

Sermon Study for South Idaho Pastors' Conference
The Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod
Boise, Idaho — 8 May Anno Domini 2003

Based on John 10:11-18 — the Gospel Reading for Easter 4
Three-Year Series — Part B
11 May Anno Domini 2003

I am the Good Shepherd. The Good Shepherd lays down his life for the sheep. He who is a hireling and not a shepherd, whose own the sheep are not, sees the wolf coming and leaves the sheep and flees; and the wolf snatches them and scatters them. He flees because he is a hireling and cares nothing for the sheep. I am the Good Shepherd; I know My own and My own know Me, as the Father knows Me and I know the Father; and I lay down My life for the sheep. 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. Therefore doth My Father love Me, because I lay down my life, that I might take it again. No man taketh it from Me, but I lay it down of Myself. I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it again. This commandment have I received of My Father.

◆ Isagogics for The Gospel of John

- **Author** - Other than higher critics, the overwhelming consensus is that the author is John, the disciple whom Jesus loved (John 13:23; 19:26; 21:7, 20). The author is *the other disciple*, that is, *τον άλλον μαθητήν οὗ ἐφίλει ὁ Ἰησοῦς* (John 20:2). This is the Apostle John, one of the sons of Zebedee, a brother of James (Matthew 4:21), a fisherman, one of the Sons of Thunder (Mark 3:17), the undershepherd of Mary (John 19:26), and the author, not only of the Gospel, but also three epistles and the Revelation.

Eusebius writes:

In Asia, moreover, there still remained alive the one who Jesus loved, apostle and evangelist alike, John, who had directed the churches there since his return from exile on the island, following Domitian's death. That he survived so long is proved by the evidence of two witnesses who could hardly be doubted, ambassadors as they were of the orthodoxy of the Church - Irenaeus and Clement of Alexandria. In Book 11 of his *Heresies Answered*, Irenaeus writes:

All the clergy who in Asia came in contact with John, the Lord's disciple, testify that John taught the truth to them; for he remained with them till Trajan's time. (For more, see Eusebius' *The History of the Church*, 3:23 and 6:24-25).

- **Time** - The date of the Gospel is AD 90-100 (Franzmann).
- **Place** - While the Scriptures do not specifically state where John was when he wrote his Gospel, early church history places him in Asia, and in particular, Ephesus. Irenaeus writes: "The church at Ephesus was founded by Paul, and John remained there till Trajan's time; so she is a true witness of what the apostles taught" (Book 111 of his *Heresies Answered* - as written in Eusebius' *The History of the Church*, 3:23.). Clement reports in his *The Rich Man Who Finds Salvation* that John was in Ephesus before and after his exile in Patmos (Eusebius 3:23).

- **Occasion** - The Church was being infiltrated by men advocating a lie ... that the spiritual is good and the material is evil. Thus, in Docetism (a form of Gnosticism), Jesus only seemed to be man. Cerinthus advanced a modified form of Gnosticism in which a personal visitation of the divine with the human occurred at Jesus' Baptism and ended some time prior to the crucifixion. With the advances of the heresy known as Gnosticism (wherein there is the denial of the personal union), "John wrote a **spiritual** gospel" (Eusebius, *History*, 6:12) concerning the Word Who *became flesh and tabernacled among us* (οἷ λογος σαρκος εγενετο και εσκηνωσεν εν ημιν —John 1:14). Rather than let the Church hear and abide in a lie, John wrote of the pure *truth* (a word used some 21 times in the Gospel). In what enrages the contemporary, tolerant ears of those without and, tragically too often, those within the Church, we behold the pure Word of dogma is written by John —

By this you know the Spirit of God: every spirit which confesses that Jesus Christ has come in the flesh (εν σαρκι) is of God, and every spirit which does not confess Jesus is not of God. This is the spirit of antichrist, of which you heard that it was coming, and now it is in the world already (1 John 4:2-3).

- **Recipients** - St. John wrote to the Church, that is, to the Elect Lady and her children in a world of conflict and a wilderness of temptation to depart from the Jesus, the One Who is *the Way and the Truth and the Life* (John 14:6).
- **Sources** - John is *the disciple who is bearing witness to these things, and who has written these things; and we know that his testimony is true. But there are also many other things which Jesus did; were every one of them to be written, I suppose that the world itself could not contain the books that would be written* (John 21:24-25). John was an eyewitness of the many things that Jesus did. The apostle wrote, *That which was from the beginning, which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we have looked upon and touched with our hands, concerning the word of life -- the life was made manifest, and we saw it, and testify to it, and proclaim to you the eternal life which was with the Father and was made manifest to us* (1 John 1:1-2). Also, John had additional information because he was known by the High Priest (John 18:15-16). It seems almost certain that, since John was entrusted with the care of Jesus' mother (John 19:26-27), he relayed events that Mary, the mother of our Lord, told him (for example, the Wedding at Cana).
- **Purpose** - Since Jesus declared: *I am the Way and the Truth and the Life; no one comes to the Father except by Me* (John 14:6), John, the disciple whom our Lord loved, inspired by the Holy Spirit, wrote the purpose for this Gospel, doing so very clearly and in truth and purity: *Now Jesus did many other signs in the presence of the disciples, which are not written in this book; but these are written that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that believing you may have life in His Name* (John 20:30-31).
- **Content** - Law and Gospel in that the Law (that always accuses the old sinful nature in each one of us and shows us our sin) was given by Moses; whereas Grace and Truth (that is, the Gospel - namely, the Incarnation of the Almighty, the active obedience of our Redeemer, the passive obedience of the Savior, His sin-atonement Death for the world, His triumphant, death-defeating Resurrection and His majestic Ascension) came through Jesus Christ (John 1:17).
- **Canonicity of John** - The Gospel is one of the homologoumena; that is, it is agreed upon by all as being accepted and confessed in the church as the Word of God.

