

Fake news and examples-

Point Which voice are you listening to, can you tell the difference?

"Fake news is a type of yellow journalism that consists of deliberate misinformation or hoaxes spread via traditional print and broadcast news media or online social media.[1] Fake news is written and published with the intent to mislead in order to gain financially or politically, often with sensationalist, exaggerated, or patently false headlines that grab attention."

In the 1200s BC, Rameses the Great spread lies and propaganda portraying the Battle of Kadesh as a stunning victory for the Egyptians; he depicted scenes of him smiting his foes during the battle on the walls of nearly all his temples. The treaty between the Egyptians and the Hittites, however, reveals that the battle was actually a stalemate.

Greenland was portrayed as a great place to live by those who wanted to settle on it.

"During the 980s, explorers led by Erik the Red set out from Iceland and reached the southwest coast of Greenland, found the region uninhabited, and settled there. Erik named the island Greenland "He named the land Greenland, saying that people would be eager to go there if it had a good name."

We need in our lives to figure out who we allow to lead us.

Shepherd's of our day in ANE culture (and modern day middle east)

III- One Man and His Dog

One Man and His Dog is a BBC television series in the United Kingdom featuring sheepdog trials; it demonstrates the skills of the shepherd and their trained sheep-dogs. This bond is familiar to both UK and Australian residents. In Australia Kelpie's are renowned from jumping onto the backs of sheep and driving the flock from this position.

In our modern day shepherds often ride horses, four wheel off road vehicles, some even use helicopters!

This is far from the biblical image of a shepherd.

"Jesus changed the image to that of the shepherd and the sheep. Why? Because to the Jewish mind, a "shepherd" was any kind of leader, spiritual or political. People looked on the king and prophets as shepherds. Israel was privileged to be "the flock of the Lord" (Ps. 100:3). For background, read Isaiah 56:9-12; Jeremiah 23:1-4; 25:32-38; Ezekiel 34; and Zechariah 11. Some of the greatest people named in the Bible were shepherds by occupation: Abel, the patriarchs, Moses, and David, to name a few. Even today in the Holy Land, you may see shepherds leading flocks and revealing how intimately they know each sheep, its individual traits, and its special needs. Keep in mind that Jewish shepherds did not tend the sheep in order to slaughter them, unless they were used for sacrifice. Shepherds tended them that the sheep might give wool, milk, and lambs."- Warren W. Wiersbe

'Many people in the industrialized West (though not Australians!) are inclined to think of shepherds as sentimental beings, perhaps somewhat effeminate, with their arms full of cuddly lambs, and the English adjective 'good' does nothing to dissuade us from these misconceptions. But the shepherd's job was tiring, manly and sometimes dangerous. The word kalos suggests perhaps nobility or worth: the noble shepherd or the worthy shepherd '- D. A. Carson,

The context for using this parable- failure of the leaders to help those who God has touched

Jesus uses this illustration in direct response to the removal of the man born blind from the community by the leaders. The implication is clear. The leaders of the people are now being named by Jesus as "a thief and robber " at worst or acting as a "hired hand " at best. Given Jesus earlier comparisons to those who opposed him as having Satan for a father, it is most likely the first implication that Jesus means.

"The occasion for this lesson was the excommunication of the beggar from the synagogue (John 9:34). The false shepherds did not care for this man; instead, they mistreated him and threw him out. But Jesus, the Shepherd, came to him and took him in (John 9:35-38). Jesus was referring primarily to the religious leaders of that day (John 10:8). He was not condemning every prophet or servant of God who ever

ministered before He came to earth. The statement “are thieves and robbers” (not “were”) makes it clear that He had the present religious leaders in mind. They were not true shepherds nor did they have the approval of God on their ministry. They did not love the sheep, but instead exploited them and abused them. The beggar was a good example of what the “thieves and robbers” could do” - Warren W. Wiersbe

In his expansion of this illustration, Jesus uses familiar imagery for the people to understand.

First, he touches on how shepherds would operate. In this style of shepherding, the sheep of many flocks would often be kept in one pen, then in the morning, the shepherds would arrive and start calling the sheep. The sheep, knowing the voice of their shepherd respond, and then follow the one they trust.

"The true shepherd comes in through the door, and the porter recognizes him. The thieves and robbers could never enter through the door, so they have to climb over the wall and enter the fold through deception. But even if they did get in, they would never get the sheep to follow them, for the sheep follow only the voice of their shepherd. The false shepherds can never lead the sheep, so they must steal them away." - Warren W. Wiersbe

Then in direct opposite to methods used in Australia, the shepherds lead, not drives the flock. He talks to them, and they continue to follow his voice. The shepherd knows the flock by name, and he understands the idiosyncrasies of the sheep.

