

Pastors Network

Church of the
Lutheran
Brethren

4th Sunday of Easter (Series B)

April 29th, 2012

Gospel: John 10:11-18

Epistle: 1 John 3:1-2

Lesson: Acts 4:23-33

Psalm: Psalm 23

CLB Commentary on the Gospel Text

by Rev. Dale Hanson

In this one little word "Shepherd" is gathered all the comfort that we have in Christ. Jesus gave His life as an atoning sacrifice for us. He did this willingly and voluntarily; moved by His obedience to the Father and His love for all mankind.

There is another (Satan) who also seeks to lead people but he doesn't really care for the sheep. His actions and motivations are clearly exposed in verse 10 of this 11th chapter of John . . . only to steal, to kill and destroy.

The close relationship of the Good Shepherd and His sheep is compared the intimate relationship between God the Father and God the Son.

This text also speaks of the love God has for the whole world; no people are outside of the Shepherd's interest.

May God help us to not ignore or neglect this amazing love, grace and free forgiveness.

May our Good Shepherd ever watch over us that we never stray from Him.

What Luther Says:

Verse 14 - Luther comments that although Christians have external marks no one but Christ really knows who the true sheep are because no one but God can look into the heart of anyone. A person's spirituality can only be recognized by that faith within the heart which considers Christ its Good Shepherd.

Luther also points out that those who are truly His sheep know that they are. They live in full assured hope because they hang on the voice and Word of their Shepherd and train themselves not to judge by what they experience and feel but by the voice and Word of their Shepherd.

In this text we can come to understand what God wants His ministers to be doing. That is to Shepherd the flock God has given them - go out and give them pasture - the Word of God. This is the job of a pastor - to preach and teach the Word of God and to lead a holy life to prove the genuineness of your faith. Remember as well that it is only the pure doctrine of Christ that can nourish and quicken souls both that of the pastor and of the people. There can be no Christians living without Christian doctrine; without the Gospel. The pastor makes a grave mistake if he seeks to use the Law (Christian disciplines) instead of the Gospel to produce true disciples.

Finally, Luther also makes the point that Jesus is the only Shepherd. There is only One Shepherd and only one way of salvation. While there are many kinds of faiths and religions found in the world; God intends to receive only those who accept the Gospel, no matter whom they are or from whom they come. For the true and only faith consists in following this Shepherd and His voice.

(Taken in part from the notes in *The Lutheran Study Bible and What Luther Says*, compiled by Ewald Plass.)

Grace and peace as you preach; boldly and joyfully give your people these good words from our Good Shepherd.