◆ **Biblical Context of John 10:11-15**

- The Prologue — John 1:1-18
- The Disciples of John and Jesus — John 1:19-51
- The Public Ministry of Jesus — John 2 - 11
- The Passion of Our Lord — John 12-19
- The Resurrection — John 20:1-18
- The Institution of the Public Ministry — John 20:19-31
- The Epilogue — John 21

The 10th Chapter of the Gospel of John takes place near the end of Jesus' public ministry and precedes an attempt to stone Jesus for blasphemy. When Jesus declares that He and the Father are One, *the Jews answered him, "It is not for a good work that we stone you but for blasphemy; because you, being a man, make yourself God" (John 10:33)*. Chapter 11 of the Gospel is a critical point as Jesus raises Lazarus from the dead and the plot to kill Jesus is discussed at a meeting of the Sanhedrin (11:47). Thus *Jesus no longer moved about publicly among the Jews (11:54)*.

John 10:1-18 is the Good Shepherd section of the Gospel and, with the exception of verse 6 and the first part of verse 7, is spoken by Christ Himself. Just preceding verses 11-15 Jesus declares to His own in verse 7 (and similarly in verse 9), "Truly, truly, I say to you, I am the Door of the sheep" (*Ἀμὴν ἀμὴν λέγω ὑμῖν ὅτι ἐγώ, εἰμὶ ἡ θύρα τῶν προβάτων*). [Note that there is a figure of speech here; namely, the sheep which is a figure for the Lord's folk. That Jesus is the Door is not a figure of speech. He is the Door.]

◆ Liturgical Context of John 10:11-16

- **The Fourth Sunday of Easter in Series B of the Three-year Lectionary - John 10:11-18**
- **Psalm of the Day — Psalm 23** (see the Introit)
- **The First Reading for the Fourth Sunday of Easter - Acts 4:23-33**

When they were released they went to their friends and reported what the chief priests and the elders had said to them. And when they heard it, they lifted their voices together to God and said, "Sovereign Lord, Who didst make the heaven and the earth and the sea and everything in them, Who by the mouth of our father David, Thy servant, didst say by the Holy Spirit, `Why did the Gentiles rage, and the peoples imagine vain things? The kings of the earth set themselves in array, and the rulers were gathered together, against the Lord and against his Anointed' -- for truly in this city there were gathered together against Thy Holy Servant Jesus, Whom Thou didst anoint, both Herod and Pontius Pilate, with the Gentiles and the peoples of Israel, to do whatever Thy hand and Thy plan had predestined to take place. And now, Lord, look upon their threats, and grant to Thy servants to speak Thy Word with all boldness, while Thou stretchest out Thy hand to heal, and signs and wonders are performed through the Name of Thy Holy Servant Jesus." And when they had prayed, the place in which they were gathered together was shaken; and they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and spoke the Word of God with boldness. Now the company of those who believed were of one heart and soul, and no one said that any of the things which he possessed was his own, but they had everything in common. And with great power the Apostles gave their testimony to the Resurrection of the Lord Jesus, and great grace was upon them all.

- **Epistle Reading - 1 John 3:1-2**

See what love the Father has given us, that we should be called children of God; and so we are. The reason why the world does not know us is that it did not know Him. Beloved, we are God's children now; it does not yet appear what we shall be, but we know that when He appears we shall be like Him, for we shall see Him as He is.

- **Introit**

The LORD is my Shepherd;
I shall not want.
 He maketh me to lie down in green pastures:
He leadeth me beside the still waters.
 He restoreth my soul:
He leadeth me in the paths of righteousness for His Name's sake.
 Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death,
I will fear no evil:
 for Thou art with me;
Thy rod and Thy staff they comfort me.
 Thou preparest a table before me in the presence of mine enemies:
Thou anointest my head with oil; my cup runneth over.
 Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life:
and I will dwell in the House of the LORD for ever.*(Psalm 23 — KJV)*
 Glory be to the Father and to the (†) Son and to the Holy Ghost;
As it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be, now and forever. Amen.
 The LORD is my Shepherd.
Amen.

- **Collect**

Almighty God, merciful Father, since You have wakened from death the Shepherd of Your sheep, grant us Your Holy Spirit that we may know the Voice of our Shepherd and follow Him that sin and death may never pluck us out of Your hand; through Jesus Christ, Your Son, our Lord, Who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, One God, now and forever.
Amen.

- ♦ **Exegesis of John 10:11-15**

verse 11

ƱgƱ, eimī o`poinhn o`kaloj
 \ o`poinhn o`kaloj thn
 yuchn autou/ tiqhsin uper
 twh probatwn\

