bethlehem Parma*.

This is what I covered today:

- Jesus – The ONLY Way!
- My World
- The Ultimate and Under
- Difficult But Good

These topics are yet to come:

- God's Word
- Joy or Grief
- Vital Signs
- Knowing God and Jesus
- Relationship Basics
- God's Kingdom First
- Faith and Works Order

Let Us Pray: Dear LORD, I TY for the privilege of shepherding the sheep here at BLC. Help me to rightly know, live, and teach Your word, and may all with a connection to this congregation faithfully receive and eternally benefit!

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