

Sheep Without a Shepherd

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[0 : 00] Grab your copy of scripture if you can and turn to Matthew chapter 9. We'll begin reading in verse 35. And Jesus went throughout all the cities and villages, teaching in their synagogues and proclaiming the gospel of the kingdom and healing every disease and every affliction.

When he saw the crowds, he had compassion for them because they were harassed and helpless like sheep without a shepherd. Then he said to his disciples, the harvest is plentiful, but the laborers are few.

Therefore, pray earnestly to the Lord of the harvest to send out laborers into his harvest. You may be seated. Let's hear the preaching now of God's word. Well, let me thank you for the opportunity to go away for three weeks and be refreshed.

And I would appreciate those prayers. Thank you for praying and I will be praying for you. And may it be that in three weeks' time as we regather, that we will all love our Savior more, be more hungry and thirsty for righteousness and for seeing his kingdom.

Come with power to our hearts, to our church, and to the world. He is worthy. What kind of animal best describes you?

[1 : 26] What animal does God use most often in the Bible to describe you? We've had some hints already in our worship, in our reading.

And if you're thinking sheep, you're absolutely right. And why is that? What is it that we have in common with sheep that God would call us such so often?

Let me just mention two things this morning. The first thing is that sheep are defenseless. Just look at them. Left to themselves, they're helpless. Now, compare them with other animals.

God has often built defense mechanisms into the animals that he's created. We think of the rhinoceros with its thick hide and its sharp pointed horn.

The bear with its mighty paws. Or the lion with its strong jaws. A gazelle that's able to run fast to get out of danger.

[2 : 30] A porcupine with its sharp quills to discourage any attacking predator. A skunk that has a scent that enemies don't want to mess with.

A turtle that has a shell to retreat into when he's in danger. Birds that take wings and fly away. But sheep, what do they have to defend themselves?

They're not fast enough to run away. They have no wings to fly away and no shell to hide in. Left to themselves, they're helpless against the predator. You know, the only defense for a sheep is a good shepherd.

A good shepherd. David gives us a clear example of this. We read it in 1 Samuel 17. When he was just a shepherd boy and taking care of his father's sheep.

One day a lion came and snatched a sheep in its mouth and ran off. David didn't run home to get daddy. It would have been too late for that sheep. He ran after the lion.

[3 : 39] And struck it. And rescued the sheep out of its mouth. And when the lion turned on him, he grabbed his hair and struck him and killed him. And he did the same with a bear that had taken away one of the sheep.

Risking his own life to save the sheep. I don't know about you, but if I were a sheep, I'd want to be in David's flock. Wouldn't you? Here's a man that is willing to risk it all for my safety.

What security that would give to a sheep to know that. And to be able to then graze in green pastures besides still waters.

But what would have happened to those sheep without a shepherd in those instances? Well, there's no doubt. They'd have been dinner for the lion and supper for the bear.

Now that's us without a good shepherd. Defenseless. Helpless. We saw it in the scripture that was just read for us.

[4 : 49] Left to ourselves were sheep for the slaughter. Dinner for the wolves. We are in this world as sheep among wolves, Jesus says.

False teachers dressed up like faithful ministers of the gospel. So that they can get close to the sheep. And let them listen to them.

Oh, but they're really servants of Satan. The New Testament tells us. A people. And people are following them to hell even while they think they're going to heaven. That's the danger of the sheep with wolves.

Satan's a deceiver. He pretends to be an angel of light. He deceived Eve. She bought into his lie. And Adam followed her in her sin and plunged the whole human race into sin. So that now every son and daughter from Adam and Eve are born with a sinful nature.

[5 : 52] A nature that loves the lies rather than the truth. Easily deceived with darkened minds.

Deceitful hearts. Deceitful hearts. That cannot be trusted to guide us in truth safely to heaven. You know, there's a way that seems right to a man.

He looks at it. This really looks like the right way to heaven. But it ends in destruction and death. So we live in this world where it follows Satan's lies.

It repeats his lies. It spreads his evil. And it calls evil good and good evil. It mislabels everything.

And we simply do not have the wisdom and discernment to find our own way through this world.

And to make it finally to heaven. Children, think of it this way. Think if there's poison put on candy.