ƱgƱ, eimī — This is another use of the great **I AM** that makes a declaration of the Divine and follows from the Exodus revelation of God in the burning bush in Exodus 3:14 —
 hKormaw hya, rva| hya, hvml a, ~yh| a/ rmaW
 ~kyl a| ykl v. hya, l a'filyb. l i r m a t o
 and in the Septuagint (egw, eimī o` wn), especially as it is linked

verse 11

VEgw, eimi o` poinhn o` kaloj
\
o` poinhn o` kaloj thn
yuchn autou/ tiqhsin uper
twh probatwn\

with John 8:58 when Jesus says, **V**amhn **a**uhn legw **u**imh(prin **V**abraam gene, sqai **egw, eimi**. Other proclamations by Jehovah in the Gospel of John include the confession that Jesus is the Messiah (**VEgw, eimi**(o` lalwh soi — 4:26); the Bread of Life (**VEgw, eimi o` artoj thj zwhj**\ — 6:35, 41, 48, 51); the Light of the world (to. **fwj tou/kosmou**\ — 8:12); the Door (10:7, 9); the Good Shepherd (10:11, 14); the Resurrection and the Life (**VEgw, eimi h` ana, stasij kai. h` zwh**, — 11:25); the Way, the Truth, the Life (**VEgw, eimi h` odoj kai. h` a`thqeia kai. h` zwh**\ — 14:6); the True Vine (**VEgw, eimi h` ampeloj h` a`thqinh**, — 15:1, 5); Jesus of Nazareth! (**Egw, eimi** — 18:5 — *Then He said to them, "I AM [egw, eimi]" they drew back and fell to the ground* — 18:6 — a third time in verse 8!).

o` poinhn o` kaloj — In addition to the 23rd Psalm, Old Testament references to the Lord being the Shepherd include Psalm 80:1 — *Give ear, O Shepherd of Israel (la`fylh[ro — o` poimainwn ton Israhel), Thou Who leadest Joseph like a flock!* — Ezekiel 34:11-16, particularly verse 15 — *I myself will be the Shepherd of My sheep, and I will make them lie down, says the LORD GOD.*

Of particular benefit for the understanding and consequent application of the word **shepherd** in this portion of Holy Writ, consider the following languages for the first part of John 10:11 —

Ego sum pastor bonus. (Latin) and *Yo soy el buen pastor* (Spanish).
In other words, *Jesus is the Good Pastor.*

tiqhsin — This is a 3rd person, singular, present indicative from the verb **tiqhmi** which means to give, commit, place, deposit or lay down. Jesus uses this word (**tiqhmi**) three times in the Gospel Reading. In addition, Paul (in Romans 9:33) and Peter use it in making reference to Jesus as the Christ, for example, *For it stands in Scripture: "Behold, I am laying (tiqhmi) in Zion a Stone, a Cornerstone chosen and precious, and he who believes in Him will not be put to shame (1 Peter 2:6).*

thn yuchn autou/ — In order for you to have eternal **Life** (**exh| zwhn aiwnion** — John 3:16) the Good Shepherd must lay down His **Life** (or Soul — **yuchn**). *The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy; I came that they may have Life (zwhn), and have it abundantly (John 10:10).* Indeed, *the Son of Man came not to be served but to serve, and to give His Life (yuchn) as a Ransom for many (Matthew 20:28).*

uper twh probatwn — The meaning of the preposition is “for, on behalf of, instead of.” Here is pure Gospel; namely, the Substitution. This is the opposite of the way natural man thinks the sacrifice ought to be. For example, later in John 13:37, Peter says to Jesus, *Lord, why cannot I follow you now? I will lay down my life for you (thn yuchn mou uper sou/qhsw).* In the next verse, Jesus replied with the reality and consequences of man’s doctrine of works righteousness, *Will you lay down your life for Me? (Thn yuchn sou uper emou/qhseijh) Truly, truly, I say to you, the cock will not*

crow, till you have denied me three times.

This substitution is even more profound when considered from the vocation of the shepherd and the life of the sheep. Abel was the first shepherd and he sacrificed sheep as an offering to the LORD. Noah built an altar and sacrificed sheep. The Gospel does not consist only of Jesus' active obedience when He goes forth to defeat the Devil in fulfilling His own Law perfectly, but also in His passive obedience by being the Offering of the Ages. Jesus is the Good Shepherd Who sheds His Blood in the Sacrifice that gives forgiveness of sins, eternal life and salvation for the sheep.

verses 12 and 13

o` misqwtoj kai. ouk wh
poinhn(ou- ouk estin ta.
probata idia(qewrei/ ton
lukon ercomenon kai. afi,
hsin ta. probata kai. feugei
kai. o` lukoj arpazei auta.
kai. skorpizei oti misqwtoj
estin kai. ouvmelei autw/
peri. twh probatwnA

o` misqwtoj — The word refers to a hired worker and does not, of itself, indicate a positive or negative. The context indicates its intended sense. Concerning the former, when Jesus called James and John, *they left their father Zebedee in the boat with the hired servants (twh misqwtwh), and followed Him (Mark 1:20)*, while the negative is demonstrated in Jude 11 — *Woe to them! For they have gone in the way of Cain, have run greedily in the error of Balaam for profit (misqou) and perished in the rebellion of Korah.* In John 10:12 the use is of the latter and the hireling stands as the opposite of the Good Pastor. The sheep do not belong to the hireling and he cares nothing for the sheep. He's in this for the silver and the gold while the Good Shepherd saves His own by His holy precious Blood and His innocent suffering and death. The hireling sees the wolf coming and flees (afihsin). The hireling will let death be the shepherd of the sheep (Psalm 49:14). Not so the Good Shepherd. He will lay His life down by allowing the wolf to attack Him and the Good Pastor will die the sheep's death.

ton lukon — It seems that this word always is a negative and is associated with the Lord warning His Church. Jesus sends His disciples out as sheep or lambs among wolves (lukwn — Matthew 10:16 & Luke 10:3). Wolves are false teachers who come with their lies. They are agents of the ravenous wolf who is a liar, Satan. Jesus warns His Church about them: *Beware of false prophets, who come to you in sheep's clothing but inwardly are ravenous wolves (lu, koi — Matthew 7:15).* The wolves attack from the outside and consume from the inside of the flock. The hireling simply does not care. He will flee from the truth by leaving or by becoming a wolf in sheep's clothing. The Church's song is sung to remind the children of this truth, that is of course, where such hymns are permitted to be sung.

