

## “Jesus, My Good Shepherd”

May 17, 2020

John 10

Welcome to the Emmanuel Baptist Church Sunday service. I'm Pastor Peters. My wife Janet and I are glad that you've decided to be join us. We are praying for you and for your loved ones. So, thank you for being here.

Please find a Bible and open it with me to the Gospel of John, chapter ten.

Let me begin today with a word about shepherds. The first occupation known to man outside the Garden of Eden was shepherding. Adam and Eve's first son, Abel, was a shepherd. The Bible tells us that, as an act of worship, Abel brought the best of his flock as a sacrificial offering.

Shepherds, though, through the years of many sermons by Pastors and Bible teachers, have gotten a really bad rap. They've been made out to be the outcasts of society and, it's often said that Shepherds have never had a very good reputation.

But, the Bible tells a much different story. Did you know, for example, that Abraham, the Father of the Jewish nation, was a shepherd? And his son Isaac was a shepherd. And Moses was a shepherd. And David was a shepherd (II Samuel 5:2). And, as everybody knows, from Psalm 23, that the LORD is a Shepherd (Psalm 80:1; Jeremiah 23:2-3; and Isaiah 40:11). [Found on <https://factsandtrends.net/> “Christmas Urban Legends: Shepherds as Outcasts” by Aaron Earls, December 17, 2015].

And, by the way, I'd like to correct another misconception; about sheep. They are not, as some say, dumb. They are very intelligent. God made sheep. And they are best when they are under the care of their Shepherd.

So, today, my message is titled “Jesus, My Good Shepherd.” Shall we pray?

“Father, I thank You that You are a Shepherd. I thank You that You are the Perfect Shepherd. And I thank You that today we can search Your Word to discover just Who You are and what You are like. There are some here today who need to know You and need to hear Your voice. Teach us, LORD. I ask this in Jesus' Name. Amen.”

Please find with me John 10:1 and, as I read, I'll ask you to look for these two things. Watch for **the voice** of the shepherd and **the ear** of the sheep Follow with me at John 10:1 *“Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that entereth not by the door into the sheepfold, but climbeth up some other way, the same is a thief and a robber. (2) But he that entereth in by the door is the shepherd of the sheep.*

*(3) To him the porter openeth; and **the sheep hear his voice:** and **he calleth his own sheep by name**, and leadeth them out. (4) And when he putteth forth his own sheep, he goeth before them, and the sheep follow him: for **they know his voice**. (5) And a stranger will they not follow, but will flee from him: for they know not **the voice** of strangers...*

*(16) And other sheep I have, which are not of this fold: them also I must bring, and **they shall hear my voice;** and there shall be one fold, and one shepherd.”*

Here's what's on my heart; just two things; one, the Shepherd's relationship to the sheep; and two, the sheep's relationship to his shepherd.

So, I'm asking "What is *this* Shepherd like?" And to answer the question, I'm turning to a parable given to us by the LORD Himself, the Son of God.

Now, before I answer the question "What is this Shepherd like?" I want to ask and answer this question "Why?"

You see, the Greatest Person in all of human history was/is a Shepherd. Most people tend to see Jesus Christ as a great religious figure. Many people know Him to be a Teacher, a Prophet, a Priest, a King, and, as the One Who died on the Cross, a Savior. But He's a whole lot more.

Think with me about your own life. Is this not true? We need Someone Who knows and understands us. We need Someone Who cares about us. And we need Someone we can trust.

All these needs are met in a Person. All these needs are met when we find Jesus Christ to be a Good Shepherd.

Do you remember these words "*The LORD is my Shepherd, I shall not want.*" This word "want" is the Old English for "lack" or "need." And there is really only One Person in this world Who can meet your needs. As you are about to see, His Name is Jesus Christ, the Good Shepherd.

First, the Shepherd's voice; vs. three.

John 10:3 "*To him the porter openeth; and **the sheep hear his voice: and he calleth his own sheep by name**, and leadeth them out. (4) And when he putteth forth his own sheep, he goeth before them, and the sheep follow him: for **they know his voice**. (5) And a stranger will they not follow, but will flee from him: for they know not **the voice** of strangers...*"

One of the best things you can do when you read your Bible is to see what is being stressed in the passage. The emphasis Jesus puts on His being a Shepherd is this. His sheep

hear His Voice. There's nothing that matters more than that the ear of the sheep can recognize the voice of his shepherd.

Everybody's got a unique voice. Think about how amazing it is that God has made us so that, as soon as we are born, we can distinguish the voice of Mom. Voice recognition is extremely valuable. I found one study done in France where researchers studied forty-four adults. They found that 99.9% of the adults could distinguish the voice of a loved one with just four syllables; merci beaucoup. [Found on <https://www.huffpost.com/> "We Can Identify A Friend's Voice After Hearing Just Two Words" by Carolyn Gregoire, 10/09/2015].

