

## Do You Love Me Pt 2 – Take Care of My Sheep

### Description

15 When they had eaten, Jesus said to Simon Peter, Simon, son of John, do you  
16 Again He said to him the second time, Simon, son of John, do you love Me [w  
17 He said to him the third time, Simon, son of John, do you love Me [with a d  
18 I assure you, most solemnly I tell you, when you were young you girded your  
19 He said this to indicate by what kind of death Peter would glorify God. And

John 21:15-19 AMPC

Jesus' second request to Peter was that he take care of his sheep. Now sheep are lambs that are over 1 years old. It should be clear to see some of the differences and challenges that arise when transitioning to caring from lambs to sheep. Sheep are older, they have developed a personality, life experiences to draw from, questionable social circles that they may find belonging in and be influenced by, and thick, dense, coarse wool that covers their body. Let's break down the importance/relevance of each of the characteristics that I mentioned earlier. Age, sheep can be stuck in their ways or believe that they have a better solution when it comes to how things are done. Their experiences in life have contributed to their worldview and reasoning which can sometimes make it difficult to learn and accept new/different things. Not everything that a sheep has learned is wrong, but it may not be best. Sheep are social animals that live in groups and feel more safe in numbers. When relating this to humans you can find behaviors such as "group think" which can cause people to struggle to develop independent ideas or leave comfort zones. Social groups and culture can make it difficult for people to find true freedom in trusting and walking with God. Culture and tradition can become a stronger influence than God's word. Last but not least, each of these factors can contribute to the development of thick, dense, and coarse wool that can develop over time if not properly maintained. Wool can act as a layer of protection from external elements such as the cold, and water, but when it is unkept and allowed to grow without maintenance, it can become a snare to the individual and become entangled in traps, wires/twigs, and become full of thorns and other debris. What was meant to protect can become an obstacle to the word of truth and love being able to penetrate to the areas that it needs to get to. This thick unkept wool that can possess so much filth and debris from the past, and negative experiences becomes an additional barrier to overcome for the healing hands of Christ and those that he sent into your life. People that are meant to help become damaged in the process of helping you as they attempt to walk with you through life's journey. We can become comfortable with the undue burden of carrying around defense mechanisms, mind structures, and behaviors that we were never meant to have if not for sin, immaturity, or other people's dysfunction wounding us. For Peter to take care of the sheep it would require him to build on the character traits and fruits of the spirit that were developed in caring for the lambs. The sheep would require Peter to abide in Jesus, and seek the Holy Spirit so that he would be able to meet the needs of the people. Taking care of Jesus' sheep would mean that Peter would have to take a holistic approach, and address the individual needs of the sheep in an effort to develop trust. Peter like us couldn't lean on his OWN understanding to address spiritual matters. A heart and mind of service first would be instrumental in taking care of sheep. When situations became difficult it would require a heart and mind posture adjustment for Peter that what he was doing for

Christ, and the salvation of the sheep, rather than for his personal satisfaction.

## Reflection Time

We must be aware that Jesus is intentional in his word choice and questions. Every command and question of Jesus is meant to cause us to self reflect, shift our focus/perspective from self to him. How well are you taking care of Jesus' sheep? Are you considering the needs and experiences of others as you walk out your journey with Christ, and your interactions with people? Are your actions, words, and behavior a reflection of your love for Christ? Assess your life and see if you're carrying wool that should have been sheaved, and what's contained in your wool. Ask Christ to help you no longer be a damage to yourself or others.

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1. Case Studies

### Tags

1. Book of John
2. Case Studies
3. Faith
4. Jesus
5. Lamb
6. Love
7. May 2024
8. obedience
9. Peter
10. Sheep

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