The haughty spirits, Lord, restrain
Who o'er Thy Church with might would reign
And always set forth something new,
Devised to change Thy doctrine true. (TLH #292, stanza 6 — better tune is #541)

The Church shall never perish! Her dear Lord, to defend,
To guide, sustain, and cherish, Is with her to the end.
Tho' there be those that hate her, False sons within her pale,
Against both foe and traitor She ever shall prevail. (TLH #473, stanza 3)

verses 12 and 13

o` misqwtōj kai. ouk wh
poinh̄n(ou- ouk estin ta.
probat̄a idia(qewrei/ ton
lukon ercomenon kai. afi,
hsin ta. probata kai. feugei
kai. o` lukoj ar̄pazei auta.
kai. skorpizei ōti misqwtōj
estin kai. ouvmelei autw̄/
peri. tw̄n probat̄wn̄

The opposite of the hireling is the under-shepherd; that is, the over-seer. To such **episkopouj** in Ephesus, the Apostle Paul says, *Take heed to yourselves and to all the flock, in which the Holy Spirit has made you overseers, to care for the Church of God which he obtained with the blood of his own Son. I know that after my departure fierce wolves (lukoi) will come in among you, not sparing the flock; and from among your own selves will arise men speaking perverse things, to draw away the disciples after them (Acts 20:28-30).*

ar̄pazei — This is a word that can mean “to seize quickly, to take away by force, to snatch, to take away suddenly.” Jesus said, *When any one hears the Word of the Kingdom and does not understand it, the evil one comes and snatches away (ar̄pazei) what is sown in his heart; this is what was sown along the path (Matthew 13:19).* The Good Shepherd uses the infinitive form when He said, *My Father, Who has given them to Me, is greater than all, and no one is able to snatch (ar̄pazein) them out of the Father's hand (John 10:29).*

skorpizei — “Disperse” or “scatter” are the most common meanings of this verb. [Notice how similar **skorpizw** is to **skorpion** (scorpion).] Jesus says that *He who is not with Me is against Me, and he who does not gather with Me scatters (skorpizei — Luke 11:23).*

verses 14 & 15

Wegw, eimi o` poinh̄n o` kaloj
kai. ginwskw ta. ena. kai.
ginwskousi, me ta. ena,
(kaqwj ginwskēi me o` path.
r kaqw. ginwskw ton pate,
ra(kai. thn yuchn mou ti,
qhmi uper tw̄n probat̄wn̄

ginwskw — There is a knowledge between the Good Shepherd and the sheep that is a reflection of the knowledge between the Father and the Son. There are differences, but certainly affection is a part of this knowledge.

tiqhmi — While **tiqhsin** is used in verse 11, the first person singular is spoken here. The sense is that “I am laying down My Life” by proceeding on into this death on behalf of the sheep.

verse 16

kai. ālla probata epw̄ al
ouk estin ek thj̄ aūthj̄ tau,
thj̄ kakeīna dei/ me agageīn
kai. thj̄ fwnh̄j̄ mou akou,
sousin(kai. genhsontai mia
poinh̄(eij poinh̄n

thj̄ aūthj̄ tau — The other flock is the Gentiles (**ālla probata** — the *other sheep*) who will come into the One Church. In Jesus the Old and the New Testament Church is the Body of Christ. This Christ lays down His Life, *for He is our peace, who has made us both one, and has broken down the dividing wall of hostility, by abolishing in His flesh the law of commandments and ordinances, that He might create in Himself one new man in place of the two, so making peace, and might reconcile us both to God in one body through the cross, thereby bringing the hostility to an end (Ephesians 2:14-16).* The word **dei/** denotes necessity and this laying down of His Life for the sheep was done once for all and thus *there is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free, there is neither male nor female; for you are all one in Christ Jesus. And if you are Christ's, then you are Abraham's offspring, heirs according to promise (Galatians 3:28-29).*

thj̄ fwnh̄j̄ mou akousousin — *They hear My Voice.* Paul gives catechetical

verse 16

kai. alla probata ew al
ouk estin ek thj auhj
tauthj\ kakeina dei/ me
agagein kai. thj fwnhj
mou akousousin(kai. genh,
sontai mia poimh(eij
poimhA

instruction by asking, *Did you receive the Spirit by works of the Law, or by hearing with faith (ex akohj pistewjE— Galatians 3:2). So faith comes from hearing (pistij ex akohj), and what is heard comes by the word of Christ (akoh. dia. rhmatoj Cristou — Romans 10:17).* Jesus said, “*I AM (Egw, eimi) the Way, and the Truth, and the Life; no one comes to the Father, except through Me*” (John 14:6).

We believe, teach and confess that ...

“Accordingly, we should and must constantly maintain that God will not deal with us except through his external Word and sacrament. Whatever is attributed to the Spirit apart from such Word and sacrament is of the devil.”

(Smalcald Articles, Part III, Article VIII — Confession)

mia poimh(eij poimhA — *one flock, one Shepherd* — Note the feminine singular and the masculine singular. The Church is feminine and the Pastor is masculine. Here is the Bride and the Bridegroom, and the LORD God “has a unique community in the world. It is the mother that begets and bears every Christian through the Word of God” (LC). She hears His Word and her children individually confess concerning her: “I believe one holy, catholic and apostolic church. I acknowledge one Baptism for the remission of sin, and I look for the Resurrection of the dead and the life of the world to come. Amen” (Nicene Creed).

