

John 58 – Jesus's Sheep

08/31/2025

Scripture 1: (Jn. 10:11-21 ESV)

I am the good shepherd. The good shepherd lays down his life for the sheep. He who is a hired hand and not a shepherd, who does not own the sheep, sees the wolf coming and leaves the sheep and flees, and the wolf snatches them and scatters them. He flees because he is a hired hand and cares nothing for the sheep. I am the good shepherd. I know my own and my own know me, just as the Father knows me and I know the Father; and I lay down my life for the sheep.

And I have other sheep that are not of this fold. I must bring them also, and they will listen to my voice. So there will be one flock, one shepherd. For this reason the Father loves me, because I lay down my life that I may take it up again. No one takes it from me, but I lay it down of my own accord. I have authority to lay it down, and I have authority to take it up again. This charge I have received from my Father."

There was again a division among the Jews because of these words. Many of them said, "He has a demon, and is insane; why listen to him?"

Others said, "These are not the words of one who is oppressed by a demon. Can a demon open the eyes of the blind?"

Scripture 2: (Ezek. 34:17-31 ESV)

"As for you, my flock, thus says the Lord GOD: Behold, I judge between sheep and sheep, between rams and male goats. Is it not enough for you to feed on the good pasture, that you must tread down with your feet the rest of your pasture; and to drink of clear water, that you must muddy the rest of the water with your feet? And must my sheep eat what you have trodden with your feet, and drink what you have muddied with your feet?

"Therefore, thus says the Lord GOD to them: Behold, I, I myself will judge between the fat sheep and the lean sheep. Because you push with side and shoulder, and thrust at all the weak with your horns, till you have scattered them abroad, I will rescue my flock; they shall no longer be a prey. And I will judge between sheep and sheep. And I will set up over them one shepherd, my servant David, and he shall feed them: he shall feed them and be their shepherd. And I, the LORD, will be their God, and my servant David shall be prince among them. I am the LORD; I have spoken.

"I will make with them a covenant of peace and banish wild beasts from the land, so that they may dwell securely in the wilderness and sleep in the woods. And I will make them and the places all around my hill a blessing, and I will send down the showers in their season; they shall be showers of blessing. And the trees of the field shall yield their fruit, and the earth shall yield its increase, and they shall be secure in their land. And they shall know that I am the LORD, when I break the bars of their yoke, and deliver them from the hand of those who enslaved them. They shall no more be a prey to the nations, nor shall the beasts of the land devour them. They shall dwell securely, and none shall make them afraid. And I will provide for them renowned plantations so that they shall no more be consumed with hunger in the land, and no longer suffer the reproach of the nations. And they shall know that I am the LORD their God with them, and that they, the house of Israel, are my people, declares the Lord GOD. And you are my sheep, human sheep of my pasture, and I am your God, declares the Lord GOD."

Sermon:

Jesus Christ is the good shepherd. He is our good shepherd. Christians: everyone who trusts in Jesus for their salvation by faith alone, everyone who willingly and obediently submits to His sovereign authority as the LORD, everyone who loves the Jesus revealed by Scripture; are Jesus's "sheep". We are His flock and He is gathering us to Himself, to dwell within the security of His pasture. He intimately knows us. He knows everything about us: about who we are, about all of our hopes, and all of our dreams; while we also know Him and may recognize Him because of how He has revealed Himself to us through sacred Scripture; through the written revelation that His Holy Spirit confirms within every Christian's heart. Therefore, Jesus knows His own and His own know Him, just as God the Father knows God the Son and the Son knows the Father.

Jesus's sheep know Him. We recognize Him for who He is and we appreciate our relationship with Him. as our good shepherd. We know that He loves us and we understand that that is why we love Him in response. We believe and trust that because He has laid down His life in our defense, that His love is truly honest and real (John 15:13); a love of the highest quality and greatest capacity, infinite and unchanging. We know that He is our Provider and our Rescuer, facts that we are wholly grateful for. However, there are questions of substance which still remain for each of Jesus's sheep to rightly understand.

- How may I know that Jesus Christ truly is my shepherd?
- How may I know that the shepherd I am following is the true Jesus?

Unfortunately, the answer to that first question is somewhat difficult to answer. It is challenging because it is entirely subjective and utterly absolute. It is a matter of "knowing" it, surely and certainly. For Christians today, our "knowing" is a matter of simple faith, because we do not have direct access to any firm proofs or evidences. We can not eat the loaves and fishes, with the five thousand and more, that were broken by Jesus' hands. We can not speak with the countless people who were healed miraculously at Jesus' Word and touch. We did not witness Jesus walk upon the waters of the Sea of Galilee as on dry land. Instead, we must trust the testimony of those who actually tasted and saw (Psalm 34:8).

