

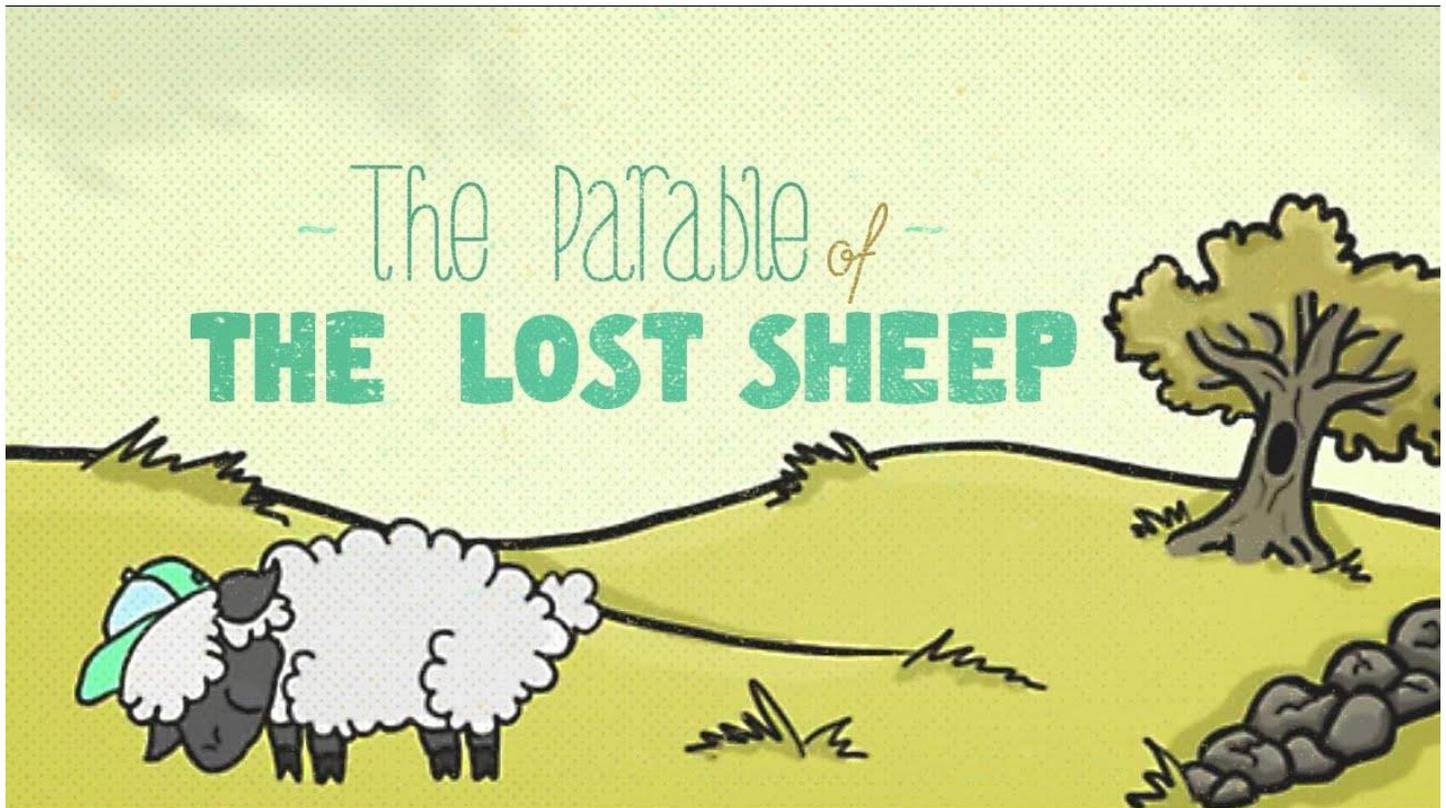
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Pastor's Bible Study



The Parable of the Lost Sheep

Servant Church of the Oranges
SAINT MATTHEW
AFRICAN METHODIST EPISCOPAL CHURCH
God's Love for God's People