“... for thank God, a seven-year-old child knows what the church is, namely, holy believers and sheep who hear the voice of their Shepherd. So children pray, ‘I believe in one holy Christian church.’”

(Smalcald Articles, Part III, Article XII — The Church)

dia. touto — *for this reason* — Here follows the reason; or, for the following reason why **me o` pathr agapaI** The Father loves the Son, not because of the sheep, but because of what His Only-Begotten Son is doing; specifically, the Sacrifice — *because I lay down my life (thn yuchn mou)*. Of His own free will, the Incarnate Son of God lays it down into death in order to take it up again. This latter speaks of the death-destroying Resurrection from the grave, the marvelous, hope-giving Ascension to heaven and the marvelous Enthronement at the right hand of the Father. This is pure Gospel! Therefore, hear the Word of your Redeemer, “*Let not your hearts be troubled; believe in God, believe also in Me. In My Father's House are many rooms; if it were not so, would I have told you that I go to prepare a place for you? And when I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and will take you to Myself, that where I am you may be also. And you know the way where I am going*” (John 14:1-4).

oudeij airei authn — *No one took it.* The “it” refers to **thn yuchn mou** in the previous verse. The fact that the verb, **airei**, is an aorist “took” could mean that 1.) Jesus is speaking about what is to take place as

verse 17

dia. touto, me o` pathr
agapaI ofi egw. tiqhmi thn
yuchn mou(iha palin la,
bw authnA

oudeij airei authn apV
 emou(atlv egw. tighmi
 authn apV emautou. exousi,
 an ecw qeinhai authn(kai.
 exousian ecw palin labei/
 n authn\ tauthn thn
 entolhn elabon para. tou/
 patroj mou.

already accomplished; for example, “And now I have told you before it takes place, so that when it does take place, you may believe” (John 14:29); or even, 2.) Jesus is speaking about the entire giving of Himself beginning with His circumcision and ending with the spear wound in His side.

apV emautou — *from or of Myself* — He does this because this is the doing of the will of the One Who sent Him. Thus Jesus could say, “This is the charge that I received from My Father” (tauthn thn entolhn elabon para. tou/ patroj mou). The events that proceed from the Garden of Gethsemane to the tomb appear to be ones in which others are in command and directing the events. But this is not true. Jesus is in charge here.

exousian — *authority* — Some have this translated as *power* and we might anticipate *dunamij* but *authority* is the word used here. With the authority comes the right to use the power. The force of it is, “Now, even according to My human nature, I have the authority and therefore, the power to lay down My Life and I have the authority and therefore, the power to take it up again. For another example of *authority* consider what Jesus said to His eleven called disciples on the mountain in Galilee, **Edogh moi pasa exousi, a en ouranw/ kai. epi. Itjh ghj** (Matthew 28:18).

qeinhai authn(kai... labeiñ authn — *to lay it down ... to take it up* — Jesus does the first in order to do the second; that is, Jesus lays down His Life *in order* (iha — verse 17) to take it up again. This is wonderful, for who, but God is able to do this? No one. Peter said, **Kurie(dia. ti, oudunamai, soi akolouhsai artiE thn yuchn mou uper sou/ qhsw** — that is roughly translated, “Lord, why am I not empowered to follow You? I will lay down my life for You.” But Peter could not take it up again! Jesus would say later in the Gospel of John, “*Greater love has no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends*” — thn yuchn autou/ qh/ uper twh filwn autou/(15:13). Again, “a man” might lay down his life, but he would not be able to take it back up again. Jesus does the first in the sin-atoning Sacrifice of the ages in order to take it up again in the Resurrection. What is true for the Christ is true for His followers. This Gospel is demonstrated when Jesus raised Lazarus from the dead with only His Word and when, at the moment of the Sufficient Death of God Incarnate, *many bodies of the saints who had fallen asleep were raised, and coming out of the tombs after His Resurrection they went into the holy city and appeared to many* (Matthew 27:52-53). At the Resurrection, the sheep will hear the Voice of the Good Pastor say, *Follow Me!* (Franzmann) and we will come out of our graves and follow Him Who is the Shepherd (*poimena*) and Bishop (*epi, skopon*) of our souls (*yucwh* — 1 Peter 2:25) and be with the LORD forever.

♦ Major Doctrines and Themes

- **The Two Natures of Christ**
 - + **Man in order to Lay Down His Life**
 - + **God in order to Take It Back Up Again**
- **Justification by the Grace of God through Faith in Christ**
 - + **The Incarnation of the Word for us**
 - + **The Sacrifice of the Word become flesh for us**
 - + **The Resurrection of the Incarnate Word for us**
 - + **The Promise of Forgiveness, Eternal Life and Salvation through the Proclaimed Word**
 - + **God-given Faith to hear the Voice of the Good Pastor and believe the Good News**
- **The Una Sancta**
 - + **The Hidden Church**
 - + **The Marks of the Church**
- **The Office of the Public Ministry of the Word**
 - + **Telling the Truth — Both Law and Gospel**
 - + **Exposing the Lie and Pointing out the Liar**
- **The Office of the Sheep**
 - + **Hearing the Word — Both Law and Gospel**
 - + **Judging the Doctrine Heard**

◆ Pondering a Few of These Things

- **From “*The Lutheran Confessions*,” ...**

“In order to preserve the pure doctrine and to maintain a thorough, lasting, and God-pleasing concord {Triglott has “unity”} within the church, it is essential not only to present the true {pure} and wholesome doctrine correctly, but also to accuse {censure} the adversaries who teach otherwise (I Tim. 3:9; Titus 1:9; II Tim. 2:24; 3:16). “Faithful shepherds,” as Luther states, “must both pasture or feed the lambs and guard against wolves so that they will flee from strange voices and separate the precious from the vile” (John 10:12-16, 27; Jer. 15:19).”

