

Order of Worship for April 30, 2023

Prelude:

P: Jesus Christ is risen!

C: He is risen indeed, Alleluia!

Opening Hymn: *"The King of Love My Shepherd Is"* – Hymn #709

Confession and Forgiveness

P: In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.

C: Amen

P: God made us, we are His.

C: It is He who made us, and we are His. We are His people, the sheep of His pasture.

P: Yet, we have sinned against Him.

C: All we like sheep have gone astray. We have turned everyone to his or her own way.

P: But Jesus, our Good Shepherd, gave His life for us.

C: The Good Shepherd laid His life for His sheep. He is the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world.

P: By the power and authority of our Good Shepherd, Jesus Christ, I forgive you all your sins in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.

C: Amen.

P: For we were like sheep gone astray, but now we have returned to the Shepherd and Overseer of your souls.

C: And when the Chief Shepherd appears, we will receive the crown of glory that will never fade away.

Service of the Word

Entrance Psalm: Psalm 23 (read in unison)

All: The LORD is my shepherd, I shall not want. He maketh me to lie down in green pastures. He leadeth me besides the still waters. He restoreth my soul, He leadeth me in paths of righteousness for His name's sake. Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no ill. For though art with me. Thy rod and thy staff they comforted me. Thou preparest a table in the presence of mine enemies. My cup runneth over. Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life. And I will dwell in the house of the LORD forever.

P: The Lord be with you.

C: And also with you.

P: Almighty God, merciful Father, since You have wakened from death the Shepherd of Your sheep, grant us Your Holy Spirit that when we hear the voice of our Shepherd we may know Him who calls us each by name and follow where He leads; through the same Jesus Christ, Your Son, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

C: Amen.

Hymn: “The Lord’s My Shepherd”- Hymn #710

Reading from the Book of Acts: Acts 2:42-47

R: The followers of Jesus devoted themselves to the apostles’ teaching and fellowship, to the breaking of bread and the prayers. And awe came upon every soul, and many wonders and signs were being done through the apostles. And all who believed were together and had all things in common. And they were selling their possessions and belongings and distributing the proceeds to all, as any had need. And day by day, attending the temple together and breaking bread in their homes, they received their food with glad and generous hearts, praising God and having favor with all the people. And the Lord added to their number day by day those who were being saved.

R: This is the Word of the Lord.

C: Thanks be to God.

Epistle Lesson: 1 Peter 2:19-25

R: This is a gracious thing, when, mindful of God, one endures sorrows while suffering unjustly. For what credit is it if, when you sin and are beaten for it, you endure? But if when you do good and suffer for it you endure, this is a gracious thing in the sight of God. For to this you have been called, because Christ also suffered for you, leaving you an example, so that you might follow in His steps. He committed no sin, neither was deceit found in His mouth. When He was reviled, He did not revile in return; when He suffered, He did not threaten, but continued entrusting Himself to Him who judges justly. He Himself bore our sins in His body on the tree, that we might die to sin and live to righteousness. By His wounds you have been healed. For you were straying like sheep, but have now returned to the Shepherd and Overseer of your souls.

R: This is the Word of the Lord.

C: Thanks be to God.

Holy Gospel: John 10:1-10

P: The Holy Gospel according to St. John, the 10th chapter.

C: Glory to You, O Lord.

P: [Jesus said:] “Truly, truly, I say to you, he who does not enter the sheepfold by the door but climbs in by another way, that man is a thief and a robber. But he who enters by the door is the shepherd of the sheep. To him the gatekeeper opens. The sheep hear his voice, and he calls his own sheep by name and leads them out. When he has brought out

all his own, he goes before them, and the sheep follow him, for they know his voice. A stranger they will not follow, but they will flee from him, for they do not know the voice of strangers.” This figure of speech Jesus used with them, but they did not understand what He was saying to them.

So Jesus again said to them, “Truly, truly, I say to you, I am the door of the sheep. All who came before Me are thieves and robbers, but the sheep did not listen to them. I am the door. If anyone enters by me, he will be saved and will go in and out and find pasture. The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy. I came that they may have life and have it abundantly.”

P: This is the Gospel of the Lord.

C: Praise to You, O Lord.

Sermon Hymn: “*Jesus Lives! The Victory's Won*” – **Hymn #490**

Sermon: “*Shepherded by Jesus*” (Saturday Sermon Only) - **John 10:1-10**

Parenthood is a good way to describe the relationship of Jesus as our shepherd. He speaks about being the shepherd who comes to the sheep through the gate. There are many ways that you can get people to do things. But we see in Jesus a shepherd who guides us that way a good father or mother does—by love.

Parents can use cleverness to get their kids to toe the line. Some child psychologists recommend using humor in disciplining. How would you discipline an angry child of 5 who called you a "poopyhead" (or worse) for insisting that he clean up his room or eat his vegetables? Would you:

- a. Demand an immediate apology
- b. Put him in time out
- c. Give him a spanking
- d. Say, Shhh! You can't tell anyone my secret name!”

“d.” is an example of parenting by humor. You get the child's attention through doing what he/she doesn't expect. Here are some other examples:

Voice yourself. Walk into your child's room and ask them to clean it -- in a fake opera voice at the top of your lungs. Funny voices and using different characters are a great way to diffuse tension.

Fall down. A lot. Especially with toddlers; they think it's hilarious when adults fall down, since they do it a lot themselves.

False cry -- especially with boys. There's such a taboo against crying with boys that I do it all the time. Kids will experiment with teasing or some mild aggression, and I'll go 'WAAAAAAHHHH!' They'll laugh and laugh and want to do it over and over again.