Their shepherd would often lead the flock to a distinct pasture, and then this area would have a section set aside for the evening, another pen for the sheets safety. During the day the shepherd would position himself at the entrance to this pen, at night, he would sleep on the entrance way, making himself the "gate" by which the sheep entered and exited. During daylight hours, if they felt threatened they could retreat to this pen behind the shepherd, when feeling safe they could exit to the pasture land to feed.

"After a shepherd's flock has been separated from the other sheep, he takes them to pasture. Near the pasture is an enclosure for the sheep. The shepherd takes his place in the doorway or entrance and functions as a door or gate. The sheep can go out to the pasture in front of the enclosure, or if afraid, they can retreat into the security of the enclosure. The spiritual meaning is that Jesus is the only Gate by which people can enter into God's provision for them "- Edwin A. Blum

"The sheepfold was usually an enclosure made of rocks, with an opening for the door. The shepherd (or a porter) would guard the flock, or flocks, at night by lying across the opening. It was not unusual for several flocks to be sheltered together in the same fold. In the morning, the shepherds would come, call their sheep, and assemble their own flocks. Each sheep recognized his own master's voice."-Warren Wiersbe

We often use symbols of Jesus and sheep, but sadly the images fail to give true meaning to what Jesus was saying. Regarding the promise for us now because of the mighty sacrifice he gave. We have relegated this image to that of Children's books; nothing could be further from the truth.

Shepherds were tough people, who could deal with every eventuality, but also caring for the well being of the flock was their responsibility. David before he becomes King makes this point to King Saul

1 Samuel 17:34-37 (NLT) "But David persisted. "I have been taking care of my father's sheep and goats," he said. "When a lion or a bear comes to steal a lamb from the flock, 35 I go after it with a club and rescue the lamb from its mouth. If the animal turns on me, I catch it by the jaw and club it to death. 36 I have done this to both lions and bears, and I'll do it to this pagan Philistine, too, for he has defied the armies of the living God! 37 The Lord who rescued me from the claws of the lion and the bear will rescue me from this Philistine!"

Jesus as a shepherd is a powerful image of one who is willing to give his life to protect the sheep!

Jesus claim to be God- Good/ Worthy!

While we have translated the word was “Good” shepherd, it can also be extended to cover the English idea of a “Worthy Shepherd”, by its usage Jesus is playing on the idea of Divinity, for only God is good.

Mark 10:17-18 (NLT) As Jesus was starting out on his way to Jerusalem, a man came running up to him, knelt down, and asked, “Good Teacher, what must I do to inherit eternal life?”<sup>18</sup> “Why do you call me good?” Jesus asked. “Only God is truly good.

"This is the fourth of our Lord's I AM statements in John's Gospel (John 6:35; 8:12; 10:9). Certainly in making this statement, He is contrasting Himself to the false shepherds who were in charge of the Jewish religion of that day. He had already called them “thieves and robbers,” and now He would describe them as “hirelings.” The word translated “good” means “intrinsically good, beautiful, fair.” It describes that which is the ideal, the model that others may safely imitate. Our Lord's goodness was inherent in His nature. To call Him “good” is the same as calling Him “God” (Mark 10:17–18).” Warren W. Wiersbe

Jesus promises that he will give his life for them, not the other way around, the claim will be backed with his resurrection.- Victorious living.

Jesus is calling those who now recognise they are trapped within a dead religion of Judaism to follow his voice and step into the real life that God promises. This life is demonstrated by Jesus ability to lay down his life at the right time and to TAKE IT UP AGAIN. Jesus resurrection is proof that his sacrifice was found worthy, and achieved all it set out to do. He has achieved the victory over death and sin, and now offers a proper life, one we can live in victory. He gives us, Victorious living!

"Since the people did not understand His symbolic language, Jesus followed the illustration with an application (John 10:7–10). Twice He said, “I am the Door.” He is the Door of the sheepfold and makes it possible for the sheep to leave the fold (the religion of Judaism) and to enter His flock. The Pharisees threw the beggar out of the synagogue, but Jesus led him out of Judaism and into the flock of God! As the Door, Jesus delivers sinners from bondage and leads them into

freedom. They have salvation! This word "saved" means "delivered safe and sound." It was used to say that a person had recovered from severe illness, come through a bad storm, survived a war, or was acquitted at court. Some modern preachers want to do away with an "old-fashioned" word like "saved," but Jesus used it! "-Warren W. Wiersbe

Irresistible grace- those who are called.

Before we explore this living further, it's worth noting this "voice of the shepherd" is part of the idea behind the theology of Calvin that God draws those that are his into the Kingdom. We call this Irresistible Grace.

