

# Sheep of Heaven

Know that the LORD Himself is God; It is He who has made us, and not we ourselves; We are His people and the sheep of His pasture. ~Psalm 100:3

One of the beautiful concepts of faith is that we are the sheep of God, and that he will take care of us forever. It is hard to take the worldly sheep as examples of living, for we think we are so much smarter than they are.

But in reality we are just sheep, and Jesus is our shepherd. He knows where the green pastures are. He knows where the watering holes are and when we need to drink. And he knows where we should go.

The problem we Christians have is thinking we know more than God knows. Humility is a hard thing for all Christians, for we all think we know more than those proverbial sheep. The problem is that is our problem. We don't. It's simply about trust and love. We try to make it much more complicated.

A sheep farmer is tending his flock when a city slicker rolls up in his BMW, hops out and asks, "Hey, if I tell you exactly how many sheep you have, can I take one?" The farmer nods, so the city slicker opens his laptop, calls up some satellite photos, runs some algorithms, and announces, "You have 1,432 sheep."

Impressed, the farmer says, "You're right. Go ahead and take one." So the city slicker loads one of the animals into the backseat of the car. "Now," says the farmer, "I'll bet all my sheep against your car that I can tell you what you do for a living."

A gaming sort, the city slicker says, "Sure."

"You're a consultant," says the farmer.

"Wow!" says the consultant. "How'd you know?"

"Well," says the farmer, "you come from nowhere even though I never asked you to. You drive a flash car, and wear a smart suit. You told me something I already knew. And you don't know anything about my business. Now give me back my dog!"

Like the very first couple, Adam and Eve, when we think we know more than we know, we find out the hard way we don't. God wants to lead us, but in order for that to happen, we must take on the qualities of Heaven's new and improved sheep.

The very first quality we must have is to listen to the Shepherd's voice. Of course, Jesus is the Great Shepherd, and we as his sheep must pray all the time. Listening in prayer, and in the course of life, to the guidance of the shepherd is the hardest thing we do as Christians.

Sometimes we don't think he speaks in a way we can understand. But he does. He speaks through the Holy Spirit. He speaks through people. He speaks through the scriptures. He

speaks in such a variety of ways that we must be on the alert for the ways in which he actually communicates.

Sheep are notoriously grounded. They eat grass with their head down, and if not for the guidance of the shepherd they will graze right off the side of a cliff.

So we need to hear the voice of the Shepherd saying not to go off that cliff. And when we fall, we need to be able to hear Him so He can rescue us.

The wonderful language of Psalm 23 helps us in knowing how to be blessed by our God. “He makes me lie down in green pastures. He leads me beside the still waters. He restores my soul.” From the image of the sheep fed and watered by our God to the eternal soul which God’s sheep possess, we have the help and life that only God’s sheep can find.

It is no accident that God chose the shepherds outside Bethlehem as the first ones to tell about the birth of Jesus, who was to be the Good Shepherd. We must not miss the irony of the rough, tough shepherds kneeling before the tiny newborn baby who was even at that moment their shepherd.

You, see, dear reader, as God’s sheep it is not how much we know, but who we know. It is about grazing in the lush green grass which heaven provides, and moving forward with other sheep in our flock under the leadership of Jesus, the great shepherd himself.

We must not be afraid, even in the most difficult and dangerous of circumstances, for our shepherd has the strength of lions and the wisdom of a thousand of the wisest professors. “Do not be afraid, little flock,” Jesus tells us, for your Father has chosen gladly to give you the kingdom.

So think sheep thoughts. Trust the Christ our shepherd. And move forward slowly, gently, step by step, together with the rest of the flock. Be sheep of heaven.