

Mixtape

Mixtape: through the psalms

SCRIPTURE: Psalm 23 - Lead like a shepherd:

Being a line leader in elementary school-

When I was in elementary school, there were a couple of special days that we always looked forward to: all the holidays were fun. (halloween, thanksgiving, Christmas, valentines day). The days we had assembly. (magician, or dental hygiene program, or our public servants) ever Friday because it was pizza day. But there was another day that was just the best, and that was the day, you got to be the leader!

- recess, lunch, music class... no matter where your class went that day, you were there first! Being the leader, I realize now was meant to teach us something, but at the time it meant we were the king or the queen for the day! Very self serving.

As I have grown and matured, I have learned that being leader, is more than what I get out of it. Being a leader comes with things like compassion and care. Sometimes friction and hurt. It can come with victories and growth, but also defeats and heartaches.

Being a leader is not always easy or fun, because when you are a leader you now have RESPONSIBILITY.

- to people

- to production
- security
- setting the example

This morning, as we continue in our series, MIXTAPE, we are going to be studying through a pretty familiar Psalm, I think it would be fair to say it's one of, if not the most well known of the Psalm. Many times it is used at funerals, because it is a reassuring reminder of how God is with His creation, and it reminds us of how much he cares and loves us.

This morning, I want us read through the 23rd Psalm together.

The Lord is my shepherd, I lack nothing. 2 He makes me lie down in green pastures, he leads me beside quiet waters, 3 he refreshes my soul. He guides me along the right paths for his name's sake. 4 Even though I walk through the darkest valley, I will fear no evil, for you are with me; your rod and your staff, they comfort me. 5 You prepare a table before me in the presence of my enemies. You anoint my head with oil; my cup overflows. 6 Surely your goodness and love will follow me all the days of my life, and I will dwell in the house of the Lord forever.

David writes poem/ song of comfort and he starts it off by saying that God is a shepherd.

Now, this seem to make sense to us, but to an Israelite at this this time, it could have maybe seemed a bit odd. because shepherds, at that time were not looked at with high regard, but instead they were looked down on.

- By nature, their jobs meant that:

1. Always out in the fields.

2. Always out protecting their sheep/ dirty
3. Accused of being thieves and being in places they shouldn't be
4. Ceremonially unclean, (which meant they couldn't go and worship in the temple.
 - a. Slaughtering sheep. Helping them give birth.

Yet, shepherds had a great responsibility to watch out for, care for, to provide for, to protect and maintain the flock.

Break out Psalm 23

1-3- The Lord is my shepherd, I lack nothing. 2 He makes me lie down in green pastures, he leads me beside quiet waters, 3 he refreshes my soul. He guides me along the right paths for his name's sake.

Here, David reminds us that God provides for all of our needs. He makes sure that we are moved to healthy pastures and provides clean water.

- We look to God as the provider of everything we need in this life.
- He takes care of us
 - There have been times when our month wasn't going to end before our money. (Ever been there before?). - And when that happens we worry, but somehow, God is always faithful and sees us through. David is not saying that God is going to give you every wish of your heart, but instead that God is going to be faithful to see you through and provide our needs.

- When we follow Him, we stay on safe paths.

4-5 - 4 Even though I walk through the darkest valley, I will fear no evil, for you are with me; your rod and your staff, they comfort me. 5 You prepare a table before me in the presence of my enemies. You anoint my head with oil; my cup overflows.

Even in our darkest of hours, when we feel attacked on all sides, We are reminded that He is our protection.

Rod and Staff - a sign of power

When the Israelites were in Egypt, the staff was an ever present symbol of power, but it was held by Pharaoh.

Pharaoh - depicted in hieroglyphs and carvings, much of the time Pharaoh has a staff in his hand. (Slide)

Sign of power and leadership side note -

Remember the interaction with Moses and Aaron versus Pharaoh's magicians? When God told them to throw their staffs on the ground and they turned into snakes. Then Pharaoh's men did the same, does anyone know what happens next? Exodus 7:12 - Each one threw down his staff and it became a snake. But Aaron's staff swallowed up their staffs.

Has anyone thought that Aaron's snake swallowed the magicians' snake? But what it says is, "staff".

Im not entirely sure what it means, but maybe it means this, if the staff is a symbol or power for Pharaoh, maybe this is showing Pharaoh that God is all powerful. Even greater than Pharaoh himself.