We must trust that their experiences and understandings were recorded faithfully and accurately. We must trust that, across the generations of copies made from copies made from the lost originals, no falsehoods or errors or mistakes of substance have been introduced to the text, whether by accident or bad intention. Children have probably played the game of "Telephone" since before Alexander Graham Bell even invented the device, and they can certainly tell us that it is not easy to transmit and reliably preserve information through that many touch points. Logically, and according to ordinary reason, the idea that the Words of Scripture have been perfectly and accurately preserved across history, is statistically improbable and, for many, the idea is entirely unbelievable, unless of course there was a supernatural and divine influence preserving it. Except, we Christians actually believe that that is true, and that is something which all the faithful of the Church have believed throughout the past two thousand years of church history and even across the fourteen hundred years before that, as well. The Church has believed this fact and has known it to be true even without the confirming evidences that were uncovered during the most recent one hundred years, evidences like:

- A shepherd discovered a cave, in 1947, near the Dead Sea, containing clay jars that were filled with documents written over a period of three hundred years, between 200 BC and 100 AD. Included within this library was a nearly complete copy of the book of Isaiah; a manuscript copy that had been transcribed around 125 BC. This copy is functionally identical to the oldest extant Jewish manuscripts of the Hebrew Scriptures, only missing the "vowel points" that were created and added by the Masoretes around the 6th and 7th centuries AD. This two thousand year old copy demonstrates the fidelity of the

copiers to the text, and the incredible accuracy of their copying practices, confirming the justification of our confidence.

- Meanwhile, p66 (Papyrus 66), is the oldest, nearly complete copy of John's Gospel. This manuscript was discovered in 1952 in Egypt and, although there are numerous opinions about specifically when, scholars are confident that it was transcribed between 150 and 400 AD. The accuracy of this manuscript is further evidence demonstrating and affirming our confidence in the faithful transmission of the New Testament. Thus the faith and confidence of generations of Christians, in the reliability of Scripture, are proven justified, even against the “reasonable” expectation of logic.

But, how are Christians so confident about the truthfulness and rightness of Scripture, without having physical confirming evidences? It cannot be attributed to just our own wishful thinking, or to the fervent and dogmatic assertion of “rightness” by the church. Nor is it entirely attributable to the evidences and testimonies written within Scripture, those that attest to it being God's Holy Word. Rather, “our full persuasion and assurance of the infallible truth and divine authority thereof, is from the inward work of the Holy Spirit bearing witness by and with the Word in our hearts.” (WCF 1.5; 1 Corinthians 2:9-10, Isaiah 55:11, 1 John 2:20 and 27). Christians know Jesus and we believe Him to be true because the Holy Spirit, who is dwelling within the heart of every Christian, testifies to it and therefore, strengthens our faith and confidence. Whatever spirit dwells within any particular person, testifies to who their shepherd is.

But the second question is much easier to answer, because Jesus is much more simple than we like to give Him credit for. Scripture clearly and plainly tells us who He is, what He is about, and what He expects from His sheep (WCF 1.6-7). Knowing Jesus and knowing that we are following the true Jesus is easy to do, when we know the Scriptures well: when we study them diligently and faithfully apply them to our lives. That is why the Evangelist tells us elsewhere to “*test the spirits to see whether they are from God*” because “*many false prophets have gone out into the world.*” (1 Jn. 4:1 ESV) so that we may discern between good shepherds and bad shepherds: between Jesus and “false Jesus's”; by comparing what they say and do against what Scripture plainly teaches and says.

This is why it is so important for Christians to know and understand the relevant and appropriate contexts: the narrative context, the literary context, and the historical contexts; within Scripture. That is why it is so important for us to study whole passages of Scripture, rather than singular verses, and study them within their context and not removed from it. Otherwise, our sinful hearts, which are naturally prone to twist God's Word, will try to make verses like, “*Anyone who does not love does not know God, because God is love.*” (1 Jn. 4:8 ESV), seem to mean whatever we want or absolutely nothing at all. Or, we may intentionally isolate verses, such as “*...the law came in to increase the trespass, but where sin increased, grace abounded all the more...*” (Rom. 5:20 ESV) and use them to justify our unrepentance and continuation in sin, intentionally ignoring what Paul writes just two verses later, “*What shall we say then? Are we to continue in sin that grace may abound? By no means! How can we who died to sin still live in it?*” (Rom. 6:1-2 ESV), refuting such anti-nomianism clearly. Or, we so over-contextualize whole books, such as Paul's letters to Timothy in Ephesus, to justify ignoring them as “authoritative Scripture”; arguing instead that they were meant only for that particular time and place, and lack any lasting relevance or importance. Problems, false prophets, false Christs and false gods are all easily refuted and rebuked when we know and understand Scripture well; when we know Jesus Christ as well as He knows us.

