

## CHARACTERISTICS OF A GOOD SHEPHERD

Luke 2:8-17; 15:4-6

I'm glad you could be with me once again today for the radio program, "It's a Good Life." Today we're going to look at three aspects of a good shepherd. We want to look first in Luke chapter 2, and then we're going to be looking in Luke chapter 15.

But first, let me invite you to look at our website today, [www.LRWM.org](http://www.LRWM.org). On that website, you'll be able to leave us a prayer request. Any request that you have you'll be able to leave on that website. Now, if you go to the website, [www.LRWM.org](http://www.LRWM.org), you can leave your prayer request. You can also download a transcript of this program absolutely free. You can also write to me or go to that website and download other transcripts of the program, "It's a Good Life." Be sure, if you write to me, to let me know what program you would like a transcript of. These are absolutely free to you.

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Now, in Luke chapter 2, we're going to look first of all in that chapter, and I'm sure that it is a familiar chapter, and the verses we're going to read are going to be familiar to you. But let's look there in Luke chapter 2 and verse 8.

It says there, <sup>8</sup>*And there were in the same country shepherds abiding in the field, keeping watch over their flock by night.* <sup>9</sup>*And, lo, the angel of the Lord came upon them, and the glory of the Lord shone round about them: and they were sore afraid.* <sup>10</sup>*And the angel said unto them, Fear not: for, behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people.* <sup>11</sup>*For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord.* <sup>12</sup>*And this [shall be] a sign unto you; Ye shall find the babe wrapped in swaddling clothes, lying in a manger.* <sup>13</sup>*And*

*suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host praising God, and saying,* <sup>14</sup>*Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men.* <sup>15</sup>*And it came to pass, as the angels were gone away from them into heaven, the shepherds said one to another, Let us now go even unto Bethlehem, and see this thing which is come to pass, which the Lord hath made known unto us.* <sup>16</sup>*And they came with haste, and found Mary, and Joseph, and the babe lying in a manger.* <sup>17</sup>*And when they had seen [it], they made known abroad the saying which was told them concerning this child. And verse 18 says, And all they that heard [it] wondered at those things which were told them by the shepherds.*

Is it any wonder that we look at the Good Shepherd, the Lord Jesus, and we see that the announcement was made here to shepherds in the field. Once again, as we look in our section of Scriptures today, we're going to see a likeness of our Good Shepherd, the Lord Jesus, in the likeness of a shepherd who took care of his sheep.

Now, over in the book of Luke, once again, in chapter 15, we're going to start reading there with verse 4. *What man of you, having an hundred sheep, if he lose one of them, doth not leave the ninety and nine in the wilderness, and go after that which is lost, until he find it?* <sup>5</sup>*And when he hath found [it], he layeth [it] on his shoulders, rejoicing.* <sup>6</sup>*And when he cometh home, he calleth together [his] friends and neighbours, saying unto them, Rejoice with me; for I have found my sheep which was lost.*

The love of Jesus is not mere sentiment, as some would have you think. It's an action. It's an active and energetic love. It is expectant love, going after sheep that have no intention of returning to the fold. You see, it is not a natural thing at all for any man, woman, boy, or girl to be away from

Christ. Going after sheep made and makes the shepherd leave all else. Now, in verse 4 of Luke 15, we see the shepherd in searching. It says *until he find it*. Mark him well as with his eyes as he looks. He looks for the sheep that is lost.

And notice, he looks with his heart. He has a deep yearning to find that sheep and he uses everything about him. He uses all of his faculties as he goes after that which is lost. Now, there is no rejoicing in his countenance. He has a serious look on his face as he is walking along, looking, searching every area to try and find that sheep that has gone astray. He's anxious for the lost. In Luke chapter 19 and verse 10, it says *For the Son of man is come to seek and to save that which was lost*. Jesus came specifically to seek and to save those individuals who are lost, who need a Saviour, who need a Shepherd to lead them.

And notice with the shepherd, there is no hesitation in his mind. Despite the roughness of the way or the length of time or the darkness of the night, he still pursues his lost one. There's ninety and nine safe; he's still going after that one who is lost. He came into the world to seek and to save those who were lost. Those sheep who do not have a Saviour, He's looking for them even right now.

There was once a Chinese convert by the name of Yam Sing, and on his examination for membership in a Baptist church out in San Francisco in response to a question they asked him, "How did you find Jesus?" Yam Sing answered like this. "I no find Jesus at all. He find me." And of course, he passed the test that this Baptist church gave him because, you see, it's Jesus who looks for us. It's Jesus who has searched for that lost sheep, those individuals who need a Saviour.

