



The Shepherd

*Luke 2:8-15, 1 Timothy 2:1-6, 2 Peter 3:9, John 3:16-18,
Matthew 28:18-20, 2 Corinthians 5:14-21*

- 1. Dr. Bill Leonard once preached a sermon at Calvary using the analogy of the locally owned store in Texas where his father worked. In those days before Walmart and Costco and even K-Mart, this store was called "Everybody's". The idea was that they had something to buy for everybody. The shepherd character in our video reminds us that the kingdom of God is for everybody - no exceptions. The kingdom is for ALL - even the lowly shepherds - no one is left off the invitation list. Is our invitation list equally inclusive? Have you ever been omitted from a guest list and felt the pain of rejection? Isn't it quite the blessing to discover our name on a guest list when we have no business being included based on our own merit?*
- 2. The shepherd character sees himself as a "method actor" a Meryl Streep, trapped in the body of a bookkeeper. Yet a look around his office reminds us of "The Island of Misfit Toys" with the photograph on a prominent spot showing him as president of the Glee Club (twice).*

One might guess that his poor self-image explains his overbearing behavior toward others. He seems like a person to avoid, but God chooses to use him to tell the greatest story ever told. Is up really down and vice-versa in God's Kingdom?

- 3. The Lord God has created us for a specific role and the Spirit has empowered us to fill that role in a godly way. What this means is that the glorious message of Christmas has been entrusted to first century shepherds, 21st century method actors who smell like first century shepherds, and ALL who have put their faith, hope and trust in Jesus for salvation. ALL of us are called to be ambassadors for Christ this Christmas season and throughout the year (2 Corinthians 5:14-21). How's your ambassadorship going this Christmas?*
- 4. The line that "Dan", our shepherd in the video, delivered at the manger was poignant. He said, "God asked me to be the keeper of the most important message that's ever been kept". If you are a believer, someone(s) somewhere shared that message with you and you have never been the same. The message is for the great whosoever, for ALL people. As you experience the love of God in Christ Jesus, in that baby this Christmas, who will be the next person with whom you share that love? Please make that person a focus of your pray and your actions.*
- 5. Those filled with so much worldly wisdom that they have little or no room for faith scoff at the idea that Godly peace comes only through the one who embodied it while wrapped in swaddling clothes and lying in a manger. What Jesus came to do through His life, death, and resurrection is what would bring ALL people the possibility of peace. Jesus paid the price for the sin of everyone. This is what the Glory of Christmas would lead to - hope, peace, joy, love, and grace for everybody. Do we comprehend how scandalous, how naïve this appears to the lost? How might we overcome the skepticism of a dark world?*