

Faith in

Farming

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Faith in Farming

With costs rising and the value of livestock going in the opposite direction it's no wonder that more and more farmers are facing financial hardship.

However we describe the causes... the Common Agricultural Policy, inadequate subsidies, supermarket policies or changing trends in market forces... working the land today is a constant struggle.

Sadly, precious few would say they had much faith in farming these days.



And in the midst of such a commercial and economic nightmare a growing number are asking, 'Does anyone really care?'

SECURITY

Although we may feel that no-one understands our distress, which at times can border on despair, there is One whose loving kindness never fails...

As a father has compassion on his children, so the LORD has compassion on those who fear him; for he knows how we are formed, he remembers that we are dust.

Psalm 103:13-14



Perhaps it was a farmer of long ago who said...

I lift my eyes to the hills - where does my help come from? My help comes from the LORD, the Maker of heaven and earth.

Psalm 121:1-2

But His concern for us goes far beyond the realm of job security. He invites us to enter into a living, personal relationship...

Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest.

Matthew 11:28

Yet this is only part of the story...

HOPE

Of course, if we're really serious about 'getting right' with God we must first listen to what He says about our human nature.

Just as sheep are prone to wander... so are we...

We all, like sheep, have gone astray, each of us has turned to his own way...

Isaiah 53:6

And if we're truly honest with ourselves, and not using our circumstances as an excuse, we'd have to admit that our lives fall far short of the standard God sets...

If we claim to be without sin, we deceive ourselves and the truth is not in us.

1 John 1:8

Of course, farmers get used to their livestock dying. As they say, 'Anyone who never lost a ewe, never kept one!' But we are not like sheep because we will have to give an account one day...

...man is destined to die once and after that to face judgment...

Hebrews 9:27

However, sheep also need a shepherd...



SACRIFICE

Sheep will always need care and protection. Yet even the concern of the most devoted farmer is a pale reflection of God's love for the likes of us.

Looking into the future His Son, the Lord Jesus Christ, anticipated His own death on the Cross of Calvary when He said...

I am the good shepherd. The good shepherd lays down his life for the sheep.

John 10:11

We may live an isolated, lonely life, sacrificing many of the comforts of urban living in order to work the land.

Yet the greatest sacrifice of all took place on a barren hillside 2000 years ago...

For Christ died for sins once for all, the righteous for the unrighteous, to bring you to God.

1 Peter 3:18

...God demonstrates his own love for us in this: While we were still sinners, Christ died for us.

Romans 5:8



COMMITMENT

This, the greatest act of love the world has ever known, demands a response from us. We're called to turn away from all we know to be wrong and ask the risen Christ Jesus into our lives to become our Saviour, and Lord of our future. In this way, not only do we receive forgiveness, but a brand new start... with the power to cope, no matter what...

...if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; the old has gone, the new has come!

2 Corinthians 5:17

Just as commitment is a vital element in any meaningful relationship, so the Lord Jesus sets out His expectations for all who would be His true followers...

No-one who puts his hand to the plough and looks back is fit for service in the kingdom of God.

Luke 9:62

But in putting Him first in our lives we'll go on to prove His never-ending commitment to us...

...do not worry, saying, 'What shall we eat?' or 'What shall we drink?' or 'What shall we wear?'... But seek first his kingdom and his righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well.

Matthew 6:31 & 33



CHALLENGE

The life of a farmer could never be described as easy... but these days it can be more a question of mere survival. The struggle to maintain an income, a job, a home... these are all huge challenges. Yet the greatest of them all - because it has everlasting significance - is what to do about the Lord Jesus Christ...

For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life.

John 3:16

Every farmer knows that cattle not registered with BCMS and without passport are worthless. However, in ignoring or rejecting Christ Jesus, we face a future which is far worse...

...whoever does not believe stands condemned already...

John 3:18

...because even death is not a dead end, but a fork in the road! So therefore NOW is always the right time to 'get right' with God.

...now is the time of God's favour, now is the day of salvation.

2 Corinthians 6:2