Of course, we all can now recognize Alexa and Siri. But, how about the voice of Jesus?

Look with me at John 10:3 "*To him the porter openeth; and **the sheep hear his voice: and he calleth his own sheep by name**, and leadeth them out. (4) And when he putteth forth his own sheep, he goeth before them, and the sheep follow him: for **they know his voice**. (5) And a stranger will they not follow, but will flee from him: for **they know not the voice of strangers**.*

*(8) All that ever came before me are thieves and robbers: but **the sheep did not hear them**... (16) And other sheep I have, which are not of this fold: them also I must bring, and **they shall hear my voice**; and there shall be one fold, and one shepherd."*

Now, go back with me, for a moment to the first century. Shepherds often kept their flocks inside a corral of some sort, where, many times, many shepherds would bed down their flocks overnight. Then, at daybreak, the shepherd would arrive at the gate of the corral, which was then opened by the porter, the night watchman. But, before each sheep or even each flock would leave the security of the corral, the shepherd would stand before all of them and speak or use what is called a whistle command. And, as soon as the sheep would hear their

shepherd's voice, his or her ears would prick up, and it would listen for his instructions. A typical shepherd can call 2,000 sheep by his whistle command.

And, the shepherd knows each individual sheep by name. Here is a modern day example of a shepherd calling to his sheep. This is a copyrighted video – by way2much productions

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=e45dVgWgV64>

What does it mean to hear the Shepherd's voice?

Psalm 46:10 *"Be still, and know that I am God..."*

The voice of Christ is the voice of God. And, practically speaking, you can hear His voice in your spirit. If Jesus says that His sheep hear His voice, then that voice must be clear for every single sheep just like each and every sheep is able to distinguish the voice of her or her shepherd.

A number of years ago I took a class with a professor named Dr. Thomas A. Thomas. And Dr. Thomas had written a number of books. Now, here's what I noticed. As I read his book, I could hear him speaking.

This is exactly the same thing that happens when you read God's Word. His Word is alive and powerful. And, we, human beings, become listening sheep. We listen to Him as He speaks to our spirit. Jesus' words are very simple *"My sheep hear My voice."*

Now, you might be someone who listens more with your mind. But, there's something much deeper than your mind. Jesus intends for you to listen with your spirit.

Where is it inside of you that feel guilt or anger? It's in your spirit. How is it that you feel forgiveness for your sins? It's in your inner man. And, when you listen to the LORD, He

speaks to your spirit. He tells you in very simple language that He died and that he rose again from the dead for your forgiveness. Then, at the moment you believe His Words, you are listening to His Voice, and forgiveness occurs in the deep recesses of your person.

The Shepherd speaks to your spirit in the Book He has written to us through His own Spirit.

So, are you listening to Him? Can you hear His Voice? Are you letting *Him* direct you through His Words?

First, the Shepherd's voice.

Second, the Shepherd knowledge; vs. 14

A shepherd has a unique relationship with his sheep. In this case, Jesus knows you better than you know yourself. Look again at John ten and verse fourteen. John 10:14 *"I am the good shepherd, and know my sheep, and am known of mine."*

In today's world, in your life, aren't you glad when someone in your life knows you well? Don't we all like it when other people know what we're really like? Think about your parent or your guardian; grandmother; grandfather; your spouse. These people see you for what you are and accept you for who you are.

And, yet, folks, there is One Person in this world that knows you perfectly. And He's the Shepherd. Jesus Christ is the One Person Who knows us better than you even know yourself.

What are you like in your true self? That's the part of you that the LORD knows very well. What you are is what He knows. The Greatest Person in all the universe is a Shepherd and He knows you very well. He understands you. He sees you exactly as you are.

Now, sometimes we suffer. And, when we suffer, we might even begin to think “Does the LORD understand? And, if so, does He care? Why is He allowing me to suffer this way?”

And the LORD’s answer is this “*Cast all your care upon Me, because I care for you.*” The shepherd sees every sheep and knows when they are in need.

Psalm 92:10 “...*I shall be anointed with fresh oil.*”

Why? Why anoint a sheep’s head? The main reason is to maintain his health. All sorts of insects, ticks, mosquitoes, gnats, etc. plague sheep. And the shepherd provides this medicinal ointment to their heads to ward off the diseases that come from those insects.

David says this in Psalm 23 “*he anoints my head with oil.*” He uses the oil as a symbol – whatever the LORD provides you today that soothes, calms, and comforts your soul is His personal anointing upon you. Sometimes it’s a word from a friend or a loved one. Sometimes it’s an event that happens to you. Sometimes it’s a refreshment that comes in the mail. Sometimes it’s a decision by someone else that positively affects your life. Each of the times the LORD sends something upon you that soothes and comforts you, He’s doing it to show you His personal care.