Formula of Concord, Solid Declaration, Rule and Norm, paragraph 14 (Tappert).

- + How closely connected are unity within the church and pure doctrine?
- + What two items are required and what are the consequences when either of them is omitted?
- + Is it loving to accuse those who teach and/or practice false doctrine?
- **From “*On the Ministry and the Role of the Laity*,” Johann Gerhard wrote ...**

“The doctrine of any shepherd must be examined with respect to the rule of Scripture, and according to it, seeing that it is the rule and measuring line, Psa 19:9, which judges concerning shepherds;

ordinary shepherds ought to be heard, if they teach what Christ set as precepts, if they do not assert another doctrine than the true doctrine of Christ, Mat. 28:20, Joh. 10:1, 2 John 10. They should not be heard absolutely and simply, as to whatever they present, but only as long as they hold forth the consent of the Scriptures, for they do not have the special privilege of not erring, as the Prophets and Apostles [did], but they, no less than the rest of the faithful *are built on the foundation of the Prophets and Apostles*, Eph. 2:20. If they teach apart from the purity of the prophetic and apostolic doctrine, they must not be heard. ... Shepherds should be heard, but insofar as they are and remain shepherds leading the sheep to the salutary pastures of the heavenly doctrine; those who corrupt and pervert the word of Christ, the highest shepherd and our only teacher and doctor, are no longer shepherds, but ravening wolves, and likewise, they are not to be heard, but fled from.”

Locus XXIII, On the Ecclesiastical Ministry, p. 19
Repristination Press, Malone, Texas

- + Since Gerhard references Matthew 28:20, what connection is he asserting between true doctrine and Christian missions?
- + What sort of subscription are members of the congregation to have concerning what is heard from the pastor: *quia* (because) or *quateness* (insofar as)? Why?
- + How much of the truth does the Lord want compromised?

- **Once again from “*On the Ministry and the Role of the Laity*,” by Johann Gerhard ...**

“[I]t is one thing to inquire into the truth of doctrine and discern heresies from orthodoxy, false prophets from true teachers, which is a general call pertaining to all Christians; it is another to teach publicly in the church, which is a special call. We do not make shepherds out of sheep; but we demand that they remain sheep. Yet we do not want them to be dullards, who are neither able nor allowed to discern between shepherds and wolves. The Papists make stupid sheep out of their hearers, those who would follow a shepherd without any discernment, even if he at worst either led them to harmful pastures or even turned them over to a wolf; they make of their hearers parrots who hang on the command of prelates; they make angels out of prelates, who are merely infallible and above responsibility.”

Locus XXIII, On the Ecclesiastical Ministry, p. 21
Repristination Press, Malone, Texas

- + Are the members of your congregation taught enough true doctrine such that they will confront the pastor if he preaches or teaches false doctrine?
- + What are some of the reasons why it is not loving to let a pastor continue to preach and teach false doctrine and/or engage in false practice?

- **From “*The Babylonian Captivity of the Church*” by Martin Luther ...**

“Whoever, therefore, does not know or preach the gospel is not only no priest or bishop, but he is a kind of pest to the church, who under the false title of priest or bishop, or dressed in sheep’s clothing, actually does violence to the gospel and plays the wolf [Matt. 7:15] in the church.”

- **From “*The Proper Distinction Between Law and Gospel*” by C. F. W. Walther ...**

“On examining your sermon for both its Law and Gospel contents, you may find that you have given the Gospel very little space. Now remember, if you come out of your pulpit without having preached enough Gospel to save some poor sinner who may have come to church for the first and the last time, his blood will be required of you.” (page 409)

+ What is the Gospel?

- **Commenting on Matthew 7:16 Martin Luther writes ...**

Here Christ is warning us about both characteristics of these false prophets. We should not be swayed by the fact that they occupy the office of the ministry, though this is necessary and proper for a preacher. But this does not give anyone a guarantee that people have to believe him, as though he could not be a scoundrel in the ministry. It is not unusual in the world for villains and rascals to occupy every office and station in society and to abuse it. “I concede that they may be called prophets,” Christ says, “but beware and be sure that they are not false prophets.” Similarly, do not look only at sheep’s clothing and the precious name and appearance under which they come, for here you are told that hidden underneath there might be a ravenous wolf. So beware that the sheep’s clothing does not deceive you, for if they are to deceive the people, they all have to put on this lovely camouflage and appearance. Precisely that is the difference between these secret enemies and those other overt enemies, who invade us openly and whom everyone recognizes. But these enemies walk around in our midst with the same office that we have, and they make an impression by using the same Scriptures and words. Nevertheless they are coming, Christ says, “on their own”; that is, though they do have the office, still they bring a kind of word and teaching that God has not committed to them and that He did not send them to preach, their own dreams and “doctrines of demons” (1 Tim. 4:1), decorated with the name of God. Take special warning, therefore, against the sheep’s clothing. Trust no man, however fine an impression he may make, but look only at the Word. See whether he is properly using it or whether he is using it as a pretext to peddle his own stuff.

Luther's Works, vol. 21 : The Sermon on the Mount and the Magnificat

+ Since the marks of the Church are the preaching and teaching of the Word of God in its truth and purity, and the administration of the Sacraments as instituted by Christ, what are the marks of a “wolf-man”?

