

Group Notes 3rd November 2024 – I am the Good Shepherd (and how to be a Good Follower)

Scriptures

John 10:14-15 I am the good shepherd. I know my own and my own know me, just as the Father knows me and I know the Father; and I lay down my life for the sheep.

Mark 12:30-31 'You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind, and with all your strength.' The second is this, 'You shall love your neighbour as yourself.' There is no other commandment greater than these.

Being a Good Sheep (Being a Good Follower of the Good Shepherd)

So what should we do day to day to be a good follower?

If you have flown you will know that part of the safety drill emphasises that if the aircraft depressurises and oxygen masks drop into lap – you put your own mask on first before helping others do so. If you do not look after yourself you are no use to anyone else.

In the same way the reading from Mark has an implied "Keep yourself in top condition before you can help your neighbour. Useful guideline is to spend 5% of you time and resources in keeping yourself fit to serve others – if you do not, you will burn out. It is not selfish to care for yourself in order to better serve others. You can be an example to others in self care - or a warning to others by burning out.

Taking each of the parts of Mark 12:30

Body

1 Corinthians 6:19 Do you not know that your bodies are temples of the Holy Spirit, who is in you, whom you have received from God? You are not your own; 20 you were bought at a price. Therefore honour God with your bodies.

1 Corinthians 12:12 There is one body, but it has many parts. The body of Christ has many parts - all are of equal value, if one part does not work then all suffer.

Do you believe this? Or is there a caveat you make when answering?
How do you deal with this gap between aspiration and reality

Heart (Relationships)

John 13:34 So now I am giving you a new commandment: Love each other. Just as I have loved you, you should love each other.

Matthew 25:38 'Lord, when did we see you a stranger and invite you in, or needing clothes and clothe you?

What difficulty or what obstacles do you have with living this day to day.
What strategies do you use to overcome these difficulties or obstacles?

Mind (Thinking)

Philippians 4:8

Finally, brothers, whatever is true, whatever is honourable, whatever is just, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is commendable, if there is any excellence, if there is anything worthy of praise, think about these things.

What do you think about most?

Are these thoughts helpful to serving God?

How could you train yourself to think the way Philippians suggests?

Soul (Relationship with God)

Matthew 16:26 For what will it profit a man if he gains the whole world and forfeits his soul? Or what shall a man give in return for his soul?

Repeating what I said earlier in the context of your relationship with God – to be of use to others we need to care for that relationship. Out of the 16 hours you are awake everyday - 5% of that time amounts to 48 minutes. A small investment to enhance your usefulness in carrying out God's work.

In the last few decades we have sacrificed quiet time with God for busyness. Instead of 'human beings we have turned in to human doings. Anyone know where that comes from? Roald Dahl The BFG.

Do you have time to listen to God?

Do you recognise that we have sacrificed quiet time with God?

How have we/could we reverse this trend?