[7 : 02] And between you and the day you die, all through your life, and wherever you go, you see this candy laying around. Lying around there where you are.

And every time you look at it, you say, that looks good. What's your chance of making it all the way to the end without ever once eating that candy?

You say, well, it's got poison and I don't want it. But there are voices to tell you, there's nothing wrong with that candy. It's good. I'm eating it.

You see, it's a deceitful world under the power of a deceitful devil. And we as sheep have no defenses of our own against such dangers.

The devil himself is a roaring lion seeking whom he may devour. He's too tricky for us and too strong for us. A sheep's only defense is a good shepherd.

[8 : 03] Now, at least six times, the Bible describes people as sheep without a shepherd. And not once is that a favorable condition to be in, in the way that the passage uses it.

It's always a pitiful condition to be in because sheep need a shepherd to survive. Our text, Matthew 19, 35 to 37, Jesus was going through all the towns and villages, teaching in their synagogues, preaching the good news, the gospel of the kingdom.

And when he saw the multitudes, he had compassion on them. His heart beat with sympathy and pity for them.

Why? Because they were helpless, harassed and helpless like sheep without a shepherd.

Oh, yes, sheep are helpless. Helpless without a shepherd. And that condition is the condition of every man and woman, boy and girl, without Jesus Christ.

[9 : 16] They're like sheep without a shepherd. This word harassed. It means distressed, completely worn out, shot, exhausted, fainting, beat up, wounded.

Robertson says, torn and mangled as if by wild beasts. Jesus saw the multitudes and saw them that way. Harassed. Helpless.

The word can mean thrown down, defeated, forsaken, utterly hopeless. A sad and a pitiful sight. I wonder, do you see the multitudes like Jesus does?

Do you see them harassed and helpless and like sheep without a shepherd? Oh, we need the eyes of Jesus to look past the outward veneer and clothing, the outward sign, whether rich or poor, educated or uneducated, high, low, self-confident or scared.

See their poor souls as bruised and broken, scarred by sin, deceived by Satan, conquered by a world of sinners. Trials in life and all of this with no shepherd to save them.

[10 : 38] Weighed down with burdens and worries under the burden of sin and guilt. Judgment to come. And the consequences of their sinful choices perhaps now catching up with them.

Because the way of the sinner is hard. The way of the sheep without the shepherd is not good. They're unable to manage. They're harassed by the troubles of all kinds.

Helpless. Defenseless. Easy prey to their never-dying souls. And Jesus sees them that way and his heart runs out with pity for them.

They need a shepherd and have none. But there's a second way that we're like sheep. Needing a shepherd.

Not only are we defenseless, but secondly, sheep are prone to wonder. Prone to wonder. We have a tendency to go astray.

[11 : 42] To meander away from the kind shepherd watching over us. Which only exposes us to the very dangers that we're unfit to face alone. And that's what God has to say to us.

In Isaiah 53. We saw it here in the scripture reading, didn't we? In 1 Peter 2.25. You were like sheep going astray. Where did Peter get that?

He got it from Isaiah who said it hundreds of years before. Chapter 53 and verse 6. We all like sheep have gone astray. Each one of us has turned to his own way.

Notice the universal statement. It's a universal statement. We all like sheep have gone astray. No exceptions. Here's God.

Here's God. And we have turned our back to him and his ways. And we have gone our own way. Every single one of us. We hit the ground from the womb with our backs toward God.

[12 : 46] That sinful nature that we inherited from Adam and Eve. We all like sheep have gone astray. But it's also an individual statement.

It's not just the group, the flock going off. Each of us has turned to his own way. You see the personal nature. Think of it that way.

How have I gone astray? Not just all of us. But each one of us has our own unique way instead of God's way.

A way suited to please our sinful desires. You have yours and I have mine. But what they both have in common is it's not God's way.

It's our own way. And therein is our trouble. We've gone wayward. We've drifted. We've strayed from God. No one lives a God word life with his face toward God.

[13 : 46] Seeking to please him. No, we're pleasing ourselves. We're living for me. What's in it for me? What do I want to do? Not what does God want me to do?

That's the nature we inherit. And it's not an innocent meandering off. It's rather an intentional rebellion against God.

