

ANCHORS 6¹

Real Responsibility: Invest & Invite

We have now spent over half the semester looking at the first two anchors of Chi Alpha. We now take a turn to look at real responsibility. Real responsibility means recognizing the situations of people around you: your friends, the less fortunate, and the global world. It means investing in the lives and livelihoods of others, and inviting them not only into our own lives, but also into a

Christian walk of their own. Sometimes, we lack vision for why we should reach out to the lost people in our lives. By better understanding God's heart for the lost, we can better understand why real responsibility should be not just the task, but the joy, of every Christian.

Today we are reading the parable of the Shepherd with the lost sheep. Keep in mind that Jesus is telling the story in response to the Pharisee's grumbling and confusion over why Jesus befriends and spends time with sinners. This parable is Jesus' answer to their question: It matters to His Father, the one to whom they are lost! Consider that the story is told from the Shepherd's perspective and not the sheep's. Indeed, the sheep may not have even known he was lost! Instead, the heart of the parable is in the experience of the Shepherd through concern over losing a member of His flock, and His joy upon rescuing the sheep. Jesus tells us that He seeks after and saves the lost for two reasons: 1) When they are lost, His father's heart is grieved. 2) When they are recovered, His Father's heart is gladdened. So, if evangelism is about lessening God's sorrow, and bringing celebration to His heart, then we are called to reach out to ALL of His lost children- not just the ones we like, or the easily accessible, or those we think earned relationship with God. He wants to be reunited with every single man, woman, and child, whatever their situation, personality, or history. Will you care for the things your Father's heart cares for and join in this mission?

Luke 15:1-10, NIV

Now the tax collectors and sinners were all gathering around to hear Jesus. 2 But the Pharisees and the teachers of the law muttered, "This man welcomes sinners and eats with them." 3 Then Jesus told them this parable: 4 "Suppose one of you has a hundred sheep and loses one of them. Doesn't he leave the ninety-nine in the open country and go after the lost sheep until he finds it? 5 And when he finds it, he joyfully puts it on his shoulders 6 and goes home. Then he calls his friends and neighbors together and says, 'Rejoice with me; I have found my lost sheep.' 7 I tell you that in the same way there will be more rejoicing in heaven over one sinner who repents than over ninety-nine righteous persons who do not need to repent. 8 "Or suppose a woman has ten silver coins and loses one. Doesn't she light a lamp, sweep the house and search carefully until she finds it? 9 And when she finds it, she calls her friends and neighbors together and says, 'Rejoice with me; I have found my lost coin.' 10 In the same way, I tell you, there is rejoicing in the presence of the angels of God over one sinner who repents.

Pre-Article Questions:

1. If you were able to attend our large group worship service this week/past week, how did God speak to you through the worship or the message?
2. Have you ever lost something of value? What was the experience like?

Study Questions:

1. Why does Jesus tell these two parables? What question is he attempting to answer?
2. Who are the main characters in each story? How do you think the main characters in each parable felt, describe some of their emotions?
3. How would you describe sheep? In what ways do sheep fit Jesus' description of his mission? Are there any other scriptures Jesus uses in the Gospels to describe for who and why He came? Let's read a few.
4. In the parable of the lost sheep, how did this sheep suffer? Can you describe a time in your life when you could relate with this lost sheep?
5. What were some of the actions these two characters took? What about these actions encourage you and challenge you when you think about seeking and saving people who are without hope and without faith in Christ?
6. Overall, what do these two passages reveal about God's heart for lost people?
7. Chi Alpha has a commitment to "Invest & Invite". What do you think this means in our daily lives? What could you practically do to invest and invite in your relationships with the lost around you (ex. classes, hallway, family, a friend, co-workers, etc.)?

Prayer Partner Assignment:

Set two goals this week: Meet with your prayer partner this week and Read 2 Corinthians 5:14-21. Discuss any thoughts, comments, or questions you might have about the passage and something fresh you learned from the reading of the passage. Spend the final moments of your meeting talking through these two goals together and planning.

1. Invest: What is a relationship you can invest in this week? Come up with one concrete way you will invest in that person. Then DO IT!
2. Invite: What is an event or activity you can invite a friend who does not yet know Jesus to, this week?

Closing

Spend some time talking and praying for each other for the boldness, selflessness, and courage to reach the lost around you this week. Talk about who God has clearly placed in your life to reach out to and what it will take to really reach them.