

Like any organization, every church is a distinct culture, formed and nurtured and perpetuated by the ongoing interaction of leaders and congregants. In addition, every church culture has a life of its own.

A Church Called Tov

The leaders guide the organization towards a particular culture. But they are not the only ones who have a say in that matter; the congregation too is involved in shaping the culture of the church.

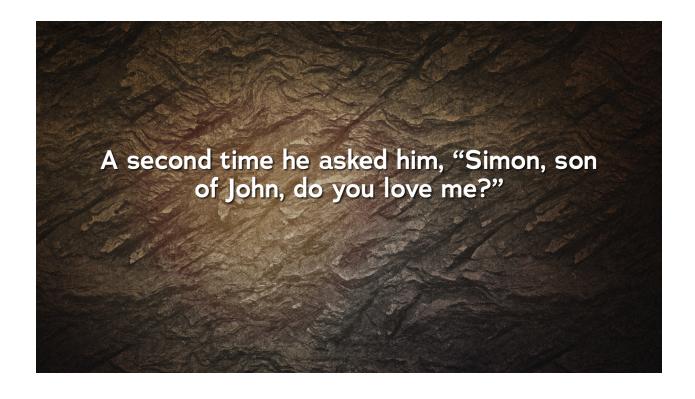
A Church Called Tov

So though it is true that leaders lead and thus have a decisive and sometimes overriding voice in the formation of the culture, it is more accurate to say that leaders and congregations form the church's culture together.

A Church Called Tov

When they had eaten breakfast, Jesus asked Simon Peter, "Simon, son of John, do you love me more than these?"

"Yes, Lord," he said to him, "you know that
I love you."
"Feed my lambs," he told him.

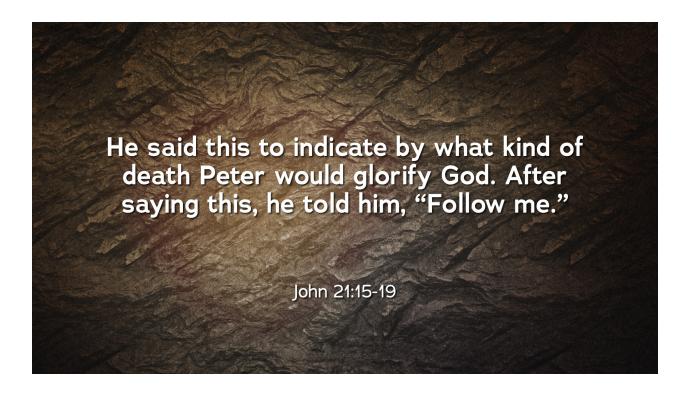


"Yes, Lord," he said to him, "you know that I love you."
"Shepherd my sheep," he told him.

He asked him the third time, "Simon, son of John, do you love me?"

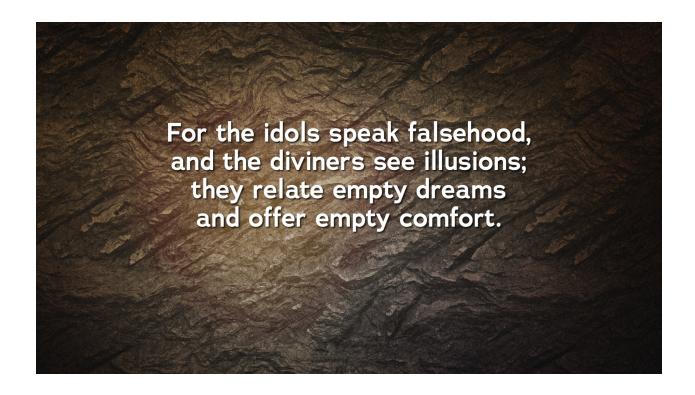
Peter was grieved that he asked him the third time, "Do you love me?" He said, "Lord, you know everything; you know that I love you." "Feed my sheep," Jesus said. "Truly I tell you, when you were younger, you would tie your belt and walk wherever you wanted.