A claim to independence from God. I, no thank you God. I will choose for me. I'll do what I want. It's an intentional thing. We don't like to be dependent and listen to someone else, not even God. And we're proud of it. Do you know one of the most popular songs, at least in Great Britain at funerals, is I did it my way.

That's thumbing our nose at God at the end of life. That whatever else happened in my life, I can at least tell you this, I did it my way. Well, exactly. Isaiah said that 700 years before Jesus was born.

[14 : 50] He said, we've all gone astray. Each of us has turned to our own way. But it's not something to be proud of. It's something to humble us in the dust. We said that to this God that we've just sung about.

He lives in an approachable light of holiness. In him there's no darkness, no none at all. And we thumbed him and said, I did it my way. I'm doing it my way.

Some of you are still saying that to him. Oh, you wouldn't say it out loud, but that's what you're doing. You're going your own way. Romans 8, 7 and 8 says, the natural mind is enmity against God.

It's not neutral. It's hostility toward God. And how does it show it? It's not submissive to God's laws. God says, don't. And we said, I will. He says, do. And I said, not if I don't feel like.

There's hostility, enmity against him so that they that are in the flesh cannot please God. And so this waywardness is in the DNA of our fallen nature.

[15 : 53] And it requires a new heart. And it's not even completely done away with in this life. Even the best of Christians still sing, as we've often sung here, prone to wonder.

Lord, I feel it. Prone to leave the God I love. Why is that? Why is that, Christian, after walking with God for 40, 50, 60 years? You say, I still feel something inside of me that's pulling me away from this God that I love.

That's the flesh that we were born with. And it's to be increasingly mortified, but it's with us until that last step when we step into heaven and we see him as he is and we're made like him.

Prone to wonder. Lord, I feel it. Prone to leave the God I love. So we're our own worst enemies, aren't we? With this nature to stray from God.

A nature that loves to wander. Someone posted a video in the internet of a shepherd with one of his sheep. And it looks to be somewhere in the British Isles. There he is out there with his high rubber boots on.

[16:58] And cutting right through the field is this irrigation ditch. Maybe three feet deep and a couple feet wide. And lo and behold, some, I'll say it, dumb sheep has fallen into the ditch.

And it's a big one and it's stuck there. And the shepherd gets down in the ditch with it and is wrestling this thing.

It's a heavy beast and finally frees it and lifts it out. And it runs off. And so he's now getting out himself out of this three-foot ditch.

And just as he gets up, he looks. And there that sheep is gone about 50 yards down the field. And he's gone right back down in the ditch. Prone to wonder.

Prone to wonder. You see, it's something in us. It's in the DNA of sinners to stray. What would have happened to that sheep without the shepherd?

[18:02] Persistently coming along and lifting it out of the ditch and setting him on his feet. It would have starved to death. Or it would have been the meal for the next predator.

A sheep has no hope without a good shepherd. And so left to ourselves, we would have wandered in sin all the way to hell itself.

We're wandering sheep with wandering hearts who need a good shepherd to seek and to save us. And to bring us all the way to heaven. The problem is that not just any shepherd will do either.

No, we need a good shepherd that we can trust our eternal souls to. One of the problems in Old Testament Israel was that when the people, all like sheep, had gone astray, they turned their back on God and were worshiping idols and falling into all kinds of sins that God had told them not to. There were only a few faithful shepherds to call them back to God. And that was the role of the true prophet in Israel. God sent them to call the people back to God.

[19:23] And so they came and they preached and they pointed out the sins of the people. And they warned them of the coming judgment if they do not turn from their sin and return to God.

And they called the people, turn to God. He will have mercy on you. Isaiah was a faithful shepherd in his day under the chief shepherd, the Lord.

And this is his message to Israel gone astray. Isaiah 55, 6 and 7. Seek the Lord while he may be found. Call on him while he's near. Let the wicked forsake his way.

Your whole way is wrong. You're going the wrong direction. Let the wicked forsake his way. Let him let the evil man forsake his thoughts and let him turn to the Lord.

And he will have mercy on him and to our God, for he will freely pardon. Hosea was another faithful shepherd and he went to to fall in Israel and stray in Israel.

[20:27] And he says in chapter 14 and verse 1, return, O Israel, to the Lord your God. Your sins have been your downfall. You see, God's judgment had already fallen on Israel.

