

Pictures of the People of God

Seeing ourselves through God's Eyes.

Guided Growth with Pastor Keith @ CBC Sunday, Feb. 20th

Our Perspective is shaped by our Perception but Our Perception can be poisoned by deception!

Lies that are believed have great power over us. (2 Cor. 4:4) That's why it's important for us to see ourselves and others through God's eyes! The Bible reveals many different truths & pictures that enable us to do this.

(2 Cor. 4:6,7) Over the past few weeks we've learned that God sees us as: A Buried Treasure (Mt 13:44); A Precious Pearl (Mt 13:45,46); Clay in the hands of a master Potter. (Jer. 18:1-6; Is. 64:8); and a "Bride" engaged to Jesus (2 Cor. 11:2).

Part 5: God sees us as His Sheep! (Ps. 23; 103; Jn 10; 1 Pt 5:2)

1. This Picture describes our problems.

A. We are prone to "Wander." Is. 53:6 "All we like sheep have gone astray..."

1) Sheep are indiscriminate eaters and can be led astray by following their appetites.

Phil. 3:18,19 *"for many walk; ..who are the enemies of the Cross of Christ; whose God is their belly...who mind (phroneō: disposed, regard) earthly things."*

2) This is why the Shepherd goes after His lost sheep. Lk 15:3-7

B. We are Prone to "Poison." (False Doctrine/Deception)

1) Sheep have trouble differentiating between healthy and unhealthy plants.

a) The shepherd prepares the field they'll be grazing in by removing poison plants.

Ps. 23:5 *"Thou preparest a table before me..."*

b) That's why God challenges Pastors (shepherds) to "Preach God's Word" (2 Tim. 4:2-7)

C. We're Prone to "Predators"

1) Sheep have no natural defenses. (Their only security is the Shepherd!)

Ps. 23:5 *"thou preparest (arak': to order, arrange, furnish, battle) a table before me in the presence of mine enemies."*

a) David learned this personally. (1 Sam. 17:37)

1Pt 5:2-4,8,9 *"Feed the flock of God which is among you...8 Be sober...vigilant; because your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour"*

2) That's why Satan seeks to Infiltrate the flock to divide us from the Shepherd! Mt 7:15

D. We're prone to Division.

1) Sheep are natural "followers" so Satan seeks to infiltrate the flock with Bitterness/Rebellion:

1 Sam 15:23 *"rebellion is as the sin of witchcraft..."* Merî (rebellion) comes from mara (Bitterness) and Bitterness is infectious! (Heb. 12:15)

2) Satan tries to accomplish this through:

a) False Shepherds. Acts 20:28-30

(1) That's why we all need to know the scriptures! (Acts 17:11; 2 Tim. 2:15; Heb. 13:7,17)

"Remember them which rule over you, who have spoken unto you the word of God; whose faith follow, considering the end of their conversation."

b) False Followers. (Tares?) Ro 16:17-18 *"brethren, mark (skopeo: consider) them which cause divisions (dichostasi'a: disunion) and offences (skan'dalon: trap stick) to the doctrine ye have learned; and avoid them. (Ekklinō: shun) For they that are such serve not our Lord Jesus Christ, but their own belly; and by good words and fair speeches deceive the hearts of the simple."* (a'kakos: innocent, uninformed) (also Pr. 13:10; 22:10)

(1) Remember Korah's rebellion! Numbers 16

- (a) Korah (Dathan & Abiram) "took men" (vs 1)
- (b) Those "took" 250 others. vs 2
- (c) *"They Gathered together against Moses"* Vs 3
- (d) God publicly "tested" them (16-20) (See also 1 Cor. 11:18,19)
- (e) God publicly judged them. Vs 20-35
- (f) The infection spreads (vs 41) God sent a "Plague" that killed 14,700 more! Vs 49 (James 3:5,6)

E. We're Prone to Panic!

- 1) We're Easily *influenced!* Sheep are easily "spooked" and tend to react with herd mentality.
 - a) This tends to produce a "stampede effect" where others can get "caught up", confused and hurt. Korah (Numbers 16); Jesus' judgement before Pilate? Mt 27:22)
 - b) Most "church problems" can easily be resolved if we follow Christ's prescription. (Mt 18)
 - (1) Jesus addresses the inevitability of "offences" vs 7
 - (2) He shares the parable of the lost sheep. (vs 11-14)
 - (3) Gives directions on how to resolve offences. (15-17)
 - (4) Warns about the consequences of unforgiveness. (21-33)
 - (a) Our Pride keeps us from forgiveness / reconciliation.
 - (b) This inevitably "infects us" with bitterness.
 - (c) We tend to "infect" others. (Heb. 13:15)

2) We're easily *Infected!*

- a) Insects & mites lay eggs in head/facial wounds.
(Psoroptes ovis) which can easily spread when the sheep "get their heads together."
Pr 16:27-28 "*An ungodly man diggeth up evil: and in his lips there is as a burning fire. A forward man (Tahpukôt': from hapak meaning to overturn) soweth strife: and a whisperer separateth chief friends.*"
God refers to this as "*sowing seeds of discord*". Pr. 6:16-19
- b) Wise shepherds rub medicinal oil on their heads to prevent or kill mites that have already infected.
Ps. 23:5 "*Thou anointest my head with oil...*" Oil is a picture of the Holy Spirit. (Zech. 4:6)

F. We're also Prone to becoming "bloated."

- 1) This condition is called becoming "cast". (gasses in stomach cause bloating when on back)
- 2) Usually caused by being overweight (Heb 5:12-14) or having too much wool.
- 3) If they don't get help quickly, they can die within a day! Gal. 6:1

Conclusion: We, like sheep, are prone to:

- Wander (Get distracted and sidetracked) Jms 1:14-16
- Poison (Ingest unhealthy things) 1 Thes. 5:21,22
- Predators (Fall prey to evil/deceit) 2 Tim. 3:13
- Division (Often motivated by pride) 1 Cor 3:1-4
- Panic (Influenced/Infected) Heb. 12:15
- Bloat (Overtaken and overwhelmed) Gal. 6:1

Application: What's the solution to these Problems? *Staying Close to the Shepherd!*

Ps. 23:1 "*The LORD is my Shepherd; I shall not want!*" (*hāsēr'*: lack or fail)

1 Pt. 5:7 "*Casting all your cares upon Him, For he careth for you.*"

Next week we'll focus on the Provision God gives His Sheep to help them deal with these Problems!