Tuesday, October 22, 2019

6:30 pm

I. DID YOU REMEMBER TO WRITE DOWN THE 3 KINGDOM COMMITMENTS YOU ARE WILLING TO MAKE?

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

THE PARABLE OF THE LOST SHEEP
Matthew 18:10-14; Luke 15:1-7

NIV 1984 (New International Version)

¹⁰ “See that you do not look down on one of these little ones. For I tell you that their angels in heaven always see the face of my Father in heaven.”¹² “What do you think? If a man owns a hundred sheep, and one of them wanders away, will he not leave the ninety-nine on the hills and go to look for the one that wandered off? ¹³ And if he finds it, I tell you the truth, he is happier about that one sheep than about the ninety-nine that did not wander off. ¹⁴ In the same way your Father in heaven is not willing that any of these little ones should be lost.

Now the tax collectors and “sinners” were all gathering around to hear him. ² But the Pharisees and the teachers of the law muttered, “This man welcomes sinners and eats with them.” ³ Then Jesus told them this parable: ⁴ “Suppose one of you has a hundred sheep and loses one of them. Does he not leave the ninety-nine in the open country and go after the lost sheep until he finds it? ⁵ And when he finds it, he joyfully puts it on his shoulders ⁶ and goes home. Then he calls his friends and neighbors together and says, ‘Rejoice with me; I have found my lost sheep.’ ⁷ I tell you that in the same way there will be more rejoicing in heaven over one sinner who repents than over ninety-nine righteous persons who do not need to repent.

NKJV (New King James Version)

¹⁰ “Take heed that you do not despise one of these little ones, for I say to you that in heaven their angels always see the face of My Father who is in heaven. ¹¹ For the Son of Man has come to save that which was lost. ¹² “What do you think? If a man has a hundred sheep, and one of them goes astray, does he not leave the ninety-nine and go to the mountains to seek the one that is straying? ¹³ And if he should find it, assuredly, I say to you, he rejoices more over that *sheep* than over the ninety-nine that did not go astray. ¹⁴ Even so it is not the will of your Father who is in heaven that one of these little ones should perish.

Then all the tax collectors and the sinners drew near to Him to hear Him. ² And the Pharisees and scribes complained, saying, “This Man receives sinners and eats with them.” ³ So He spoke this parable to them, saying: ⁴ “What man of you, having a hundred sheep, if he loses one of them, does not leave the ninety-nine in the wilderness, and go after the one which is lost until he finds it? ⁵ And when he has found *it*, he lays *it* on his shoulders, rejoicing. ⁶ And when he comes home, he calls together *his* friends and neighbors, saying to them, ‘Rejoice with me, for

I have found my sheep which was lost!' ⁷ I say to you that likewise there will be more joy in heaven over one sinner who repents than over ninety-nine just persons who need no repentance.

MSG (The Message (paraphrase))

¹⁰"Watch that you don't treat a single one of these childlike believers arrogantly. You realize, don't you, that their personal angels are constantly in touch with my Father in heaven? ¹²⁻

¹⁴"Look at it this way. If someone has a hundred sheep and one of them wanders off, doesn't he leave the ninety-nine and go after the one? And if he finds it, doesn't he make far more over it than over the ninety-nine who stay put? Your Father in heaven feels the same way. He doesn't want to lose even one of these simple believers.

¹⁻³By this time a lot of men and women of doubtful reputation were hanging around Jesus, listening intently. The Pharisees and religion scholars were not pleased, not at all pleased. They growled, "He takes in sinners and eats meals with them, treating them like old friends." Their grumbling triggered this story. ⁴⁻⁷"Suppose one of you had a hundred sheep and lost one. Wouldn't you leave the ninety-nine in the wilderness and go after the lost one until you found it? When found, you can be sure you would put it across your shoulders, rejoicing, and when you got home call in your friends and neighbors, saying, 'Celebrate with me! I've found my lost sheep!' Count on it—there's more joy in heaven over one sinner's rescued life than over ninety-nine good people in no need of rescue.