The greatest thing in the world is the personal watch care of the Eternal Shepherd over your soul. You see, the Shepherd knows you very well. And, because He knows you so well, He makes sure that you feel His personal care.

You see, sometimes we suffer. And our suffering enables us to ask this question “Can I trust Him during this time?” He’s getting you to search your own heart. And when you turn to Him with that difficulty, He comforts your soul like no one else. He comforts you with exactly the thing you need. Now, that’s a Shepherd’s care.

First, the Shepherd’s voice.

Second, the Shepherd’s knowledge. He knows you better than you know yourself.

And third, the Shepherd’s supply. He’s the One Who supplies your needs. John 10:7 “*Then said Jesus unto them again, Verily, verily, I say unto you, I am the door of the sheep. (8) All that ever came before me are thieves and robbers: but the sheep did not hear them. (9) I am the door: by me if any man enter in, he shall be saved, and **shall go in and out, and find pasture.***

*(10) The thief cometh not, but for to steal, and to kill, and to destroy: I am come that they might have **life**, and that they might have it **more abundantly.***”

You see, He’s always got your best interests at heart.

Folks, there’s nothing you can hide from your Shepherd. And there is nothing about you that He doesn’t understand. So, you can take anything to your Shepherd, any need, any problem; with the knowledge that, not only does He know you very well, He can supply anything you need; anything in your heart, anything in your life, anything that pertains to you; He is able to supply.

Philippians 4:19 “*But my God shall supply all your need according to his riches in glory by Christ Jesus.*”

This is a contented sheep. These are contented sheep. Why? Because they are safe; because they are well-fed; and because they are resting in the knowledge that the shepherd is close by and keeping watch over them.

Sometimes we read John 10:10 like this “*I am come that they might have **life**, and that they might have it **more abundantly [I’ll have all the many material things I’ll ever need.***” That’s not what Jesus says here. Instead, He’s saying that your abundance comes not in the things of this world; but in the

things that are yours because you are His. He is your Abundance. And, when He's your Abundance, you have life more abundantly.

Folks, you need a Shepherd. You have a Shepherd in Jesus Christ. You have a Perfect Shepherd Who is all you need for anything you have need of.

A Shepherd's voice.

A Shepherd's knowledge.

A Shepherd's supply.

What more can you want than to have Jesus Christ as your personal LORD and Shepherd. What do you need more than a Shepherd?

The Apostle Paul puts it this way. Hebrews 13:10 "*Now the God of peace, that brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus, that **great shepherd of the sheep**, through the blood of the everlasting covenant, (21) Make you perfect in every good work to do his will, working in you that which is wellpleasing in his sight, through Jesus Christ; to whom be glory for ever and ever. Amen.*"

He's the Great Shepherd of the sheep.

So, in conclusion I'll ask you this. Is He your Shepherd? If not, why not?

Here's one final word from Jesus, the Good Shepherd. John 10:11 "*I am the good shepherd: the good shepherd giveth his life for the sheep.*"

The greatest thing God, the Son ever did, He did as a Shepherd. He gave His life for the sheep. The LORD is the One Who is able to be your Perfect Shepherd. His love and His presence makes you a contented, happy sheep. And, it's all possible because of Who He is and what He has done for you at the Cross.

Here's the simple Gospel message. John 3:16 "*For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life. (17) For God sent not his Son into the world to condemn the world; but that the world through him might be saved.*"

The Good Shepherd laid His life down in perfect love. Have you put your faith in the Good Shepherd? Have you made Him your personal LORD and Savior? If not, why not?

"What will you do with Jesus Christ, the Good Shepherd today?"

The Perfect Sinless, Shepherd died on the Cross and took the payment for all your sins. Do you want complete forgiveness and a true relationship with Him? Do you want complete forgiveness for all of sins? If so, you need to put your trust in Him. Today, you need Him. Today He will become your Shepherd.

Today, you can pray this sinner's prayer and enter into an eternal Shepherd-sheep relationship with the LORD.

#### Sinner's Prayer

"LORD, I admit that I am a sinner and in need of your grace. I believe that You sent Your Son to the Cross to die for me. Please forgive me of all my sins and make me Your child. Thank you."

"Father, I thank you that Jesus is my Shepherd; that He is the Perfect Shepherd; that He is the Only One Who can grant me complete forgiveness and make my life as contented as a sheep in the grass. And thank you for the free gift of eternal life that Jesus bought for us that day. In Jesus' Name, Amen."

If, today, you have received Jesus Christ as your personal LORD and Savior, I, or someone from our Church can be of

further help to you in your walk with the LORD. So, please contact us at [www.ebcsaybrook.com](http://www.ebcsaybrook.com) or 860-388-2582.

Thank you.

And, please stay for just one more minute to hear a word from someone from our Church family.