Irresistible Grace:

When God calls his elect into salvation, they cannot resist. God offers to all people the gospel message. This is called the external call. But to the elect, God extends an internal call and it cannot be resisted. This call is by the Holy Spirit who works in the hearts and minds of the elect to bring them to repentance and regeneration whereby they willingly and freely come to God. Some of the verses used in support of this teaching are Romans 9:16 where it says that "it is not of him who wills nor of him who runs, but of God who has mercy"; Philippians 2:12-13 where God is said to be the one working salvation in the individual; John 6:28-29 where faith is declared to be the work of God; Acts 13:48 where God appoints people to believe; and John 1:12-13 where being born again is not by man's will, but by God's.

"All that the Father gives Me shall come to Me, and the one who comes to Me I will certainly not cast out," (John 6:37).

What is often missed with this theological understanding is that God never compels those who come so they are unwilling, his voice becomes that of a trusted one, in which we will follow.

This is because Jesus knows his sheep- Their names, their needs, and what is best for them.

"He knows His sheep (vv. 14–15). In the Gospel of John, the word know means much more than intellectual awareness. It speaks of an

intimate relationship between God and His people (see John 17:3). The Eastern shepherd knows his sheep personally and therefore knows best how to minister to them.”- Warren W. Wiersbe

"That the shepherd knows his sheep, and the sheep know their shepherd, is presupposed by vv. 3–4; this mutual knowledge is precisely what ensures that they follow their shepherd, and only him. But the intimacy of this relationship is mirrored on the intimacy between the Father and the Son (cf. also notes on 15:9–11); indeed, the intimacy of the sheep/shepherd relationship is grounded upon the intimacy between the Father and the Son “-D. A. Carson

They trust and follow and live life to the full. Leave the "apparent safety" of dead religion and start to live life, wake up to the reality of God's promise.

"When you go through "the Door," you receive life and you are saved. As you go "in and out," you enjoy abundant life in the rich pastures of the Lord. His sheep enjoy fullness and freedom. Jesus not only gave His life for us, but He gives His life to us right now!"- Warren W. Wiersbe

This intimacy is a reflection of that between Jesus and his Father.

Challenge.

To know and be known

Who are you, how has your identity been defined? Who would you describe yourself as to the people you meet, what would you reveal as you became more intimate with people, and trusted them.

Levels of trust.- How are they defined in life?

"He also knows our natures. While all sheep are alike in their essential nature, each sheep has its distinctive characteristics; and the loving shepherd recognises these traits. One sheep may be afraid of high places, another of dark shadows. A faithful shepherd will

consider these special needs as he tends the flock. Have you ever noticed how different the 12 Apostles were from one another? Peter was impulsive and outspoken, while Thomas was hesitant and doubting. Andrew was a “people person” who was always bringing somebody to Jesus, while Judas wanted to “use” people to get their money for himself. Jesus knew each of the men personally, and He knew exactly how to deal with them. Because He knows our natures, He also knows our needs. Often, we do not even know our own needs! Psalm 23 is a beautiful poetic description of how the Good Shepherd cares for His sheep. In the pastures, by the waters, and even through the valleys, the sheep need not fear, because the shepherd is caring for them and meeting their needs. If you connect Psalm 23:1 and 6, you get the main theme of the poem: “I shall not want ... all the days of my life.”- Warren W. Wiersbe

Whose voice do you listen to, it is often stated: "Garbage in, Garbage out". What you allow to influence you is how you view life. Where are your sources?Where is your time spent?

There is a good reason we should try to focus on the wholesome and good things of life. Not to deny reality but to balance the ravages of sin in this world with the blessings of those who follow the path of Shalom, we should seek to be with those who also follow this way. It is also why Jesus encourages us in ministry to do things as a team not by our selves, for in this team we find encouragement.

What are the hallmarks of those who can recognise the voice of God, What is the life that God promises us to?

"The thief, that is, a false shepherd, cares only about feeding himself, not building up the flock. He steals sheep in order to kill them, thus destroying part of the flock. But Christ has come to benefit the sheep. He gives life which is not constricted but overflowing. The thief takes life; Christ gives it to the full."Edwin A. Blum

A life that has guilt removed from it, a life that has shown us a way to remove ourselves from shame.

A life that has a growing sense of peace within their life.



One that has fewer issues caused by themselves

One that creates time to help others

One that desires to see "heaven come to earth."

"Within the metaphorical world, life ... to the full suggests fat, contented, flourishing sheep, not terrorized by brigands; outside the narrative world, it means that the life Jesus' true disciples enjoy is not to be construed as more time to fill (merely 'everlasting' life), but life at its scarcely imagined best, life to be lived." D. A. Carson

Let us become the people he has called us to, and live a life of victorious living.