

## Easter 4B

What makes the Good Shepherd GOOD?

DECISIONS – CHOICES they make. Best pasture, Best Water, How to care for sheep.

Decisions to run away during the test OR to stand and defend the sheep

Decisions – to give themselves totally OR NOT To love OR NOT

My uncle's farm & Dad getting the calf

He didn't have to – it was cold – snow – 5AM

But my father loved the idea of it – and he found the mother and her calf and brought them in.

He DECIDED to do it – it was his CHOICE – He was acting like the Good Shepherd

In the 1<sup>st</sup> reading from ACTS Peter is preaching after healing a cripple

He refers to Jesus as 'the stone that the builders rejected that has become the cornerstone'

He says 'There is no salvation through anyone else, nor is there any name under heaven by which we are saved'

DECISION – CHOICE --- our choice, Do you want salvation? Then we need JESUS – or NOT

In the 2<sup>nd</sup> reading from 1Jn it says

'the reason the world does not know us is because it does not know Him'

Again – DECISION – CHOICE - Christianity is no secret

Yet the world chooses SEX, DRUGS, MONEY, POWER - the ways of the Hireling, not Good Shprd

In the Gospel Jesus says

'I am the Good Shepherd – the Good Shepherd lays down His life for the sheep'

'The hireling is not a shepherd, the sheep are not his own, when the wolf comes he runs away'

There is a difference between a Good Shepherd and a Hireling – WHICH ARE WE?

Here's another question – WHO ARE WE FOLLOWING?

Shepherd or Hireling (we have both in our lives) – ASK - **Who are your shepherds?**

**Who are your hirelings? Who are you following?**

Jesus said "I am the Good Shepherd, I know my sheep and my sheep know me"

**Sheep pen in the mountains & multiple flocks (they know His voice)**

THIS MEANS THE SHEEP NEED TO LISTEN TO HEAR HIS VOICE

If He called us would we recognize His voice?

GOOD SHEPHERD ICON – why is He carrying the sheep?

Wandering sheep (1) get lost AND (2) lead others astray

So – if you stray over and over – Shepherd broke its leg.

Has JC been tough on you in the past? Has He had to break your legs? Is He about to?

- He wants us to stay near Him.

As Shepherd – JC says "I am the Good Shepherd"

NB - Everything I've said so far applies to all shepherds - Sheep know their voice Breaking the leg

What makes Jesus GOOD Shepherd? **He lays down His life for sheep** Jesus did exactly that

WE are God's beloved – WE are the sheep of His flock – WE are fed by His living Word

HE leads us to green pastures, to restful waters, and refreshes our soul.

He guides us by right paths for His name sake

AND even though WE walk in a dark valley WE will fear no evil, for HE is at our side

With His rod and staff to protect us and give us courage