- **Commenting on 1 Peter 5:5 Luther writes ...**

For a pastor must not only lead to pasture by teaching the sheep how to be true Christians: but, in addition to this, he must also repel the wolves, lest they attack the sheep and lead them astray with false doctrine and error. For the devil does not rest. Now today one finds many people who can let the Gospel be

preached, provided that one does not cry out against the wolves and preach against the prelates. But even if I preach in the right way and tend and teach the sheep, this protecting and guarding does not suffice to keep the wolves from coming and leading the sheep astray. For what is built if I lay stones and watch someone else knock them down? The wolf can surely let the sheep have good pasturage. The fatter they are, the more he likes them. But he cannot bear the hostile barking of the dogs. Therefore to him who takes this to heart it is important to tend the sheep in the right way, as God has commanded.

Luther's Works, vol. 30 : The Catholic Epistles

- **An admonition and invitation from one brother to another ...**

“Let us reflect how near He is, and that none of the thoughts or reasonings in which we engage are hid from Him. It is right, therefore, that we should not leave the post which His will has assigned us. Let us rather offend those men who are foolish, and inconsiderate, and lifted up, and who glory in the pride of their speech, than [offend] God. Let us reverence the Lord Jesus Christ, Whose Blood was given for us; let us esteem those who have the rule over us; let us honour the aged among us; let us train up the young men in the fear of God; let us direct our wives to that which is good.”

1st Epistle of Clement of Rome to the Corinthians, Chapter 21, ~97 AD

Sermon:
"Jesus is the Good Pastor"
John 10:11-18
11 May Anno Domini 2003

Dear Baptized,

God speaks the truth. We hear His Word. Too often we think it is only a figure of speech. For example, Jesus says, *I am the Door (John 10:9)*. But we reason, "Is Jesus really a door? Surely this is a metaphor; at most a simile ... Jesus is like a door." The truth is, Jesus is not "a door," but rather Jesus is The One True Door - the Door Who gives every other door its meaning. We get hung up and in a jamb because we try to picture Jesus in terms of the other doors. It should be the other way around. This is no figure of speech. Jesus is the Door ... the Door from this fallen world that opens into Paradise. Every other door you can think of falls short of the Door. Christ the Door gives meaning to all other doors. If this seems confusing, it's because it's hard for us to think like that ... to turn it around.

The same may be confessed concerning what the Lord declares to us through the Apostle John in the Gospel Reading for this day. Jesus speaks the truth. We hear His Word and think it's only a figure of speech. Jesus says, *I am the Good Shepherd*. But we think, "Is Jesus really a shepherd walking around with a staff in His hand and guiding sheep? Surely this is a metaphor; at most a simile ... Jesus is like a good shepherd. This is not a figure of speech. The truth is, Jesus is not "a shepherd," but rather Jesus is *The Good Shepherd* - the Shepherd Who gives every other shepherd his meaning. The Good Shepherd leads His own through this fallen world and into Paradise.

If that is a focus difficult to maintain, we have some help. Consider the Latin and the Spanish word for "shepherd." Listen carefully and you'll hear the word. In Latin, John 10:11a is *Ego sum pastor bonus* ; and in Spanish it is *Yo soy el buen pastor*. Did you hear the word "pastor"? Now listen to the Gospel Reading once more, this time bearing in mind the truth that ...

... "Jesus is the Good Pastor."

I am the Good Pastor. The Good Pastor lays down His Life for the sheep. He who is a hireling and not a pastor, whose own the sheep are not, sees the wolf coming and leaves the sheep and flees; and the wolf snatches them and scatters them. He flees because he is a hireling and cares nothing for the sheep. I am the Good Pastor; I know My own and My own know Me and, as the Father knows Me and I know the Father; and I lay down My Life for the sheep. And I have other sheep, that are not of this Fold; I must bring them also, and they will heed My Voice. So there shall be one Flock, one Shepherd. For this reason the Father loves Me, because I lay down My Life, that I may take it again. No one takes it from Me, but I lay it down of My own accord. I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it again; this charge I have received from my Father.

Thus far the Word of the LORD our God.

The Good Pastor and His tiny congregation of two were together in Paradise. He was perfectly present with Adam and Eve; they were in complete communion with their Creator - with the Father and the Son and the Holy Ghost. The Sacredness of Jehovah is known by man. Holiness evokes joy. The LORD God walked in the Garden of Eden in the cool of the day.

The evil one which descended from heaven now speaks. Its word is one of doubt, *Did God say?* (*Genesis 3:1*). These diabolical words, spawned from the vile heart of unbelief and conceived in the putrid crawl of a fallen angel, are from the Tempter's mouth. *Did God say?* spews forth to work the downfall of man. This is Lucifer, *the dragon, that ancient serpent, who is the Devil and Satan* (*Revelation 20:2*). This is the wolf attacking the Church.

The congregation listens. Eve obeys the strange voice. Adam sins. Man falls. The symphony of Paradise gives way to the cacophony of hell. The consequences follow — death where life was. The dust of decay exhales the breath of the Spirit. Still there is hope as the LORD speaks the Promise of our Redeemer. With that Word of Good News the Church is now hidden in the world. The Good Pastor leads His congregation forward to Paradise, now going the way of the cross. The Ancient Christ is in the midst of His people as the Old Church continues the Exodus from the land of bondage to the promised land.

