

LESSON 26 Devotional

Becoming a Good Shepherd

In John 10, Jesus labels Himself the Good Shepherd and contrasts a good shepherd with a hired hand. In John 10:11-15 we read,

“I am the good shepherd; the good shepherd lays down His life for the sheep. He who is a hired hand, and not a shepherd, who is not the owner of the sheep, sees the wolf coming, and leaves the sheep and flees, and the wolf snatches them and scatters them. He flees because he is a hired hand and is not concerned about the sheep. I am the good shepherd, and I know My own and My own know Me, even as the Father knows Me and I know the Father; and I lay down My life for the sheep.”

Throughout Scripture God uses a shepherd as a role model, even though the world often despised those who tended sheep. As leaders, God’s best for us is to become good shepherds, but we first need to understand the difference between a good shepherd and a bad one.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. Read:
Psalm 23:1-5

The Lord is my shepherd; I shall not want. He makes me lie down in green pastures. He leads me beside still waters. He restores my soul. He leads me in paths of righteousness for his name's sake.

Even 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.

You prepare a table before me in the presence of my enemies; you anoint my head with oil; my cup overflows.

1 Peter 5:1-4

“So I exhort the elders among you, as a fellow elder and a witness of the sufferings of Christ, as well as a partaker in the glory that is going to be revealed: shepherd the flock of God that is among you, exercising oversight, not under compulsion, but willingly, as God would have you; not for shameful gain, but eagerly; not domineering over those in your charge, but being examples to the flock. And when the chief Shepherd appears, you will receive the unfading crown of glory.”

As a group, discuss what qualities make these shepherds worthy of following and what would those attributes look like in the workplace.

2. Read: Ezekiel 34:1-6

The word of the Lord came to me: “Son of man, prophesy against the shepherds of Israel; prophesy, and say to them, even to the shepherds, Thus says the Lord God: Ah, shepherds of Israel who have been feeding yourselves! Should not shepherds feed the sheep? You eat the fat, you clothe yourselves with the wool, you slaughter the fat ones, but you do not feed the sheep. The weak you have not strengthened, the sick you have not healed, the injured you have not bound up, the strayed you have not brought back, the lost you have not sought, and with force and harshness you have ruled them. So they were scattered, because there was no shepherd, and they became food for all the wild beasts. My sheep were scattered; they wandered over all the mountains and on every high hill. My sheep were scattered over all the face of the earth, with none to search or seek for them.

Review this list of complaints God had against the shepherds over God’s people in Israel at that time. Discuss as a group and develop a list of qualities that would be reflective of a bad shepherd. How are these qualities reflected in workplaces today?

3. Contrast the qualities of a good shepherd in Psalm 23 with the list of bad qualities you developed from Ezekiel 34. Discuss how you might apply these qualities to your workplace in practical terms to become a better shepherd to your staff.

4. Discuss the ways your staff might be impacted and how they may respond to the difference between being led by a bad shepherd vs. a good shepherd.