Then, while concluding His explanation of this parable, Jesus said something else that would have been received as shocking, although it really should not have been, “*I have other sheep that are not of this fold. I must bring them also, and they will listen to my voice. So there will be one flock, one shepherd.*”. This statement by Jesus is easy to misinterpret and misapply by those who are motivated by a false interpretation of love: as excessive charity, tolerance of everything, and an overabundance of human grace. Such classically liberal perspectives and attitudes encourage people to think that they are “more loving”, “more gracious”, “more

charitable”, “more forgiving”, and “more merciful and tolerant” than God, Himself. They build their self righteousness up into a false sense of superiority to Jesus Christ, Himself.

When Jesus said, “*I have other sheep that are not of this fold.*”, the different sheep He meant were the Gentiles. A sheepfold is the enclosure where they put the sheep for their safety. A sheepfold, or just a “fold”, is what they called the corral which had the opening which the shepherds would lie across and block, as a gatekeeper and door. Jesus's use of “fold” did not refer to the flock, but to the constructed enclosure that the sheep dwelt within. His metaphorical use of “fold” referred to the social constructs of ethnicity and nationality, not religion. Jesus was talking about gathering all of His sheep out from every where that they may be and every people group. He was also not equating or identifying all of “the Jews” as His sheep.

The Apostle Paul picks up this thread and reminds us, “*For not all who are descended from Israel belong to Israel, and not all are children of Abraham because they are his offspring, but "Through Isaac shall your offspring be named." This means that it is not the children of the flesh who are the children of God, but the children of the promise are counted as offspring.*” (Rom. 9:6-8 ESV). Therefore, everyone that is ethnically Jewish is not necessarily a part of Jesus's flock. Not everyone born into ethnic Israel are necessarily “*children of God*”, just as everyone born into a congregation of Christ's church are not necessarily “*children of God*”. Only the “*children of promise*” are. Regardless, we still treat every child as a child of promise, in the faithful hope and expectation that, in God's merciful Providence and Grace, they are. So, just as every male child in Israel was required to be circumcised, Christians should baptize their children, grasping hold of that same hope in faith. Similarly, Paul also explains how the Gentiles, those who are not born ethnically Jewish, are grafted into Israel; becoming part of God's people and are welcomed into Jesus's flock and numbered among His sheep (Romans 11:9-27).

Therefore, everyone who belongs to Christ, who are known by Him and who know Him, from out of every nation and people group, will hear and listen to His voice. They will obey His commands and they will respond to His call and come out from where ever they were to join His flock and be Jesus's sheep. They will all, each be united together as one people, under the tender care of our one “*good shepherd*”, Jesus Christ.

What this statement from Jesus does not mean, although I have heard it strongly suggested, is that Jesus has other “folds”, by which some mean other supposedly “Christian-adjacent” or ecumenical religions. But, the Jesus of Scripture does not accept the worship performed and offered by other religions. Jesus is “*the door*”: the only entrance, passage, and means of access to God our Father in heaven. He declared that anyone who tries to enter or exit the sheepfold of God by any means other than Christ, is a “*thief*” and a “*robber*”. Just because someone may claim to worship, venerate, respect, or honor Jesus, it does not mean that they are a Christian or that they belong to Christ. Everyone who worship Him wrongly, worship Him falsely and prove that they do not know Him and that they do not belong to Him.

- C.S. Lewis was utterly wrong on this point, the allegorical Aslan should not accept the worship offered to the demonic god, Tash, by the Calormene (C.S. Lewis, *The Last Battle*). They worshiped the wrong god, the wrong way, and with wrong intentions. While many people may be, and often are, delivered out of false religions, no false religion or wrong worship is pleasing to the LORD. They are nothing except strange and unauthorized fire, just ask Nadab and Abihu if you are uncertain (Numbers 3:4).
- Mormons are not Christians. They teach a false Jesus. They teach that Jesus is a creature, an angel, and not God the Son. Their extra Scriptures, the *Book of Mormon* and the *Pearl of Great Price*, often directly contradict the Bible.
- Jehovah's Witnesses are not Christians. They flatly deny the deity of Christ. They believe that He was created; that there was a time when He was not.

