

"All We Like Sheep Have Gone Astray; we have turned every one to his own way; and the LORD hath laid on Him the iniquity of us all." Isaiah 53:6 KJV



Although they can be herded and directed, sheep will more willingly follow a bucket of feed. They flee and scatter at the slightest hint of danger. Contrary to popularly held beliefs, sheep rank very high on the animal intelligence scale. I think the lesson here is more directed to the fact that sheep are extremely food oriented. They will seek food and safety above all. You might say that they are “lust” driven. Sure you can frighten a sheep into running a certain direction, but they will follow more closely and willingly if led. They can learn to recognize faces and sounds and will remember them for years. A friend of mine recounted while visiting in Palestine, he attended an early morning shepherd’s coffee. Their herds mingled while they chatted and he wondered “How will they ever separate them?” One by one the shepherds rose, gave a call or whistle and he watched in amazement as each flock separated from the rest and followed their shepherd. Jesus said, *“My sheep hear My Voice, and I know them, and they follow me.”* Sheep have a strong sense of following a leader which is generally the first sheep to move. While street preaching may induce some folks to move in the direction of Truth, personal, one-on-one attention will produce more lasting and effective results. Christ said, *“Preach the Gospel to every creature.”* It indicates God’s concern for the individual. I am not opposed to street preaching in the slightest, and some strong-minded men are called by God to be “Jonah’s” and “Jeremiah’s.” Believers for the most part, however, tend to be timid and sensitive, but we can all be good neighbors and be ready to *“give an answer for the Hope that is in us.”* We need not all be “cowboy evangelists,” but we all need to stand firm and unwaveringly on the Truth. We must be instantly aware of and ready to lead any seeker into the Light of Truth. It’s one thing to be “in your face,” and it’s quite another to just “stick to your guns.” We need not flinch in the face of persecution, but don’t incite it through insensitive, aggressive behavior. Jesus was hated, because He spoke Truth and lived a sinless life, not because He was unkind and aggressive towards others. Yes, He did cleanse the Temple of merchants, but He was defending His Own House at the time. We can trust the Holy Spirit to lead us to know when we should be overt with the Gospel and when we should privately lead others to the Truth. The Gospel both saves and condemns which, rests entirely with the hearer. Don’t be afraid to speak Truth, but at the same be sensitive to the needs of others. Christ preached to the multitudes in parables, but expounded privately to His disciples. He warned the Pharisees openly, but went out of His way to have a private conversation with the Samaritan woman. To effectively *“preach the Gospel to every creature”* we must be sensitive to the Holy Spirit’s commands and leading from God’s Word and in our hearts. Sometimes Truth must be proclaimed openly, and at other times we must go out of our way to meet the sinner in private conversation. I must be *“all things to all men that I might by all means save some.”* Not every preacher need stand in a pulpit. Sometimes it’s a backyard fence, a bus seat, or a shopping cart. Know God’s Word. Be ready!

Like scattered sheep men run away,
And seek each one a diff’rent way,
But each must follow Christ, The Way,
If they would see Eternal Day. –CGP

Whose Voice do you follow and who is following yours? Many will follow from a distance so you may never know who is influenced by your life. *“Abstain from ALL appearance of evil.”*

“My sheep hear My Voice, and I know them, and they follow Me:” John 10:27 KJV