

## East Cooper Baptist Church

March 20, 2016

### Safety and Abundant/Extraordinary/Remarkable Pasture in the Messiah

#### John 10:1-18

*"Truly, truly, I say to you, he who does not enter the sheepfold by the door but climbs in by another way, that man is a thief and a robber.<sup>2</sup> But he who enters by the door is the shepherd of the sheep. <sup>3</sup> To him the gatekeeper opens. The sheep hear his voice, and he calls his own sheep by name and leads them out. <sup>4</sup> When he has brought out all his own, he goes before them, and the sheep follow him, for they know his voice. <sup>5</sup> A stranger they will not follow, but they will flee from him, for they do not know the voice of strangers."<sup>6</sup> This figure of speech Jesus used with them, but they did not understand what he was saying to them.*

*<sup>7</sup> So Jesus again said to them, "Truly, truly, I say to you, I am the door of the sheep. <sup>8</sup> All who came before me are thieves and robbers, but the sheep did not listen to them. <sup>9</sup> I am the door. If anyone enters by me, he will be saved and will go in and out and find pasture. <sup>10</sup> The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy. I came that they may have life and have it abundantly. <sup>11</sup> I am the good shepherd. **The good shepherd lays down his life for the sheep.** <sup>12</sup> 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. <sup>13</sup> He flees because he is a hired hand and cares nothing for the sheep. <sup>14</sup> I am the good shepherd. I know my own and my own know me, <sup>15</sup> just as the Father knows me and I know the Father; and **I lay down my life for the sheep.** <sup>16</sup> 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. <sup>17</sup> For this reason the Father loves me, because **I lay down my life** that I may take it up again. <sup>18</sup> 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."*

#### Because the Good Shepherd lays down (gave) his life for the sheep:

1. The sheep gladly follow him because they know the voice of the good shepherd. (v. 4)

Conversely, the sheep flee from the stranger because they do not know his voice. (v. 5)

2. He will bring safety.
3. He will lead his sheep to pastures of abundance that are extraordinary and remarkable.
  - The thief comes only to steal, kill, and bring destruction. (v. 10a)
  - The hired hand flees when dangers arise. (v. 12)

*"<sup>27</sup> My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me. <sup>28</sup> I give them eternal life, and they will never perish, and no one will snatch them out of my hand. <sup>29</sup> My Father, who has given them to me, is greater than all, and no one is able to snatch them out of the Father's hand."*

## **1. The call of the Shepherd is an invitation to life, purpose, and dignity. (vv. 9-10)**

"The thought of DELIGHT and religion (the Christian faith) is so strange to most men, that no two words in their language stand further apart than "holiness" and "delight"...They who love God with all their hearts, find that his ways are ways of pleasantness, and all his paths are peace...We are not dragged to holiness, nor driven to duty. No, our piety is our pleasure, our hope is our happiness, our duty is our delight."

Charles Spurgeon, *Morning and Evening*, June 14

## **2. There is a compelling "mustness" to the message of the Good Shepherd. (v. 16)**

Those who come in to the Savior's fold listen to his voice.

"May the Lamb that was slain receive the reward of his suffering!"

Moravian Missions Theme (Moravian missionary movement, founded in 1722 by Count Nikolaus Ludwig von Zinzendorf, a Lutheran Pietist, at Herrnut, Dresden, Saxony).

### **Questions for Discussion:**

1. How do we discern the voice of the Good Shepherd which leads us to safety and abundant pasture? How do we recognize the voice of the one who is intent on bringing destruction?
2. Do you see the link between John 9 and 10 (if so, then who are those who have come to "steal, kill, and destroy")?
3. How can the joys, delights, and visual pleasures of life serve as either a door to eternity that awaits us or become a cul-de-sac?

"One of my greatest difficulties in consenting to think of religion was that I thought I should have to give up my beautiful thoughts and my life for the things God has made. But I find that the happiness springing from all things not in themselves sinful is much increased by religion. God is the God of the Beautiful, Religion the Love of the Beautiful, and Heaven the House of the Beautiful – nature is tenfold brighter in the sun of righteousness, and my love of nature is more intense since I became a Christian...God has not given me such thoughts, and forbidden me to enjoy them. Will he not in them enable me to raise the voice of praise?"

George Macdonald, *An Expression of Character: The Letters of George Macdonald*, p. 18