- J. Gresham Machen divided Christianity from Liberalism, back in 1923; separating orthodox Christians from the “modernists” or “progressives” who wrongly claim the Christian faith. He argued that “Liberalism” is an entirely different religion, one contrary to Christian truth. Many of these liberals denied the necessity of Christian fundamentals¹ like: the inerrancy of Scripture, the virgin birth, the doctrine of substitutionary atonement, the physical bodily resurrection of Jesus, and the full deity of Christ². Their denials eventually led them to consider the church to be an institution primarily concerned with social welfare rather than the salvation of souls. They promoted a “social gospel” instead of the Gospel of Jesus Christ. Their Jesus was just a good teacher and a moral exemplar, not God the Son and our Savior. These attitudes and perspectives evolved and continue to infect both “mainline” and other “evangelical” denominations which favor emphases on issues of “social justice”, “tolerance” and inclusion, or “charitable works” while forcing the “actual Gospel” to languish in the rear as a secondary concern or addition, instead of being the primary motivator for Christian response. These perspectives may explain why John Lennon's song, *Imagine*, is the most popular, anti-Christian song of all time.
- Muslims are not Christians. Their Allah is neither Jesus nor the Yahweh of the Old Testament, even though *allah* is the Arabic word used to refer to God. Their Jesus was neither God nor a god. Their Jesus was just a prophet, but not even the greatest prophet. Their Jesus did not die on the cross and their Jesus did not get resurrected. But, their Jesus did ascend into heaven and they expect their Jesus will return someday, to condemn Christians for our alleged “idolatry”; our failure to submit and believe their Allah.
- Jews are not Christians. They fail to rightly understand the Hebrew Scripture which they affirm as God's revelation; Scripture that consistently points towards Jesus. They stubbornly refuse to accept the fullness of God's revelation in the person of Jesus or the testimonies of His Apostles. Instead, they accuse Jesus of being a “sorcerer” who tried to lead Israel into “apostasy” (Tractate Sanhedrin (43a)³. They accuse Mary of being a prostitute and Jesus an illegitimate child (Sanhedrin 106a)⁴. While some continue to

¹<https://www.pcainhistory.org/documents/auburntext.html>

²<https://www.pcainhistory.org/documents/deliverance.html>

³ On the eve of the Passover Yeshu was hanged. For forty days before the execution took place, a herald went forth and cried, 'He is going forth to be stoned because he has practised sorcery and enticed Israel to apostasy. Any one who can say anything in his favour, let him come forward and plead on his behalf.' But since nothing was brought forward in his favour he was hanged on the eve of the Passover! — Ulla retorted: 'Do you suppose that he was one for whom a defence could be made? Was he not a Mesith [enticer], concerning whom Scripture says, Neither shalt thou spare, neither shalt thou conceal him? With Yeshu however it was different, for he was connected with the government [or royalty, i.e., influential].'

Our Rabbis taught: Yeshu had five disciples, Matthai, Nakai, Nezer, Buni and Todah. When Matthai was brought [before the court] he said to them [the judges], Shall Matthai be executed? Is it not written, Matthai [when] shall I come and appear before God? Thereupon they retorted; Yes, Matthai shall be executed, since it is written, When Matthai [when] shall [he] die and his name perish. When Nakai was brought in he said to them; Shall Nakai be executed? It is not written, Naki [the innocent] and the righteous slay thou not? Yes, was the answer, Nakai shall be executed, since it is written, in secret places does Naki [the innocent] slay. When Nezer was brought in, he said; Shall Nezer be executed? Is it not written, And Nezer [a twig] shall grow forth out of his roots. Yes, they said, Nezer shall be executed, since it is written, But thou art cast forth away from thy grave like Nezer [an abhorred offshoot]. When Buni was brought in, he said: Shall Buni be executed? Is it not written, Beni [my son], my first born? Yes, they said, Buni shall be executed, since it is written, Behold I will slay Bine-ka [thy son] thy first born. And when Todah was brought in, he said to them; Shall Todah be executed? Is it not written, A psalm for Todah [thanksgiving]? Yes, they answered, Todah shall be executed, since it is written, Whoso offereth the sacrifice of Todah [thanksgiving] honoured me.

