We Are No Longer the Blind Ones

I recently came across an article from an obscure website known as The Peninsula, which describes itself as “Qatar’s Leading English Daily Newspaper.” The article was titled, “400 Sheep Fall Off Cliff in Turkey.” The text of the article reads like this: “Hundreds of sheep follow their leader off a cliff in eastern Turkey, plunging to their deaths this week while shepherds looked on in dismay. Four hundred sheep fell 15 meters to their deaths in a ravine in Van province near Iran but broke the fall of another 1,100 animals who survived, newspaper reports said yesterday. Shepherds from Ikizler village neglected the flock while eating breakfast, leaving the sheep to roam free, the Radikal daily said. The loss to local farmers was estimated at $74,000.” If you chuckled at this story being a piece of serious news you’re not alone, but at the same time it is still pretty sad to think that our sinful nature is characterized in scripture as “sheep-like.” As Isaiah 53:6 states, “All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned, every one, to his own way; and the Lord has laid on Him the iniquity of us all.” (NKJV)

In First Corinthians 12:2 we read an often overlooked reminder that is throughout scripture, which is the reminder of our former condition—“You know that you were Gentiles, carried away to these dumb idols, however you were led.” Before Paul goes on to illustrate the proper use, place, and unity attributed to spiritual gifts, he first reminds us of our former condition in hopes of exciting us with gratitude for our newfound mercies in God. Nevertheless, the focus of God’s heart is to cleanse us from the former bondage we all had before Christ, in order to guide us into all truth. Our former idols or bondages could never utter or give us the joy that we in our flesh ascribed to them. For every truth there is an anti-truth and for every gift of grace there is a counterfeit gift offered by a false god. And like the intention of God to use spiritual gifts to unite the body, our former idols or bondages will use false promises to divide by way of self-gratification through camouflaged temptations.

We all have the propensity to indulge in our former impulses only to fall down a cliff of misery and despair, and whether we realize it or not it is very likely that we can lead others off that same cliff. Today can be a day where we recognize our former selves and renounce, rebuke, crucify, and “…reckon yourselves to be dead indeed to sin, but alive to God in Christ Jesus our Lord.” (Romans 6:11) Brothers and sisters in Christ, our Lord and Savior is beckoning us to embrace His gifts of grace that we might impart edification and unity to the
body, bringing glory to our God “…that you may proclaim the praises of Him who called you out of darkness into His marvelous light…” (1 Peter 2:9)

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