But when you grow old, you will stretch out your hands and someone else will tie you and carry you where you don't want to go."





## We are all sheep in need of a shepherd



Therefore the people wander like sheep; they suffer affliction because there is no shepherd.

Zechariah 10:2

When he went ashore, he saw a large crowd and had compassion on them, because they were like sheep without a shepherd. Then he began to teach them many things.

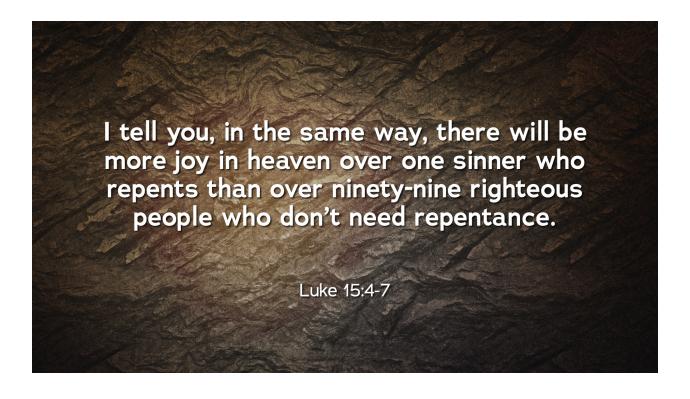
Mark 6:34

## Good shepherds seek restoration

"What man among you, who has a hundred sheep and loses one of them, does not leave the ninety-nine in the open field and go after the lost one until he finds it?

When he has found it, he joyfully puts it on his shoulders,

and coming home, he calls his friends and neighbors together, saying to them, 'Rejoice with me, because I have found my lost sheep!'



## Jesus invites us to co-shepherd with him in a spirit of love

If anyone says, "I love God," and yet hates his brother or sister, he is a liar. For the person who does not love his brother or sister whom he has seen cannot love God whom he has not seen.

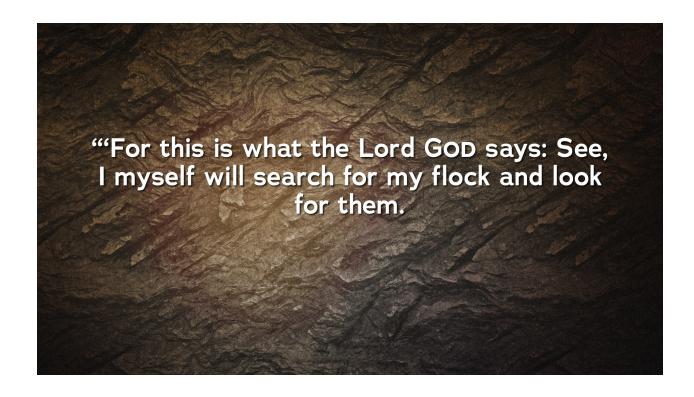
And we have this command from him: The one who loves God must also love his brother and sister.

1 John 4:20-21



## **Reflection Questions**

- 1. What does it look like to love God's sheep?
- 2. Who is Jesus inviting you to shepherd?
- 3. Where is Jesus inviting you to shepherd?



As a shepherd looks for his sheep on the day he is among his scattered flock, so I will look for my flock.

I will rescue them from all the places where they have been scattered on a day of clouds and total darkness.

I will bring them out from the peoples, gather them from the countries, and bring them to their own soil. I will shepherd them on the mountains of Israel, in the ravines, and in all the inhabited places of the land.

I will tend them in good pasture, and their grazing place will be on Israel's lofty mountains. There they will lie down in a good grazing place; they will feed in rich pasture on the mountains of Israel.

I will tend my flock and let them lie down.
This is the declaration of the Lord God.

I will seek the lost, bring back the strays, bandage the injured, and strengthen the weak, but I will destroy the fat and the strong. I will shepherd them with justice.

Ezekiel 34:11-16