⁴It is stated: “And Balaam, son of Beor, the diviner, did the children of Israel slay with the sword among the rest of their slain” (Joshua 13:22). The Gemara asks: Was he a diviner? He is a prophet. Rabbi Yohanan says: Initially he was a prophet, but ultimately, he lost his capacity for prophecy and remained merely a diviner. Rav Pappa says that this is in accordance with the adage that people say: This woman was descended from princes and rulers, and was licentious with carpenters.

hope in a Messiah still to come, others have transferred their messianic hope to the Jewish people, to national Israel as a whole.

These examples, and more that I will not take the time to list presently, do not belong to Jesus's flock. They are not “*children of God*”. They are proven to not be Jesus's sheep, when their doctrines, practices, and beliefs are compared against Scripture. Sadly, many people wrongly believe that they belong to Jesus, that they are faithfully keeping His commands and rightly following Him, But, they are following a “false Jesus” instead. All of these examples are spiritually blind, just as the Pharisees were.

Meanwhile, Jesus's sheep come to Him from out of all the many different folds in the world. We come to Him from out of every nation and from every ethnic people group. Despite being different, we are still united together as one people and one flock, under the Lordship of Jesus our “Good Shepherd”, as God's children. But, although we are all equally members of this flock, we are not all equal within it. There are sheep numbered among Jesus's flock, who are better or worse Christians than other sheep. Some people are better or worse at following Jesus than others. Some people are more or less sanctified. Some are more or less loving and charitable. Yet none of these are any less “saved”. They are no less redeemed by God's grace. We are each just at different points in our walk with Christ. But overall, we are all slowly getting better. At least we are trending slightly upwards, even while we still have our ups and downs.

Eventually, each of us will be “graded” by Jesus, our “*good shepherd*”. We will be ranked and we will be rewarded accordingly and differently. Ezekiel tells us, “*As for you, my flock, thus says the Lord GOD: Behold, I judge between sheep and sheep, between rams and male goats. Is it not enough for you to feed on the good pasture, that you must tread down with your feet the rest of your pasture; and to drink of clear water, that you must muddy the rest of the water with your feet? And must my sheep eat what you have trodden with your feet, and drink what you have muddied with your feet?*”. The LORD reminds us that He is speaking both to and about His sheep, specifically. However, this is not the same imagery found in Matthew 25:31-46, used to describe the last judgment, where Jesus separates the righteous sheep from the wicked goats; where He divides them and sends them in opposite directions. Rather, this imagery is more descriptive of Jesus separating the “stubborn and ornery” faithful from the “gladly obedient” faithful.

Understanding this, Ezekiel's words really should convict each of us because oftentimes, Christians treat other Christians as the worst. Presbyterians, Baptists, and Pentecostals all are guilty of charging the others of not being “real Christians” simply because we disagree on certain, non-essential points of doctrine. Although, we also strongly disagree about doctrines that we each deem essential, but which the other may not, yet most of those are unrelated to our shared faith in Jesus Christ. We disagree about what Bible translations should be used: whether KJV-only, or considering NIV, NRSV, ESV to be acceptable. We disagree about worship styles; something that can be non-essential so long as all of the essential elements of right worship are present. We may disagree about dancing, drinking, smoking, and movie-going or clothing. So, we are all guilty, as denominations and as individuals, of being arrogant and non-humble towards our siblings in the faith; of being judgmental towards them. But, the sad and honest truth is, we are all certainly wrong about something in our theology and/or our devotional practice; some of us more wrong, others less. But these relatively minor errors do not make us any less Christian. They, and we, are still Christians, just Christians that are wrong. We all are guilty of muddying the waters of faith for others. We are each guilty of trodding down the pasture lands of our fellow believers.

“*Therefore, thus says the Lord GOD to them: Behold, I, I myself will judge between the fat sheep and the lean sheep. Because you push with side and shoulder, and thrust at all the weak with your horns, till you have scattered them abroad, I will rescue my flock; they shall no longer be a prey. And I will judge between sheep and sheep.*” While we are each trying to find our own space and make ourselves comfortable within Jesus'

flock, we carelessly shove others around, and we try to drive them out or away, inadvertently scattering those who rightly belong to Jesus. But still, because the LORD is good and He is just, therefore, He has and He will continue to rescue His flock and so, He must “...judge between sheep and sheep.”

Therefore, Ezekiel explains that the LORD has set up over us “*one shepherd*”, His servant David (meaning the prophesied Christ), who will feed us and be our only shepherd, while the LORD will be our God. We have one LORD, one Shepherd, and we are all a part of one, single flock of sheep.

