



## LAURA FARRAR

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### FEED THE SHEEP

*But when He saw the multitudes, He was moved with compassion for them, because they were weary and scattered, like sheep having no shepherd.*

~Matthew 9:36 (NKJV)

**I** imagine a group of people who just pulled into their driveways after an eight-hour workday and a two-hour commute. Do they look weary? Maybe a little tired, stressed, and burdened?

If we look around, we'll see that the world is full of beaten, battered, anxious people. Having no hope can do that to a person. Even our churches are crowded with miserable, worried Christians. Can you picture living your entire life feeling that way? Wouldn't you want some hope?

There are many times in the Bible where God uses the symbolism of mankind being sheep. Those sheep, or people, are all around the world, starving for wholesome material, both written and spoken.

A lot of people search for meaning in life through work, family and entertainment. What are they reading? Take a look at the latest *People* magazine. Isn't it pop culture, scandals, and who's cheating on whom? Do we even have to think about why our nation is in turmoil?

Our writing can tell the good news and heal sicknesses of the heart and mind. Minister to the flocks. Can you see that they're dying? Feed those sheep!

All sheep need help and guidance. I love the mental image of God holding the lambs in His arms, carrying us close to His heart. Just as real sheep tip over and need a shepherd to set them upright, we need Jesus to pick us up when we fall. And some of us fall often!

Luke 10:3 says, "Go your way; behold I send you out as lambs among wolves." Let's paraphrase that verse. God is saying to writers: "Get to work writing! I've chosen you! I will send your manuscripts into the publishing market, which will not be kind to you or your manuscript." Look closely and you'll see that we are not the ones to submit manuscripts; God is! We are not in control of their destiny. Now doesn't that give you more confidence?

Jeremiah 23:1 (NIV) says, "Woe to the shepherds who are destroying and scattering the sheep of my pasture," declares the Lord." Doesn't that verse say it all? The world has been led astray. Everybody's worshipping something - if it's not God, it's something else. And these days, people are searching for anything that can fill them inside.

So are we writing edifying things to feed the

world's souls? TV, radio, books, and magazines bombard us with images that are dark, depressing, and hopeless. Yet we have the most encouraging message of all to share - God loves you! Our mission is to inspire and tell both Christians and those that don't yet know God.

Readers around the world have lots to choose from, but most of it is not wholesome. I work at a library, and I am appalled at 99 percent of the teen section. Fiction and nonfiction are overflowing with offensive language, morals, plot schemes, and graphics. There needs to be some light. There is a growing market of Christian teen fiction, but you rarely see any of it outside the Christian bookstore.

We are called to higher standards of entertainment and teaching. Not trash, but treasure. We know the Great Commission found in Matthew 28:16-20, "Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations..." and in Acts 1:8, "and you shall be witnesses to Me ... to the end of the earth."

So are we pursuing foreign publications? Have the nations heard of God's love from us? Are we speaking, writing, and standing up for those less fortunate? Everyone needs at least one issue on their heart to pursue and make an impact - whether it's broken homes, politics, abandoned animals, abortion, foster children, or victims of natural disasters. Have we taken a stand? My prayer is that what breaks God's heart will break mine too. His pain becomes ours.

It comes down to this: it's our field to leave or harvest. Are we willing to work hard? Because we can send a flicker of hope to a dying world!

How exactly do we accomplish this? As writers who are Christians, we have the power to write God's answer to the world through the Holy Spirit. He provides all the strength to get it done - if we can find the heart and time to pursue it.

Do you have a heart for lost sheep? God can help you lead them home.

~ © Laura Farrar

#### **Don't know where to start? Some of our goals should be to:**

- \*get clean stories published in secular magazines
- \*have clean books published with secular publishers
- \*write profiles of Christian celebrities and athletes

#### **We can also:**

- \*write profiles of churches and ministries for community magazines or newspapers
- \*write for Sunday school take-home papers
- \*write for or through our churches (newsletter or for a specific ministry: teens, children's Bible clubs, music, etc.)