Now, notice this shepherd. There was no anger in his heart. This sheep has wandered away. This sheep is one who is rebellious. He's one who doesn't pay attention. He's wandered off, but

there was no anger in the heart of the shepherd. Now, the many wanderings of the sheep cost dearly, but he counts them as nothing. These costs, these things that it cost him, he counts them as nothing so that he may but find it, find the sheep. Jesus left the realms of glory. He left Heaven. He left all things that were dear to Him to come to this Earth to find those things that become dear to Him as they receive Him as their Saviour. The lost sheep are dear to Him. They come to Him and say, "Lord Jesus, forgive me of my sin. I receive You as my Lord and Saviour. I trust You to save me." But the great Shepherd, Jesus, left the realms of glory. He counted all things lost except and for the searching of that lost sheep, those of us who needed a Saviour. He loved us so much that He gave His life for us.

Notice what happens now as the sheep is captured. We would look at it as a capture as this shepherd wanders along. And he's not actually wandering; he's looking as he walks along; he's looking for the wandering sheep. Verse 5 of Luke 15 says *when he hath found it*. Well, what happens when the shepherd finds the sheep? Notice how that the wanderer is held, how firm the grip, how firm the shepherd holds onto this sheep, this lost one.

In Romans chapter 8 and verses 35 through 39, the Bible says, <sup>35</sup>*Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? [shall] tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword?* <sup>36</sup>*As it is written, For thy sake we are killed all the day long; we are accounted as sheep for the slaughter.* <sup>37</sup>*Nay, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him that loved us.* <sup>38</sup>*For I am persuaded, that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come,* <sup>39</sup>*Nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.*

The Shepherd loves us so much that He gives us the assurance that He will never let us go. He will never leave us nor forsake us. And we often wonder and think this way. What's going to separate me from God? What's going to cause me to lose my salvation? Well, in that chapter, Romans chapter 8, verses 35 through 39, we see that nothing can separate us from the love of God, not even we ourselves. Nothing is able to take us from the hand of the Lord because He's holding onto us; we're not holding onto Him.

Now, as he carries the weight, this shepherd that we look at, as we look at the shepherd who has lost his sheep and he's found the sheep, he's not driving that sheep when he finds the sheep, but he places that sheep upon his shoulders. In verse 5 we read that. And why is it that he does not drive the sheep before him, especially seeing it was lively enough to lose itself? First, it's because, though he had the wildness enough to go astray, he did not have the wisdom enough to go right. Secondly, because probably the silly sheep had tired itself with wandering. People wander about here and there looking for certain things in their lives that they never find because there is no satisfaction in this world apart from the Lord Jesus Christ.

And notice the homebringing of this sheep. Verse 6, it says *when he cometh home*. Heaven is home to Christ. Jesus must carry us all the way there. Jesus loves others to rejoice with Him over the accomplishment of His design. One sinner can make all Heaven glad. We read that in verses 7 through 10 of Luke chapter 15. We need to understand that Jesus is the great Shepherd. He's the good Shepherd. He's also the great Shepherd in Hebrews chapter 13 and verse 20. He's the chief Shepherd in 1 Peter chapter 5 and verse 4. He is the Shepherd and Bishop of souls in 1 Peter 2:25. He is the Shepherd of the sheep who gathers the lambs with His arm and carries them in His bosom, John chapter 10 and Isaiah chapter 40 and verse 11. He is the Shepherd of Israel, Ezekiel chapter 34

and verse 23. And He is Jehovah's Shepherd, Zachariah chapter 13, verse 7.

Do you know the Shepherd today? Do you know Jesus? Have you trusted Him as your Saviour? Or are you still wandering about? Jesus wants you right now to receive Him as your Saviour. You say, "Well, he's never come for me." He has right now. He's looking to you right now. He sees you right where you're at, and He's asking you. He's wanting to pick you up and carry you to Heaven if you'll just trust Him today.

"Lord Jesus, come into my heart. I receive You as my Saviour. I receive the free gift. I want You to carry me to Heaven, Lord."

If you'll pray a prayer like that and mean it in your heart, God will save you today through the blood of the Lord Jesus Christ. If you're a saved person and you've gotten away from the Lord, you need to repent today and say, "Lord Jesus, forgive me. I come back to You to serve You. Thank You, Lord, for saving my soul."

It's been good being with you today, and I trust that you'll be back here at this same time next week when once again, you'll hear me say it is a good life. May the Lord bless you richly is my prayer.