

The Character of Jesus 45
The Good Shepherd
John 10:1 – 21
Godly Leadership

- Characteristic: Godly leadership
 - Old Testament prophecies about bad shepherds
 - Ezekiel 34:1 – 6 You eat the fat and clothe yourselves with the wool; you slaughter the fatlings, but you do not feed the flock.
 - Jeremiah 50:6 – 7 Their shepherds have led them astray...they have forgotten their resting place
 - Zechariah 11:4 – 17 Feed the flock for slaughter
 - Old Testament prophecies about the shepherding of God and the Messiah
 - Psalm 23, 77:20, 80:1, 95:7
 - Jeremiah 31:10 He who scattered Israel will gather him
 - Ezekiel 34:11 – 31 Indeed I Myself will search for My sheep and seek them out as a shepherd seeks out his flock
 - Micah 7:14 Shepherd Your people with Your staff
 - Isaiah 40:11 He will feed His flock like a shepherd
 - (1 – 6) The audience is the same as the end of the scene with the Pharisees and the man born blind (see v 21). So, the bad shepherds are the Pharisees. Contrasts:
 - (6) The audience did not understand the allegory. Why?
 - (1 – 2) Jesus was a legitimate leader; the Pharisees were not. They obtained their position and authority outside of the Law. God always appointed Israel's leaders. Jesus characterized the present leadership as thieves and robbers (Ezekiel 34:1 – 6). Certainly they used their power to maintain their wealth and position.
 - (3 – 5) Large crowds followed Jesus voluntarily. The present leadership was followed out of fear (for example, being cast out of the synagogue), not willingly.
 - (7 – 10) I am the door
 - (7) "Again." John acknowledges that Jesus is hitting the same point again, just with a different allegory.
 - (7, 9) "Door." The safe passage between the sheepfold of God and the outside world.
 - (8) "Came before Me." Previous false Messiahs (examples: Acts 5:33 – 37). Very few followed them.
 - (10) Bad leaders profit themselves. Jesus profited others.
 - (11 – 18) I am the good shepherd.
 - (11 – 13) Proper leaders give up themselves, even to death. Fake leaders protect themselves and abandon the sheep when the going gets tough.
 - (14) A proper leader knows each follower personally. A fake leader is aloof.
 - (15 – 18) A proper leader is always expanding his audience. A proper leader may appear to be struck down, but will have a great impact. Dying for others is not losing but winning.
 - (19 – 21) Apparently, the audience got it the second time through. Some stayed with theory, some were impressed by the proof.
- Application: Godly leadership
 - Historically, how have church leaders fared compared to their followers?

- Can you think of leaders of the past who lived in poverty?
- How large of a group could someone lead and still know every person well?
- How does one become a shepherd?
- Can you think of leaders who made it easy for followers to go in and out of the world safely?
Do we not tend to focus on avoiding the world?
 - Do followers generally avoid bad leaders?
 - How does a leader focus on “abundant” life, rather than meeting minimum requirements?
- Is it appropriate to suggest that these characteristics of Jesus should be found in modern church leaders?
 - In what way might a modern church leader “take it [his life] up again”?
 - Do followers generally hear the voice of good leaders?
 - Unity appears to be a hallmark of a good leader.
- Are people divided about the criteria to use for identifying leaders?