

Shepherd 5: I usually did OK, but there was one night I remembered especially. A big storm had blown up. I tried to hurry the sheep back to the fold, but I had one stubborn little lamb that wouldn't follow my leading. I had to decide whether to risk them all, or to get the others to safety and then go back to get any that had strayed. Sure enough, as I was counting them as they entered the fold 96, 97, 98, 99 and -- but no, I was missing one, there should have been 100. So I made sure the 99 were safe, then I headed out into the storm. It was dark out there, then big flashes of lightning, dark shadows, loud noises. In the flashes of light I sometimes saw the evil eyes of some wild beast hoping to capture my wayward little lamb. I prayed, I called, I looked, I longed for -- just hoping for a glimpse or a sound from the wayward lamb. I knew he didn't want to obey and be like the others, but I couldn't give up on him. I loved him, I needed him, I had to try. I searched and searched for hours that night, and just as the day was beginning to lighten, I finally heard a weak little call. But it was enough, I had located my little lost sheep. I made my way to where he was. It was slippery, mucky, thorns along the way, but I finally got to him and was able to pick him up. At last, the wayward little lamb was safe in my arms. I made my weary journey back, but it was worth it. A lost lamb had been saved.

Sing -- "Silent Night"

Shepherd 6: The night I remember most was the night we were sitting on the hillside, such a beautiful night, the sheep seemed extra calm that night. Suddenly there was a bright light, it was a very frightening sight, the heavens just seemed to light up and reveal a host of angels, saying, "For unto you is born this night . . . A Savior." I understood what a savior was -- I am a shepherd, I am a savior to my sheep. It was an awesome sight. And then I remembered the scriptures "All ye like sheep have gone astray." If I am a "sheep" then this Savior that the angels were announcing was a Shepherd for ME. I didn't think twice, I ran as fast as I could to find that Savior, someone who loved me enough to leave the splendor of heaven to be my Savior.

(Curtain closes.)

Scene Fourteen

Minister

Leslie

Kendra

Jarrold

Director

Mrs. Grace Matlock

Mr. Stephen Matlock

(Curtain opens with Minister walking to center of stage.)

Minister (closing the service): As this program comes to a close, I want to thank all of you who brought the message to us so clearly tonight. I also want to give a special thanks to the young man who God sent to us to help with the music for this program. We are

happy to introduce him to you tonight as our new music director. (Looks at pianist, pianist stands, and then starts to speak.)

Leslie: I am happy to accept the music position here with this church. I am ashamed to say that I left home when I had a fight with my parents because I chose to play at a night club instead of committing my talents to God. I wanted to experience the world, the freedom to make my own choices without worrying about what the church or my parents or God approved of. I didn't WANT the safety of the fold. But God sent His Guardian Angel to keep me from falling over the cliff, I kept getting close to the edge, but I hadn't plunged over. God really was PROTECTING me, not from pain, but from myself, from running from God and His plan for my life.

Last night I gave my heart to Jesus, and I'm changing my career. I'm glad to be a part of sharing the love of Jesus, the Good Shepherd, at the church here. It is my desire to be instrumental in shepherding, especially the young people, so that they don't make the same mistakes I did.

I would love to tell my parents that I'm sorry I rejected them, that I've become a Christian, that I love them, but they have moved since I left home and I haven't been able to find where they are yet.

I would love to tell the little boy from the fire that I WAS sent by God, that it wasn't just a coincidence, and to thank him for reminding me about the Guardian Angel although I was trying to block it from my mind.

And I would like to thank my piano student for insisting that I could give her piano lessons, and for begging me to come to the Christmas Program practice JUST TO LISTEN.

And for the music coordinator for presenting to me the picture of The Guardian Angel which reminded me that God was watching over me, that God loves me even though I was ignoring Him.

And MOST OF ALL, I want to thank Jesus for continuing to knock at the door of my heart until I opened my heart and let Him come in.

(There's a commotion from the crowd -- the minister is called from the platform to the side wings and you can hear excited talking. Minister comes back to the platform -- motions toward person offstage to come onstage -- Music coordinator wheels Jarrod onstage.)

Jarrod: Hi, Leslie, I'm the boy you helped from the fire. I KNEW God had sent you! (Holds out hands to shake hands.)

Kendra (calls out from the choir as she hurries to Jarrod): Jarrod, I'm so glad you came!

Jarrold (turning toward Leslie, with hand on Kendra's arm): And this is the granddaughter we rescued.

Kendra (to Leslie): I didn't know it was you. They told me a stranger had helped rescue me from the fire, but you're not a stranger.

Leslie (looking heavenward): Thank you, God. This is just proof that it is all a part of your plan!

(Parents step just into view of the audience -- hesitate, then mother and father together say "Son" and hold out their arms.)

(Leslie looks up, and all hurry to meet and hug each other.)

Leslie: Mother, Father! I'm so ashamed, will you forgive me?

Song -- "I've wandered far away from home, Lord I'm coming home."

Director: I want to thank each and every one of you for coming and we trust that this program is more than just entertainment. It is our hope that you will deeply consider how you want to treat the Savior that came to earth for YOU. If you already know Him as your personal Savior, determine to never let go, determine to never be a straying lamb. If you are a lamb who finds yourself straying away sometimes, and not taking the safety of the fold seriously, there is no better time than tonight to make a total commitment to your Savior. Perhaps you are a lamb that has been rebellious, determined to have your own way, and now you are on the edge of a cliff about ready to plunge over. Or, maybe you've already fallen, and are already entangled in the angry clutches of sin: drinking, drugs or any number of things that can trap you so that it seems you can never get loose no matter how hard you try. The Savior, The Good Shepherd, has His arms wide open to accept you to Him. He's reaching for YOU, if you will just reach out to Him and ask Him to forgive you, He will save you. He will release you from the things that are keeping you from accepting the safe haven of His Redeeming Love. What better time than Christmas, as we celebrate Jesus' birth, to give Him the gift of your heart, your love, your life. Yield your heart to Him as we close with this song.

Song -- "Oh what a Savior" -- or "Coming Home" -- or a song of your choice