

Recap of 3a Worksheet: Keller starts in chapter three about sheep: “because of their very makeup it is almost impossible for them to be made to lie down unless four requirements are met.” These four requirements are:

- 1) Free of all fear
- 2) Free from friction with others of their kind
- 3) Free from tormenting pests (flies or parasites)
- 4) Free from hunger

The only one that can fulfill these requirements is the shepherd.

On our last worksheet (3a) we looked at the first two (#1 & 2) requirements in detail. This worksheet continues with the last two (#3 & 4).

Free from Tormenting Pests:

Keller makes this statement in the middle of page 51 in regards to “pests” in our lives, “Similarly in the Christian life there are bound to be many small irritations. There are the annoyances of petty frustrations and ever-recurring disagreeable experiences.”

Many times the “irritants” in our lives are other people who we find to be difficult. So how do we deal with difficult people? Let’s look at the Scriptures to guide us.

In Luke 6:27-31 what does Jesus tell us we should do in dealing with these type people?

In Philippians 2:3-4 how does Paul express this similar advice?

What does Proverbs 12:16 tell us that a prudent man does in regards to an insult?

Putting all this together, the way to deal with difficult people is to love them, pray for them, expect to give rather than to receive, maintain a humble spirit, and relate to them in patience and kindness. All this cannot be done in our own strength; we have to be strengthened by the Holy Spirit to guide us. He is the only One who will be able to calm the sheep by dealing with the irritants in their lives.

Free from Hunger

Keller states in the middle of page 54 that,

“A hungry, ill fed sheep is ever on its feet, on the move, searching for another scanty mouthful of forage to try and satisfy its gnawing hunger. Such sheep are not contented, they do not thrive, they are of no use to themselves nor to their owners. They languish and lack vigor and vitality.”

We have all experienced the emotions and discontent that comes from being hungry. When we are hungry the only thing we can think about is the gnawing in our stomach and our mind focuses on obtaining food. We are not content and we are of no use to ourselves, others nor to our Shepherd.

Spiritually our souls need the same feeding. We must have green pastures to survive, keep our focus and to be useful for the Shepherd. Green pastures have to be created by God because our life without Him is a dry desert without any greenery in sight. He cleans out the rough and rocky land in our lives and plows up the soil to prepare it for seeding and watering.

What does 2 Corinthians 3:17-18 tells us about God’s work in believers?

What does Romans 12:1-2 tell us is the response that we should have to God in regards to His mercy?

As God transforms us into being Christ-like, He must demolish the sins in our lives that make our souls hunger for something other than Him. Our response should be opening ourselves up to Him and feeding upon His Word. We must not conform to the pattern of this world because it will just leave us hungry. Instead we must be transformed by the renewing of our minds.

How did David pray for this transformation in Psalm 51:9-11?