Belonging to Jesus, as His sheep, the LORD promises us that He will make a “*covenant of peace*” with us “*and banish wild beasts from the land*”, establishing us in peace and security. The LORD declares “*I will make them and the places all around my hill a blessing...*”, pouring His blessings out upon us. Promising to provide for all of our needs as “*...the trees of the field shall yield their fruit, and the earth shall yield its increase, and they shall be secure in their land.*”. But these blessings are not the end of God's promises. They are not the “be all, end all”. They are neither the fullness nor even the purpose of God's providential love and favor.

Ezekiel tells us that we shall truly know, and we shall confidently believe *pisteuo*, and we shall entirely trust that He is the LORD God, alone because He will {break the bars of our yoke} and {deliver us from the hand (or power) of our enslaver}; freeing us from the spiritual bondage of our sin and the tyranny of the Devil. No longer will we be a “*prey to the nations*”. No longer will the world be against us, since Satan's power, authority, and influence will have been broken. We will be entirely safe and secure, dwelling in peace, without anyone to make us afraid. But that is still not all. Not only will the LORD, not only does Jesus Christ remove these negatives, they add and increase our positives as well.

God has, does, and will provide us with “*renowned plantations so that [we] shall no more be consumed with hunger in the land...*”, satisfying our needs over abundantly. We will no longer suffer the “*reproach of the nations*”. The whole world will look upon the blessed Providence that Jesus' sheep receive and they will know that we are beloved and that we are the LORD's favored. Ezekiel relays and concludes, “*And they [the nations and the world] shall know that I am the LORD their God with them, and that they, the house of Israel [all of God's children; all of His people, chosen of sovereign election before the world's foundation (Ephesians 1:4)], are my people, declares the Lord GOD. And you are my sheep, human sheep of my pasture, and I am your God, declares the Lord GOD.*”. Christians truly are the LORD's sheep, Jesus's sheep: “*human sheep*” of His pasture. We are His people and He is our God, just as He promised Abraham (Genesis 17:7), Moses and the Israelites in the wilderness (Exodus 6:7), the prophet Jeremiah (Jeremiah 30:22), and the priestly prophet Ezekiel (36:28).

Again, how does Scripture teach us and prove why we should believe and trust Jesus? The Evangelist reminds us that those who heard Him still doubted and disbelieved, “*Many of them said, "He has a demon, and is insane; why listen to him?" Others said, "These are not the words of one who is oppressed by a demon. Can a demon open the eyes of the blind?"*”. Again, the miracle of the Sixth Sign, in John 9: when Jesus granted sight to a young man who had been born blind; proved and affirmed Jesus's divine power and authority and, it confirmed the truthfulness of His message (John 3:2, 9:30-33).

So, how should we respond? I sincerely hope that everyone's heart here simply wants to proclaim, “I just want to be a sheep! (Baa, Ba-baa, Baa)⁵” and be certain that they are counted and numbered among Jesus's sheep. If that is true, then I encourage you and implore you to take up your Bible and read it prayerfully. Read it from beginning to the end. Read it over and over again. You will learn and you will understand something new or something better, every time that you do. **{Beginning in January, the Elders and I will be encouraging us all to join together with one single Bible reading plan, the Murray M'cheyne reading plan⁶, so that we are all together united in the Scripture that we are each reading.}**

⁵<https://youtu.be/NOwCgxDvpgE?si=nTkRjtZRHbwPNL4>

⁶<https://www.mcheyne.info/calendar.pdf>

- Improving our Bible literacy is the best way to get to know our “*good shepherd*”: to know and believe that He is who He says He is and, to understand who and what He says that He is and, to better recognize and acknowledge the experience of His love for His children.
- Improving our Bible literacy will also help us to better be able to recognize and identify who our various shepherds, all of the many shepherds in every sphere of our live, are following and thereby leading us to follow as well.
- Listen for and listen to the voice of Christ calling you. Heed and obey the drawing of the Holy Spirit towards Jesus Christ. When it seems uncertain or unclear, “*test the spirits*” against sacred Scripture; the LORD will not contradict or countermand His holy and inerrant Word.
- Finally, pray for one another as you pray for yourself. Pray that none of us may stray. Pray that we will neither place ourselves nor drive others into places where we need to be rescued by the LORD, again. Pray that we shall all be gathered and remain together in our unity of faith in the one LORD, our Savior and Good Shepherd, Jesus Christ.

AMEN