

Of Sheep and Sheople

*My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me
– John 10:27 –*

I had the unique boon as a youngster to have a father who, due to both his genetic disposition and his abundant life experience, modeled something before my young eyes on a daily basis that so many from succeeding generations struggle to apprehend. I speak of independent and individualistic thought.

My father was from “the greatest generation” of World War II service men. As the cultural revolution of the 1960’s continued to transform our society well into the late 1970’s he refused to be swayed by the group think that appeared to be winning the day. I can still hear him “arguing” with the News Anchor on the television every night, as well as debating with some of my more liberal-thinking public school teachers at open houses. He had personally contributed to the greatness of America. He knew that America was exceptional, and he wasn’t about to let any “hippie” or “pinko” tear her down in the sight of his children. His sage advice to my brothers and me to navigate the transformative cultural waters is as pithy as it is simple to recall. “Don’t follow the sheep,” he would say. It meant don’t dress like, don’t act like, don’t think like, and don’t mindlessly emulate the crowd. Be an individual in every way, and especially in what you believe.

Fast forward to 2021. Collectivism is being promoted by political power brokers and embraced by multitudes. What started in the 1960’s is culminating before our eyes. Individual freedoms in many areas have already been curtailed, with speech being the current liberty in the crosshairs of cultural architects. If speech can be controlled, then the most vital of individualistic freedoms – that of thought – is on her deathbed. The masses are rolling over, either unwittingly influenced or unwilling to contend for the biblical principle of individualism that built the nation. Our fellow countrymen, and sadly so many in the church of Jesus Christ, are finding it easier to “follow the sheep” and participate in the group think than to remain steadfastly standing against the devilish philosophies that are assaulting our thought life and preparing the world for the Man of Sin.

It is Bible truth that all of us are just sheep, after all. We were designed to be led. But we are individual lambs, precious and uniquely designed by our Maker – not just carbon copies of others in the flock. So, the question becomes, who are we following? Stop for a moment and listen. The Good Shepherd’s voice can always be heard by His own, even above the noise and clamor of the surrounding environs or the bustling activity of the flock. Take my dad’s advice. “Don’t follow the sheep.” Exactly. Follow the Shepherd.

-- D. Murcek