God Is all powerful and is the good shepherd.

6 -6 Surely your goodness and love will follow me all the days of my life, and I will dwell in the house of the Lord forever.

The writer closes with the assurance that when we continue to follow the shepherd we will have his love and protection and we look forward to the promise of life with Him.

Leaders come in all styles, But God has given us the example of the type of leader we are supposed to be. We are to lead people like a shepherd would lead his flock.

We are called to be Shepherd Leaders

John 10: 1- 10

"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. 2 The one who enters by the gate is the shepherd of the sheep. 3 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. 4 When he has brought out all his own, he goes on ahead of them, and his sheep follow him because they know his voice. 5 But they will never follow a stranger; in fact, they will run away from him because they do not recognize a stranger's voice." 6 Jesus used this figure of speech, but the Pharisees did not understand what he was telling them.

7 Therefore Jesus said again, "Very truly I tell you, I am the gate for the sheep. 8 All who have come before me are thieves and robbers, but the sheep have not listened to them. 9 I am the gate; whoever enters through me will be saved.[a] They will come in and go out, and find pasture. 10 The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy; I have come that they may have life, and have it to the full.

11 "I am the good shepherd. The good shepherd lays down his life for the sheep. 12 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. 13 The man runs away because he is a hired hand and cares nothing for the sheep.

14 "I am the good shepherd; I know my sheep and my sheep know me— 15 just as the Father knows me and I know the Father—and I lay down my life for the sheep. 16 I have other sheep that are not of this sheep pen. I must bring them also. They too will listen to my voice, and there shall be one flock and one shepherd. 17 The reason my Father loves me is that I lay down my life—only to take it up again. 18 No one takes it from me, but I lay it down of my own accord. I have authority to lay it down and authority to take it up again. This command I received from my Father."

A Good Shepherd Leader:

1. **Honest with their Sheep**

"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. 2 The one who enters by the gate is the shepherd of the sheep.

2. Knows their Sheep

3 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

3. Relationship their Sheep

4 When he has brought out all his own, he goes on ahead of them, and his sheep follow him because they know his voice. 5 But they will never follow a stranger; in fact, they will run away from him because they do not recognize a stranger's voice.

If you are leading someone, and you are excited to see them grow, yet they don't ever seem to get to the next step, maybe it's time to look inward.

Some sheep will never venture further than their shepherd has gone themselves nor are willing to go themselves. You need to be sure you are always growing, learning, studying, and venturing as well.

4. leads their sheep to life

7 Therefore Jesus said again, "Very truly I tell you, I am the gate for the sheep. 8 All who have come before me are thieves and robbers, but the sheep have not listened to them. 9 I am the gate; whoever enters through me will be saved.[a] They will come in and go out, and find pasture. 10 The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy; I have come that they may have life, and have it to the full.

5. protects their sheep from harm

11 "I am the good shepherd. The good shepherd lays down his life for the sheep. 12 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. 13 The man runs away because he is a hired hand and cares nothing for the sheep.

14 - 16 - **Seeks out other sheep (maybe lost)**

14 "I am the good shepherd; I know my sheep and my sheep know me—15 just as the Father knows me and I know the Father—and I lay down my life for the sheep. 16 I have other sheep that are not of this sheep pen. I must bring them also. They too will listen to my voice, and there shall be one flock and one shepherd.

17 - 18 - **serves their sheep**

17 The reason my Father loves me is that I lay down my life—only to take it up again. 18 No one takes it from me, but I lay it down of my own accord. I have authority to lay it down and authority to take it up again. This command I received from my Father."

SGL Q's -

- 1.** What are some of your fondest memories of growing up when it comes to music? Memorizing songs with friends? School dances? Are some of those songs still your favorite today?
- 2.** When it comes to leadership, what do you think your style is? Have you ever thought about the idea of a "Shepherd Leader"? Do you think that leadership style can be effective in our day and culture?
- 3.** The staff was a symbol of power. What are some symbols of power today?
- 4.** Read Psalm 23 and John 10:1-18 - What are somethings that you read that you find interesting? Are there any other leadership qualities that could be added to the list? Explain your answers and discuss.
- 5.** Of the leadership qualities that were mentioned, which ones do you have the most difficult time with and why? How can you improve one of these qualities to be a better leader?