

THEY SMELL LIKE SHEEP

S.R. Luke 15:4 - 7

4 – 4 – 2021

Intro.

- A. In a special study with Tony Sayre (a shepherd) we noted the characteristics of Jesus, the good shepherd (John 10)
 - 1. We noted that, due to their tasks, shepherds smell like the sheep.
 - 2. God, through Ezekiel, spoke of a time when a truly good shepherd would feed and protect His sheep (**Ezekiel 34:17 – 24**).
 - 3. Jesus pictures the shepherd for us in **Luke 15:4 – 6**.
- B. The reason the disciples followed Jesus was because they knew and trusted Him.
 - 1. This kind of trust can only be gained one way.
 - 2. Good spiritual shepherds today imitate the Chief Shepherd and lay down their lives for the sheep.
 - 3. They attract sheep through loving service and tender, compassionate care.
- C. Three fundamental qualities of the shepherd - flock relationship are:
 - 1. Availability – outside of the assembly to nurture caring relationships.
 - 2. Commitment - of time, energy and selfless and authentic relationships with every sheep in the flock.
 - 3. Trust – **“they know His voice” (Jn. 10:4)**.
- D. The Good Shepherd is trusted because he is *Trustworthy*.
 - 1. He knows the sheep by name and he leads them out (**John 10:3**).
- E. Distorted Views of Leadership

I. HIRED HAND (John 10:12 - 13)

- A. Jesus, who enters by the gate and becomes the very door of protection for His sheep, stands in stark contrast to the hireling who runs away when things get difficult.

II. COWBOY

- A. The difference is fundamental: Shepherds lead, cowboys drive.
 - 1. The cowboy moves the heard by shouting, cracking whips or stinging the cattle with sticks and prods.
 - 2. Cowboys *force* the “herd” to go their way.
- B. The shepherd depends upon relationship.
 - 1. Jesus *leads* us in paths of righteousness (Psa. 23:2 – 4a)
 - 2. Jesus does not expect His sheep to go where he has not gone.
 - a) Then Jesus said to His disciples, "If anyone desires to *come after* Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and *follow* Me.
 - b) Modern day shepherds may use cowboy tactics, but not those of Jesus’ day.

III. SHERIFF

- A. Close kin to the cowboy mentality is the sheriff.
 - 1. He flashes a badge and brandishes a gun.
 - 2. He's the law and what he says goes.
- B. Such leaders cannot expect the love, affection and loyalty of a herd.
 - 1. They resort, therefore, to *coercion* in order to get *cooperation*.
 - 2. In reality what they get is *compliance*.
- C. Jesus warned the apostles against this distorted leadership model. **(Mt. 20:25 – 26)**
 - 1. But Jesus called them to Himself and said, "You know that the rulers of the Gentiles lord it over them, and those who are great exercise authority over them.
 - 2. 26 "Yet it shall not be so among you; but whoever desires to become great among you, let him be your servant."
- D. The "lording over" leadership style is of the world and has no place in spiritual leaders.
 - 1. "A church leader who has to *assert* his authority doesn't have much."
 - 2. (1 Peter 5:2 – 4)

IV. BOARD OF DIRECTORS

- A. This thinking is reflected by the phrase "pray for the elders' decisions."
- B. Because members have developed this terribly distorted view of spiritual leadership many elders have adopted it as well.
- C. The *board of directors* model works mostly behind closed doors, making decisions, sending memos and announcing edicts.
- D. The proof that the board of directors model doesn't work is in the absence of a following.

Conclusion:

- A. God has provided a guide for spiritual leadership through His word.
- B. God has designed a model – revealed in Scripture and displayed in Jesus Christ.
- C. All who seek to be good shepherds will imitate His example.
 - 1. "A follower of Jesus Christ who seeks to lead like Jesus must be willing to be treated like Jesus. Some will follow. Others will throw stones." G. Wilkes
- D. "I am the good shepherd; the good shepherd lays down His life for the sheep." Jn.10:11