And their lives are a mess. Because they've gotten out of the way that they were to be walking in, in fellowship with God. And they forsook him and they went in the ways of sin.

Their own hearts wanted to go. And the way of the sinner is hard. And the sad thing is, is that people in that condition don't know why. Why is life like this? Why is this happening to...

They look here and there and blame it on everything and everybody else. But Hosea says, your sin has been your downfall. That was the role of the prophet.

To point the finger and call them out for their sins. But as you know, we sinners don't like that message. And they never have. And they never will unless God gives them a new heart.

[21:31] So the false prophets, they come on this same scene. But they come with a very popular message. They didn't confront people with their sins.

They didn't call them to repent. I heard one pastor say, God didn't call me to point out sins. Well, then you're a false shepherd. They didn't invite the people to return to God and seek his mercy and he would forgive them.

No, they said, peace, peace. When there was no peace. They said, everything's fine. You're okay, I'm okay. God's okay with us just the way we are. It's not a God of judgment.

He wouldn't judge anyone. You know, that's just repeating Satan's lie to Eve, wasn't it? He comes to her and he says, did God tell you that if you eat of the tree, you will surely die?

You will not surely die. He wouldn't judge anyone. And so the false shepherds said just the same thing that sinners wanted to hear.

[22 : 37] All the while claiming that this is what God says. There's no problem between you and I. Deceitful shepherds. Now, you find in Jeremiah, I believe it's chapter 23 and Ezekiel chapter 34, whole chapter given to describe these false deceitful shepherds.

Boy, do they get taken to the woodshed by God. Let me just read a portion. Woe to the shepherds of Israel who only take care of themselves. Should not shepherds take care of the flock?

You've not strengthened the weak or healed the sick or bound up the injured. You've not brought back the strays or searched for the lost. You've ruled them harshly and brutally. So they were scattered because there was no shepherd.

And when they were scattered, they became food for all the wild animals. Therefore, the sovereign Lord is going to judge you and remove you from being shepherds in Israel.

I myself will search for my sheep and look after them. I will rescue them. I will gather them. I will care for them. I will feed them.

[23 : 45] I will save my flock and they will no longer be plundered with God himself as the shepherd, you see. But then he says, I will place over them one shepherd, my servant.

I thought he just said that he would do it. God himself would be the shepherd. Now he's saying, I will place over them one shepherd, my servant David, and he will tend them. David, he will tend them and be their shepherd.

I, the Lord, will be their God and my servant David will be prince among them. Now, David was already in the grave 400 years by now. But you see, he was a type, a figure of the coming good shepherd.

Just as David, who risked his life for his sheep. There's coming another shepherd and he's going to be like David and that he'll be a good shepherd. And so he goes by the title David.

This perfect shepherd is both God. Therefore, God says, I will shepherd my sheep. But he's also a son of David as to his flesh. And so he calls him David will shepherd my flock.

[25 : 03] That's all in Ezekiel 34. And 600 years later, the son of God become man.

Stands in Israel and says, I am the good shepherd. And the good shepherd gives his life for the sheep.

Oh, how different from Israel's shepherds. Oh, how different from Israel's shepherds of Jesus' day. The scribes and Pharisees cared not for the sheep.

Here's the kind of shepherd we all need. And there is only one. And his name is Jesus Christ. The good shepherd did more than risk his life for the sheep as David did.

No, this good shepherd lost his life for his sheep. And he did it willingly. He surrendered it, laying it down himself. To the hellish death of the cross that we might not perish, but have everlasting life.

[26 : 11] What a shepherd. He's not like the hireling, he tells us in John chapter 10. The hireling cares nothing for the sheep. He's just been hired to watch over them. They're not his.

So when danger comes, he's not going to risk his neck at all. Oh, it's just one lamb. Let him have it. Jesus says, that's not the way the good shepherd is.

The good shepherd loves the sheep. The good shepherd loves them so much that he will lay down his life and die for them. Hallelujah for Jesus, the good shepherd.

That's the kind of shepherd you need and I need and everybody that we meet needs. You see, we were wandering and defenseless sheep without a shepherd.

And the son of God saw. He saw us. He saw our great danger. Our greatest danger is not from the world, the flesh and the devil. Our greatest danger is the wrath of God that we have brought on our own heads because of our sin.

