

## Feed My Lambs

**(John 21:15-17)** When they had finished breakfast, Jesus said to Simon Peter: “Simon son of John, do you love me more than these?” He replied to him: “Yes, Lord, you know I have affection for you.” He said to him: “Feed my lambs.” <sup>16</sup> Again he said to him a second time: “Simon son of John, do you love me?” He replied: “Yes, Lord, you know I have affection for you.” He said to him: “Shepherd my little sheep.” <sup>17</sup> He said to him a third time: “Simon son of John, do you have affection for me?” Peter became grieved that he asked him the third time: “Do you have affection for me?” So he said to him: “Lord, you are aware of all things; you know that I have affection for you.” Jesus said to him: “Feed my little sheep.”

Lambs are newborn sheep which drink their mother's milk. But Jesus wasn't talking about literal sheep. He was talking about feeding spiritual food to humans.

We feed milk to an infant human. They are the Lambs that Jesus was referring to. They are new to the spiritual food found in the Bible. We don't just hand them a Bible and ignore them. We first take them through the very basic information. (1Pe 2:2)



When they get a little older ("*little sheep*") we feed them baby food. They do not have teeth yet and cannot chew dense food. They would choke on it. (1Co 3:1, 2)



Then they eventually get teeth and can feed themselves solid food.



Jesus' instructions to Peter were about the first two, who are unable to feed themselves. He wanted to make sure that they were fed the appropriate spiritual food for their spiritual age, that is to say, the proper food at *"the proper time."* (Mt 24:45)

But what about the sheep who only wants to be fed and doesn't want to feed himself? Paul spoke about such ones:

**(Hebrews 5:11-14)** We have much to say about him, and it is difficult to explain, because you have become dull in your hearing. <sup>12</sup> For although by now you should be teachers, you again need someone to teach you from the beginning the elementary things of the sacred pronouncements of God, and you have gone back to needing milk, not solid food. <sup>13</sup> For everyone who continues to feed on milk is unacquainted with the word of righteousness, for he is a young child. <sup>14</sup> But solid food belongs to mature people, to those who through use have their powers of discernment trained to distinguish both right and wrong.

In addition to those who never want to stop being fed, there are also those, like the Governing Body of Jehovah's Witnesses (GB), who don't want to stop feeding the sheep even after they have matured and are ready to feed themselves. Their actions are fulfilled in Christ's illustration of the cultivators. (Mt 21:33-41; Mr 12:1-9; Lu 20:9-16) Were those cultivators given the job of cultivating the landowner's crop? Yes. Did they cultivate the landowner's crop? Yes. Does that mean that the landowner is happy with them? No. What will the owner of the vineyard do? *"He will come and kill those cultivators."* (Lu 20:16; 2Pe 2:3)

The directions Christ gave his apostles were to make disciples and baptize them. (Mt 28:19) He did not tell them to keep feeding his adult sheep, or to keep telling them what to do, how to think, and to direct every aspect of their worship. In that situation the sheep are followers of those men. But Christ wants them to be his followers. (Mt 23:10)

Just as the cultivators wanted to keep the crop in the vineyard for themselves after it had matured, the GB want to keep the sheep under their control even after they have become mature Christians and no longer need milk. But only one person should be between Jehovah and ourselves.

**(1 Timothy 2:5)** For there is one God, and one mediator between God and men, a man, Christ Jesus,

**(Matthew 23:10)** Neither be called leaders, for your Leader is one, the Christ.

**(John 14:6)** Jesus said to him: "I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me.

**(Matthew 23:8)** But you, do not you be called Rabbi, for one is your Teacher, and all of you are brothers.

**(2 Corinthians 1:24)** Not that we are the masters over your faith, but we are fellow workers for your joy, for it is by your faith that you are standing.

**(Matthew 7:15)** “Be on the watch for the false prophets who come to you in sheep’s covering, but inside they are ravenous wolves.

**(Luke 21:8)** He said: “Look out that you are not misled, for many will come on the basis of my name, saying, ‘I am he,’ and, ‘The due time is near.’ Do not go after them.

**(Matthew 24:23-25)** “Then if anyone says to you, ‘Look! Here is the Christ,’ or, ‘There!’ do not believe it. <sup>24</sup> For false Christs and false prophets will arise and will perform great signs and wonders so as to mislead, if possible, even the chosen ones. <sup>25</sup> Look! I have forewarned you.

**(Mark 13:21-23)** “Then, too, if anyone says to you, ‘See! Here is the Christ,’ or, ‘See! There he is,’ do not believe it. <sup>22</sup> For false Christs and false prophets will arise and will perform signs and wonders to lead astray, if possible, the chosen ones. <sup>23</sup> You, then, watch out. I have told you all things beforehand.

