

THE TAKE AWAY

DISCUSSION GUIDE

Sunday, August 8, 2021

Message Summary

In this week's message, Pastor Pascale Williams taught about the benefits of shepherds in the lives of sheep. God has designed the role of the shepherd (pastor) to care for his flock, the Church. They are appointed, anointed, authorized and they have abilities like none other. And you can tell if they are a shepherd that God has appointed if they have a heart for the sheep. They will do the hard things no one else will do if it provides care for the sheep. But if you don't know how to receive the benefits from God's gift - your shepherd - you will miss out on all God has for you. God has given the shepherd spiritual weapons to help them take good care of you. The story of King David tells us that a good shepherd has a rod, a staff and a sling. The sling symbolizes the benefit of spiritual covering and protection in the lives of the sheep. Shepherds protect sheep from outside threats. The rod symbolizes the benefit of vision and direction for the sheep. Shepherds have the authority and responsibility to lead you and guide according to God's plan for your life. And finally, the staff symbolizes the benefit of prayer and intercession for the sheep. Shepherds are charged to pray and intercede for their sheep according to God's will for them. But to truly receive the blessing of these benefits at work in your life, you have to learn how to receive, honor, support, pray for and respond to your pastor-shepherd. Only then will the power of the shepherd-sheep relationship truly be activated in your life!

Key Scriptures:

- **[Psalm 23:4 NKJV]** 4 Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil; For You [are] with me; Your rod and Your staff, they comfort me.
- **Read 1 Samuel 17**, and the story of how David defeated Goliath with a stone and a sling.

Discussion Questions:

1. What is the purpose of the rod, the staff and the sling of the shepherd?
2. Why do you think it is important that we know the benefits of the shepherd in your life?
3. What do you need to do, or maybe even change, to start activating the power of the shepherd-sheep relationship in your life?

Life Application:

This week as you study the key scriptures, consider what Pastor Pascale said, "To access the benefits of shepherds, you have to receive and honor the authority of the shepherd in your life. And you have a responsibility to receive what is given." One of the best ways you can honor and receive your pastor-shepherd is to pray for them regularly. If you are a sheep of this church, then Pastor John Carter is your shepherd. Take some time this week to pray for your shepherd, Pastor John and his wife, Pastor Lisa. Pray for the leadership team that surrounds them and supports them. Pray that God supports them and blesses them as they lead the sheep according to His will and His plan.