[27 : 13] When we did this to God and went our own way, we thumbed his authority. We said, we don't care how good you've been to us. That was our ingratitude.

That was our wickedness. We went our way. And there's wrath to pay for that. There's a hell to pay for that. And that was our greatest danger as wandering sheep.

And Jesus from heaven sees us. Helpless. Defenseless. And he comes.

He comes and becomes one of us. And he goes to the cross. As what? As the Lamb of God. To take away the sins of the world.

One sheep in the place of all his trusting sheep. He saw me plunged in deep distress. He flew to my relief. For me, he bore the shameful cross. And carried all my grief.

[28 : 13] That's this great shepherd. He died for sheep that loved to wander. Isaiah 53.6 says that we all like sheep have gone astray. Each of us has turned to his own way.

And the Lord has laid on him the iniquities of us all. You see, it doesn't stop there with just going astray. For the sheep of Jesus Christ, all of their sin and iniquity was placed upon Jesus. He bore our sins in his body to the tree. We read it in 1 Peter 2. And there hell came upon Jesus. He suffered the condemnation. He suffered what we, the strange sheep, deserve to suffer. That we might be forgiven. That we might become one of his flock forever. For you who have gone astray, as Peter says, you were like sheep going astray, but now you've returned to the shepherd and overseer of your soul.

He was wounded for our transgressions. He was crushed for our iniquities. And the punishment that brought us peace with God, it was upon him.

[29 : 27] And by his wounds, we're healed. We're healed. We're at peace with God. That's the kind of shepherd we need. Not a shepherd for someone who doesn't have sin.

No. He died for sheep that love to wander. And if that's not you, then you've not been saved yet. You haven't seen your need for a savior. It begins with that.

The righteous one dying for the unrighteous to bring us to God. And now we sing with wonder, love, and praise.

I was a wandering sheep. I did not love the fold. I did not love my shepherd's voice. I would not be controlled. But the shepherd sought his sheep.

And he followed me, or veil and hill, or deserts, waste and wild. He bound me with the bands of love. He saved the wandering one. Jesus my shepherd is.

[30 : 28] T'was he that loved my soul. T'was he that washed me in his blood. T'was he that made me whole. T'was he that sought the lost. And found the wandering sheep.

T'was he that brought me to the fold. And t'was he that still doth keep. Still getting me out of the ditches. All the way to heaven.

And when he brings a wandering sheep to the fold, all heaven rejoices. And none more joyful than the good shepherd himself, who'd laid down his life for that sheep.

Rejoice with me, he says, for I have found my lost sheep. He said that when you, dear Christian, turned from your way and came entrusted in the Savior.

The Son of God said, Come, rejoice with me. I have found my sheep that was lost. Is Jesus your shepherd?

[31 : 35] He's not the shepherd of everyone. Oh, no. That's another one of Satan's lies. That's poison all over the candy. As he brought you to God.

Are you still running away and going astray, rejecting him? Well, there's real destruction in this life to pay, and there is hell in the next life, if that's you.

Don't push him away. Don't push him away. He comes to bless you. You know what he says as the good shepherd in John 10, 10? The thief comes among the sheep, only to steal, to kill, and to destroy.

But I have come that you might have life and have it more abundantly. Why would you push that away? Why would you ignore that?

Young person, why would you neglect that? Why would you say, No, let me try my way for a while. Oh, yeah? Why? You may not have the next while, and there is an eternity to pay for procrastinating.

[32 : 42] And why when he comes with eternal life in his arms to give you? What a shepherd! If you reject Christ as your shepherd, you're rejecting this abundant life.

Life to the full. Life as it was meant to be. Eternal life, which is knowing God the Father and Jesus Christ his Son as your shepherd, your good shepherd, all the way through life.

Wouldn't you like to know life as it was meant to be? Before sin entered the world? Wouldn't you like to know life as it could be for you? Oh, come.

Come to the shepherd. Trusting in him. What he did on the cross. You know, it's the life of Psalm 23. The Lord is my shepherd.

Can you say that? He's my shepherd. There are people on the planet who have the Lord as their shepherd. And they can say that.