II. THE BEHAVIOR OF SHEEP (Sheep101.info)

- A. Sheep have a strong instinct to follow the sheep in front of them, which makes distraction easy.
- B. Sheep are gregarious. They will usually stay together in a group while grazing. In fact, a sheep will become highly agitated if it is separated from the group. It is the banding together in large groups which protects sheep from predators which will go after the outliers in the flock.
- C. Sheep are a very social animal. Animal behaviorists note that sheep require the presence of at least 4 or 5 sheep which when grazing together maintain a visual link to each other.
- D. Sheep flock together. It is the sheep's flocking instinct that allows sheep herders to look after and move large numbers of sheep and lambs.
- E. Sheep are a prey animal. When they are faced with danger, their natural instinct is to flee not fight. Their strategy is to use avoidance and rapid flight to avoid being eaten.
- F. After fleeing, sheep will reform their group and look at the predator. They use their natural herding instinct to band together for safety. A sheep that is by itself is vulnerable to attack.
- G. Sheep tracks are never straight. The winding of trails allows sheep to observe their backside first with one eye, then the other. Sheep can spot dogs or other perceived forms of danger from 1,200 to 1,500 yards away.
- H. Sheep have excellent senses. Their wide angle of vision allows them to see predators. They can direct their ears to the direction of the sound. They are sensitive to what different predators smell like.
- I. Sheep are mentioned in the Bible more than 500 times, more than any other animal. The prominence of sheep in the Bible grows out of two realities. Sheep were important to the nomads and agricultural life of the Hebrews and similar peoples. Secondly, sheep are used throughout the Bible to symbolically refer to God's people.
- J. The sheep recognize the voice of the shepherd. They follow him (or her). The shepherd protects his/her flock and would give his/her life for them. It is known that animals can instantly recognize the voice of a familiar trusted person.
- K. Sheep have excellent memories for faces. They remember their handler. They also remember people who inflict abuse on them.

Debunking One of the Biggest Lies Ever Told in Teaching/Preaching: SHEEP ARE NOT DUMB OR STUPID!!!

III. SO WHAT DOES A SHEPHERD DO?

- A. Recommended Book: "The Minister As Shepherd" by Charles Jefferson. The Shepherd is:
 - A Watchman

- A Guard
- A Guide
- A Physician
- A Savior
- A Provider
- A Lover

IV. ANALYSIS OF THE TEXT

- A. These are not necessarily “**kingdom**” parables, but they do have “**kingdom implications**”
- B. Matthew 18:10-14
1. The parable is about the importance of children **and/or** “**childlike**” (new) believers.
 2. Children have angels assigned to them, but do not die and “**become**” angels.
 3. Sheep/shepherd imagery. Relationship.
 4. “**What do you think?**” Consider what should happen with this scenario.
- C. Luke 15:1-7
1. Entire chapter deals with something/someone that was lost, then found.
 2. Completely different crowd of hearers; tax collectors, “**sinners,**” Pharisees, teachers of the law.”
 - a. Extra Credit Homework – Describe difference between Pharisees, Sadducees, Scribes, teachers of the law.
 3. “**Muttered,**” murmured in his presence.
 3. Sheep/shepherd imagery, but this time...
 4. The reason for the rejoicing is....

V. LESSONS/SPIRITUAL & LIFE APPLICATIONS/QUESTIONS

- A. What are your honest thoughts about the children **and** the church or children **in** the church?
- B. Are you willing to risk your personal reputation for the kingdom?
“If you live for the praise of people...you will die by their criticism.”
- C. How much are you willing to do and how far are you willing to go for “**the one?**”
1. Do you notice they are lost, gone or have wandered away?
- D. When should we shout: **the moment of salvation!**

For Next Week:

[THE PARABLE OF THE LABORERS IN THE VINEYARD](#) - Matthew 20:1-16

Join us on the St. Matthew Prayer Line tomorrow morning at 6:30 am
(515) 604-9855, Access Code 886823#