

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

Shepherding the Sheep



At Bethlehem Parma

Part 1 (8/23 & 24)

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

Part 2 (8/30 & 31)

- God's Word
- Joy or Grief
- Vital Signs
- Knowing God and Jesus

Part 3 (9/6 & 7)

- Relationship Basics
- God's Kingdom First
- Faith and Works Order
- How Can I Help You?

Part 1 | Text: NAS 1995

Introduction

Dear Friends: This is part 1 of Shepherding the Sheep at Bethlehem Parma. See the image above for the contents of this series.

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:

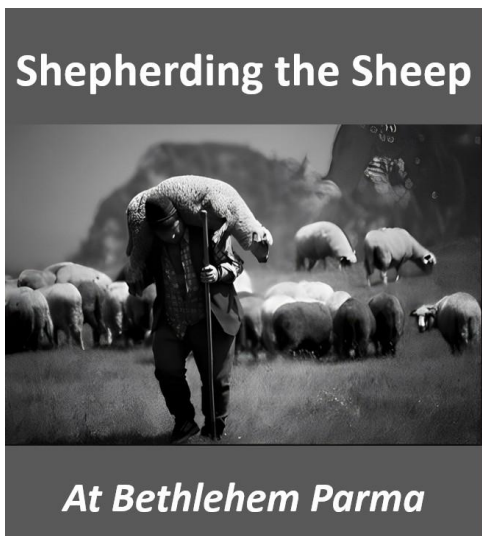
- **Be Accurate** – **James 3:1** Let not many of you become [Bible] teachers, my brethren, knowing that as such **we will incur a stricter judgment.** // All pastors / under-shepherds should be *as hardworking as possible* to rightly handle God's word of truth!
- **Warn Unrepentant Ones** – **Ezekiel 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

See the image below for what is yet to come in parts 2 and 3.



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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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