The wolf is coming and the Good Pastor takes on the old evil foe in the wilderness. Jesus defeats Satan in the desert during the forty days of temptation. The Son of God speaks to His Church - *I am the Good Pastor; I know My own and My own know Me and, as the Father knows Me and I know the Father; and I lay down My Life for the sheep*. From the wilderness Jesus moves in the direction of the cross where He will lay down His Life. No one will take it from Him. This is the Sacrifice that is offered up to the Father - the Blood of God is shed on the cross to pay for the sins of the world. The Good Pastor leads, teaches, redeems, speaks well of and defends His Church to the death. Though He dies yet does He live. The Good Pastor will not be held by the tomb or the stone door. He says to those who follow Him, *For this reason the Father loves Me, because I lay down My Life, that I may take it again. No one takes it from Me, but I lay it down of My own accord. I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it again; this charge I have received from my Father.*

The Good Pastor gives His Word and repentant ones of all nations enter His congregation, doing so one by one as the faithful tell others who the Good Pastor is, what He has done and what the Holy Trinity is doing. As a result, an infant receives Christ in Holy Baptism and enters the One Church in the Name of the Father and of the (†) Son and of the Holy Spirit. An adult hears the Voice of the Good Pastor and the Word of His Good News of all sins atoned for on the cross when Christ died and that person trusts in such Word of God. A widow stands at the graveside of her faithful husband and has but one consolation - the Resurrection of the Good Pastor and the truth that the Risen Redeemer calls His own and no one shall take them out of His hand.

The congregation is fed on the Absolution wherein the announcement of the forgiveness of sins is declared and the congregation is sustained in the Sacrament of the Altar where the Good Pastor serves Himself; that is, His Body and Blood given and shed for the remission of sins. The Church hears the good Word; that is, the Bene-Diction that the Good Pastor seeks to have spoken over the faithful. Thus the faithful congregate in the Presence of the LORD God and abide in His pure Word and Sacrament here and now until the Church is ushered into eternity there - wherein and whenin the on-going Feast continues forever.

Between now and then keep your ear on a couple of men. These two men are both in the one congregation, though one of them is wheat and the other is a weed. They will tell you that they love the Lord and that they love the congregation, although one is truly concerned about the souls of the people. The other is certainly occupied with himself. Both men operate under the title of "pastor" though one of them is a true shepherd, that is, a servant of the Word and the other is a hireling, that is, a servant of the world.

The hireling will keep the Word of truth from you. He will substitute "manageable law" in the place of the true Law that always accuses the old sinful nature in each of us. He will then, if at all, proclaim a message of "conditional gospel" wherein you must do something to be assured of your forgiveness. He will lead you away from the church's hymning of justification by grace through faith in Christ ... that is, he will direct you away from the historic liturgy of the Church. The hireling will speak *peace, peace when there is no peace (Jeremiah 6:14)* and continue the chanting of "Let charity prevail, let charity prevail," which is nothing other than an ungodly plea to forget the doctrine of the LORD God and tolerate and crawl into bed with other religions and gods and isms. The hireling will rail against the purity of doctrine and speak out against the purification of church and ministry, and does so by using the press, the secular world and public relations in raising funds for himself, suppressing the truth and promoting himself before the masses of humankind.

The world without and the world within the Church will affirm the hireling. The Apostle Paul wrote to Pastor Timothy of days *when people will not endure sound teaching, but having itching ears they will accumulate for themselves teachers to suit their own likings (2 Timothy 4:3)*. As this continues within a religious body - be that a congregation, a district or a synod - then the lie of man will become institutionalized. Woe when that happens.

For you see, when the liars have infected those assembled and the wolf comes, the hireling, who has already left the Lord, now flees with fame and fortune. The people are abandoned to the idol-gods they have been introduced to by the hireling and which have been accommodated in services and invoked in prayers. The people are scattered to the false gods they have tolerated and accumulated for themselves ... to Baal, to the god of Islam, to the spirits of the New Age, to the god of Judaism, to Vishnu, to Buddha, to the sons of Sodom and the girls of Gomorrah, to the love-god, indeed, to the hireling himself.

Jesus declares it: *I am the Good Pastor. The Good Pastor lays down His Life for the sheep. He who is a hireling and not a pastor, whose own the sheep are not, sees the wolf coming and leaves the sheep and flees; and the wolf snatches them and scatters them. He flees because he is a hireling and cares nothing for the sheep. I am the Good Pastor; I know My own and My own know Me and, as the Father knows Me and I know the Father; and I lay down My Life for the sheep.*

As for that other man, the one who is not a hireling, he is an under-shepherd or under-pastor. Every other pastor you can think of falls short of the Good Pastor. Christ gives meaning to all other pastors. The under-shepherd, even at his best is surely a wretched sinner and a poor copy of the Good Pastor. His desire, however, is to proclaim the Word in its truth and purity, and to administer the Sacraments as instituted by the Christ. Not much is said of the under-pastor in the Gospel Reading for today because it's about Jesus, the One Pastor and His Church, the One Flock.

Therefore, the other man points the people to the LORD God - to the Father Who, in His mercy and grace, gave His Son to be the Redeemer of the world - to the Son Who, in His mercy and grace, gave His Life, dying for the sins of the world and rising again from the dead - to the Holy Spirit Who gave His Word in order that you and all others might hear that you are forgiven of all your sins in the Name of the Father and of the (†) Son and of the Holy Ghost. Amen.

Now may the God of peace Who brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus, the great Pastor of the sheep, by the Blood of the eternal covenant, equip you with everything good that you may do His will, working in you that which is pleasing in His sight, through Jesus Christ; to Whom be glory for ever and ever. Amen (Hebrews 13:20-21).

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