**(Luke 17:23)** And people will say to you, ‘See there!’ or, ‘See here!’ Do not go out or chase after them.

**(2 Peter 2:1-3)** However, there also came to be false prophets among the people, as there will also be false teachers among you. These will quietly bring in destructive sects, and they will even disown the owner who bought them, bringing speedy destruction upon themselves. <sup>2</sup> Furthermore, many will follow their brazen conduct, and because of them the way of the truth will be spoken of abusively. <sup>3</sup> Also, they will greedily exploit you with counterfeit words. But their judgment, decided long ago, is not moving slowly, and their destruction is not sleeping.

**(Deuteronomy 18:20-22)** “If any prophet presumptuously speaks a word in my name that I did not command him to speak or speaks in the name of other gods, that prophet must die. <sup>21</sup> However, you may say in your heart: “How will we know that Jehovah has not spoken the word?” <sup>22</sup> When the prophet speaks in the name of Jehovah and the word is not fulfilled or does not come true, then Jehovah did not speak that word. The prophet spoke it presumptuously. You should not fear him.’

**(Isaiah 2:22)** For your own sakes, quit trusting in mere man, Who is only the breath in his nostrils. Why should he be taken into account?

**(Psalm 146:3, 4)** Do not put your trust in princes Nor in a son of man, who cannot bring salvation. <sup>4</sup> His spirit goes out, he returns to the ground; On that very day his thoughts perish.

**(Jeremiah 17:5a)** This is what Jehovah says: "Cursed is the man who puts his trust in mere humans,

**(Colossians 3:23)** Whatever you are doing, work at it whole-souled as for Jehovah, and not for men,

**(2 Timothy 3:16, 17)** All Scripture is inspired of God and beneficial for teaching, for reproving, for setting things straight, for disciplining in righteousness, <sup>17</sup> so that the man of God may be fully competent, **completely equipped** for every good work.

Christ asked Peter to feed his "*Lambs*" and *Little sheep*". (Jn 21:15-17) "*Lambs*" are baby sheep. *Little sheep*" are a bit older but are still reliant on their mother. These new ones to Christ's teachings are fed the appropriate spiritual food for their spiritual age.

We too began with the basics.

**(Matthew 4:4)** But he answered: "It is written: 'Man must live, not on bread alone, but on every word that comes from Jehovah's mouth.'"

**(Luke 4:4)** But Jesus answered him: "It is written, 'Man must not live on bread alone.'"

**(Hebrews 6:1a)** Therefore, now that we have moved beyond the primary doctrine about the Christ, let us press on to maturity,

But to mature spiritually we must do our own research and feed ourselves the deeper things from the Bible, from which we are "*completely equipped*". (2Ti 3:17)

Have you ever seen a child nursing on its mother when it looks far too old to be doing so? I imagine that is how God and Christ view those that continue to rely on others for their spiritual food.

### **How Will You Answer?**

So how will you answer God when judgment day comes:

Why have you placed men between yourself and Christ Jesus, My installed mediator? (1Ti 2:5)

Will you say:

They said that they were Your representatives.

You were given clear instructions in My Bible that there is only one mediator and that if you want to come to Me you must go through him, and only him. (1Ti 2:5; Jn 14:6)

But they said that we had to follow their interpretations and instructions in order to please You.

Why did you listen to them when I clearly told you not to follow any man? (Isa 2:22; Ps 146: 3, 4; Jer 17:5; Ac 5:29)

Because they said that those scriptures do not apply to them.

No one is exempt from My commandments.

But they seemed like such good men, and they did so many good deeds.

You were warned multiple times that false Christs would do many powerful works in my Son's name, and skillfully wrap themselves in sheep's covering to appear righteous. (Mt 7:22; 24:24; Mr 7:9; 13:22; Mt 7:15; Eph 4:14) And you were repeatedly given the command: "*Do not go after them*" (Lu 21:8; Mt 24:23; Mr 13:21; Lu 17:23) So why did you not obey?

Because they are the ones who taught me the message of Your Son.

As they ought to have done. (Lu 17:10) But you are no longer a lamb or little sheep are you? (Jn 21:15-17) You are a mature sheep who should be consuming solid food directly from my Word which gives you everything you need. (2Ti 3:17) But you continued to rely on milk from a teacher instead. (He 5:12) Why?

Because they said that I must continue to consume their milk in order to please You.

You were told, were you not, that If a blind man guides a blind man that both will fall into a pit? (Mt 15:4) Yet you continued to blindly follow those false Christs, against the many commandments not to. (Mt 24:23-25) Therefore you will reap what you have sown. (Ga 6:7)

But I thought I was doing the right thing!

No, you were not thinking at all. As you repeatedly said, you were letting those men think for you. (Ac 4:19) Because of their brazen conduct they will receive what is coming to them. (2Pe 2:2; Mt 7:22, 23) And by your own words you too will be judged. (Lu 19:22)

(see my article "Are You Worshiping Jehovah Acceptably? - Expanded")

What do *you* think?

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