Game it. Set up games where they can be symbolically aggressive without it being over the top, such as play wrestling and pillow fights.

Jesus could get us to follow Him through cleverness. He was the one who drew crowds with His miracles. Think of the performance He could put on if He decided to come to Stephens or Hilton Coliseum or even better Jack Trice stadium. He could “wow” everyone into believing in Him.

But Jesus does not enter the sheepfold by trickery, like a thief. He comes to us directly without any cover up. He is the one who calls us to a cross, not an easy, attractive life. What we see in Him is what we get—a real, live human being who came not with wealth, military might, or entertainment, but with His unlimited love.

Similar to using humor is to use reverse psychology. You tell a child to do what you don’t want them to do, and then they do the opposite. For instance:

“How on earth can you see the TV sitting so far back?”

"Yeah, I used to skip school a lot, too"

"Just leave all the lights on ... it makes the house look more cheery"

"Let me smell that shirt -- Yeah, it's good for another week"

"Go ahead and keep that stray dog, honey. I'll be glad to feed and walk him every day"

"Well, if Bluto’s mamma says it's OK, that's good enough for me."

"The curfew is just a general time to shoot for. It's not like I'm running a prison around here."

"I don't have a tissue with me ... just use your sleeve."

"Don't bother wearing a jacket - the wind-chill is bound to improve.”

People often think that when Jesus healed people and told them not to tell anyone that He was using reverse psychology—tell them to be quiet so they do the opposite and get the word around about Jesus. But Jesus truly did not want them to tell others. Reverse psychology works when you get people to freely make a choice to do what you really want them to do. As shepherd Jesus knows we can’t make a choice. On our own we will always go our own way.

Mothers could simply force us to do what we are to do. There is the simple idea of “I said so,” which demands total obedience. That can be backed up by “time outs,” taking away privileges, having dad reinforce it, and not wanting to hear mom complain.

Jesus could have forced us as a shepherd. It is the way we shepherd in the western world, like with cattle. You go behind the sheep with the help of a horse and a barking dog and force the sheep in the direction you want them to go. As God Jesus could make us do anything. He could control us so that we never went astray. For instance, remember how Pinocchio's nose grew when he lied? God could place sensors in us that would make us feel pain anytime we lied. The lying would stop. We would be perfect little robots.

But Jesus didn't do that. Instead He says, "The shepherd 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." In the eastern world where Jesus lived, shepherds do not herd their sheep from behind, pushing them in the direction they want them to go. Instead they lead the sheep, and the sheep follow. In that part of the world sheep from several different flocks can be penned together. They are separated not by the shepherds individually dividing them, but simply by the shepherd calling to the sheep. The sheep of his flock recognize his voice and gather to him. The other sheep stay away, because they don't recognize that voice. We think of David as a shepherd and as a writer of songs we call Psalms. Shepherds use songs to project loudly to their sheep so the sheep stay close to him.

Jesus leads us to Him by talking to us. It is His Word that made us in the first place. That same Word remade us through baptism. That Word is what gave us the faith to recognize that voice and want to follow it. So Jesus' way of calling and keeping us to Him is His Word. That is why He calls us in the Bible, in our worship services, in hymns, in the daily living of our baptisms, in His Supper, in other Christians. And He does it openly, not through fancy words or magic or trickery or sophisticated psychology. It is not the flashy call of success, wealth, or popularity. It is the call of one who enters not as a thief or robber, to take advantage of us, but the one who comes to love us.

Think of those who want our attention—politicians wanting a vote, companies wanting us to buy their products, the government who wants our tax revenue and good citizenship, charities that want our help. But what does Jesus want from us? Nothing, except ourselves, not because He needs us, but to love us.

Parents can help us envision Jesus as our shepherd. Parents can raise us through humor, reverse psychology, cleverness, and sheer force. But for most of us when we see our mothers we see someone who loved us, who guided us openly by that love even when it meant spitting on a piece of Kleenex to wipe dirt from our face, reminding us to brush our teeth, getting us to make our bed or turn our socks the right way when throwing them in the laundry, or coming to supper on time.

That is what we see in Jesus. Our Gospel lesson stops with verse 10 where Jesus says, "I have come that they may have life and have it to the full." That is a wonderful promise, but what really makes it wonderful is that it is true. And what makes it true is the next verse where Jesus says, "I am the good shepherd. The good shepherd lays down his life

for the sheep.” We look at the cross and see how Jesus gets us to follow Him, not by trickery, show, or force, but by His love poured out for us on the cross.

Nicene Creed:

Prayer of the Church: (P: Lord, in Your mercy; C: **Hear our prayer.**)

Sharing Our Ministry:

Offering & Voluntary:

Service of the Sacrament

Prayer of Thanksgiving:

The Lord’s Prayer:

Words of the Lord:

Distribution Hymns:

”Savior, Like a Shepherd Lead Us” – **Hymn #711**

”Blest Be the Tie that Binds” – **Hymn #649**

Dismissal:

Prayer after Communion:

P: God of all power, You called from death our Lord Jesus Christ, the great shepherd of the sheep. Send us as shepherds to rescue the lost, to heal the injured, and to feed one another with knowledge and understanding; through Your Son, Jesus Christ, our Lord.

C: Amen.

Blessing:

P: Go now with your trust in the Good Shepherd, and let us love, not just in words, but in truth and action. Believe in the name of Jesus Christ, and love one another, just as He has commanded us. God the Father be at your side, even in valleys of death. Christ Jesus be the cornerstone of your life. The Holy Spirit abide in you and tend you with love and mercy all the days of your life.

C: Amen.

Closing Hymn: *” I Am Jesus’ Little Lamb”* – **Hymn #740**