



How Did Jesus Lead?
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August 21, 2022

The Crossing Church
Las Vegas, Nevada

OPENING

This week we are continuing our study of [Quest 52](#) and this is week #34. Jesus uses the metaphor of a shepherd leading sheep to describe how Jesus leads us throughout our journey with Him.

SCRIPTURE¹

John 10:1-5 Very truly I tell you Pharisees, anyone who does not enter the sheep pen by the gate, but climbs in by some other way, is a *thief* and a *robber*. The one who enters by the gate is the shepherd of the sheep. The gatekeeper opens the gate for him, and the sheep *listen to his voice*. He calls his own sheep by name and *leads* them out. When he has brought out all his own, he goes on ahead of them, and his sheep *follow him* because they *know his voice*. But they will never follow a stranger; in fact, they will run away from him because they do not recognize a stranger's voice.

John 10:11a-15 I am the *good shepherd*. The good shepherd *lays down his life* for the sheep. The hired hand is not the shepherd and does not own the sheep. So when he sees the wolf coming, he abandons the sheep and runs away. Then the wolf attacks the flock and scatters it. The man runs away because he is a hired hand and cares nothing for the sheep. I am the good shepherd; I *know* my sheep and my sheep *know me*— just as the Father knows me and I know the Father— and I *lay down my life* for the sheep.

Ezekiel 34:1-4 The word of the Lord came to me: “Son of man, prophesy against the shepherds of Israel; prophesy and say to them: ‘This is what the Sovereign Lord says: Woe to you shepherds of Israel who only take care of yourselves! Should not shepherds take care of the flock? You eat the curds, clothe yourselves with the wool and slaughter the choice animals, but you do not take care of the flock. You have not strengthened the weak or healed the sick or bound up the injured. You have not brought back the strays or searched for the lost. You have ruled them harshly and brutally.’”

Ezekiel 34:11-12 “For this is what the Sovereign Lord says: ‘I myself will *search* for my sheep and *look after* them. As a shepherd looks after his scattered flock when he is with them, so will I look after my sheep. I will *rescue* them from all the places where they were scattered on a day of clouds and darkness.’”

Isaiah 53:6a We *all*, like sheep, have gone *astray*, each of us has turned to our *own way*;

¹ NIV translation unless otherwise indicated.

OBSERVATION

Sheep are mentioned more than any other animal in the Bible. Throughout the Old Testament Yahweh is described as a good shepherd and He deputized His key leaders to serve as a shepherd over His people. The most profound scripture is written by a shepherd called King David who wrote the majority of the 150 Psalms and Psalm 23 is the one most of us recall. Every family would have a few sheep because they were valuable in producing winter clothing. Some sheep actually slept in the family house during the night as they spread warmth throughout, but most slept in an outdoor pen where thieves could climb over the wall and steal or kill them. This is also Satan's tactic in pursuing us. Only a good shepherd could protect them.

QUESTION: How familiar are you with the sheep metaphor in the Bible? What other scriptures about sheep do you find there?

A shepherd had a choice of leadership styles to apply to the flock: Drive or lead them. He could walk behind them with a stick and beat them if they got off the path or he could go in front, leading the flock with the sound of his voice. Jesus makes a huge statement: He says, "I am the Good Shepherd." He is saying that all of the former leaders in Israel have fallen short of their calling and neglected His people or have taken advantage of them, but He has come, not just as a protector, but as a guide, provider and Savior.

QUESTION: What is your leadership style? What are the pluses and minuses about it?

QUESTION: How do you know God's voice?

Jesus compares this description of a Good Shepherd to shepherds who are hired hands. They arrive and leave on time. When danger comes they are gone. They have no motivation to do otherwise. It's just a job to them. But the good shepherd is invested in His sheep and truly cares for them individually. He knows them each personally. He knows their names, needs, insecurities, and struggles. He would lay down His life for them. Just as He has done for us.

QUESTION: We're talking about the ultimate Sacrifice. In what ways do you sacrifice for Jesus in your life?

APPLICATION

In the Old Covenant, the sheep died for their owners as sacrifices for his sin, but in the New Covenant, the Shepherd died for His sheep. His sacrifice absolves us of the penalty we owe for our sins. If we don't believe that God has the best lives planned for us, that He is our provider and protector, we will go our own way and find only destitution awaiting us. If left to ourselves without a shepherd, we will go astray and turn to our own ways. And when we do - we get hurt. There are a lot of different voices competing with our attention and if we listen to wrong voices we will follow the wrong path. We can't follow Him unless we are moving the right direction. There is no such thing as passively following Jesus. What and who we listen to will determine the direction of our lives.

QUESTION: To whom are you listening today who is leading you in the wrong direction?

QUESTION: To whom are you listening today who is leading you in the right direction with God?

QUESTION: In what direction is Jesus calling you?

When we follow our Good Shepherd, we are under His care. We are no longer in charge. That's really good – we have all heard about how stupid sheep are. When we laid down our lives, we

laid down our rights. It is God's job to guide, protect and provide for us. It's our job to listen to His voice, love Him and others, be obedient and follow.

QUESTION: What changes do you need make in order to better listen, love and obey?

QUESTION: Upon reading the 23rd Psalm, what in it speaks especially to your heart and the way you treat the people you lead?

PRAYER:

Heavenly Father, lead me in a closer walk with You so I can hear your voice more clearly. Bring wise Christian counselors into my path every day so I will not stumble, but, instead, walk confidently in Your will. In Jesus' name. Amen

QUESTIONS

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QUESTION: We're talking about the ultimate Sacrifice. In what ways do you sacrifice for Jesus in your life?

QUESTION: How do you know God's voice?

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