[33 : 48] And if you can say it, you can also say, I shall not want. I shall not be in need because my shepherd provides everything that I need. And he leads me.

He makes me lie down in green pastures. He leads me beside still waters. He restores my soul. Living in this world, sheep get beaten down, need restored. Shepherd does that. Feeds them. Waters them. Restores them. He leads me in paths of righteousness. For his name's sake. Not those hard ways that come with consequences that drag me down. No, righteous paths. In the keeping of which there's great reward. And even though I go through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil. Why?

Because my shepherd's with me. And I can go with my shepherd right down into the chasm of the grave and come out on the other side with him into eternal life.

[34 : 47] Because he's my shepherd. He lived and died and rose again for me. And though his rod and his staff, they comfort me. That rod with which he killed the lion and killed the bear, he comforts.

That comforts me. To know that my shepherd will protect me. My shepherd will take that staff and the hook when I get in places I shouldn't. He'll bring me back. I'm comforted by that.

He cares. He loves me. You prepare a table before me in the presence of my enemies. All these enemies that we've spoken of. I'm no match for them. But, oh, my shepherd. There's not one that can match his wisdom, power, and love.

And he anoints my head with oil. My cup runs over. An overflowing life. An abundant life. That's what my shepherd does for me.

So that I can say, surely, of a certainty, goodness and mercy will follow me all the days of my life.

[35 : 54] Nobody can say that without this good shepherd. But those who have the good shepherd, every one of you can say, surely, goodness and mercy will follow me all the days of my life.

Do you know what that does for a man, a woman, a boy, or a girl? Security and sense of, I'm in good hands. Yes, they're nail-pierced hands.

He was willing to lay down his life for you. You know, I'll go anywhere following that kind of shepherd. He leadeth me. Oh, blessed God. He's the one that's my shepherd.

And after I've had goodness and mercy all the days of my life, then I will dwell in his house forever and ever. What is there not to like about that?

Revelation 7 says, For the lamb at the center of the throne will be their shepherd. And he will lead them to springs of living water.

[37 : 03] Yes, shepherding us all the way through this life and then our good shepherd forever and ever. Is he yours? Have you trusted in him?

Don't show up at the last judgment without the good shepherd. Come in the arms of him who was once pierced for our transgressions that we might be forgiven and our sins remembered no more.

John chapter 10, Jesus gives us the marks of his sheep. How can you know you're a sheep in Jesus' fold? Let me just give you a couple marks. He says, My sheep, listen to my voice.

I know them and they follow me. In other words, this shepherd calls to us by his word. This is his voice. And every time you open it and read it, his voice speaking.

That's why some of you aren't reading it. You don't want to hear his voice. Well, you're not one of his sheep. No, my sheep hear my voice and they follow me. They've got a new heart.

[38 : 13] So I'm done with that. I'm following the good shepherd. God has given that new heart.

That's a mark of one of his sheep. And what he says to us in his word is, Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, helpless and harassed in this life with all of sin's consequences.

Come to me and I will give you rest. You've all had a good night's rest and you wake up refreshed. Not that kind. Soul rest. Rest for your soul.

Where your soul says, I have nothing to fear if I would die this moment and go before God the judge because my good shepherd laid down his life and took the punishment in my place.

That's all my trust. And it's enough. And what soul rest that is. What lift of guilt that is. The voice of the shepherd, come to me. Some of you need to heed that call right now as you sit there.

I am coming, Lord. I'm putting all my trust in you. Not anything in what I've done. Not in my works, but your works. Not in my merit, but yours. What else is a mark of a sheep?

[39 : 23] Well, he says, I know them. You see, this shepherd has an intimate relationship with every one of his sheep. I know them by name, he says.

Just think about that for five minutes today. That there is one on the right hand side of the throne of God who knows the name of John Heene.

And that means he knows everything about me. And he loves me no less. And it means that he knows all of my needs. Not only all my sins, but he knows all my needs.

Mine. Forget yours for the moment. He knows me by name. All that I need. And he promises. To give me mercy and grace to help me in my time of need.

He knows us by name. Our names on the palms of his hands were written. And he went to the cross with our names on his heart. It's a personal relationship with Jesus.

[40 : 29] Do you have that personal? You talk to him in prayer. And he talks to you in his word. And he knows just the word you need. He knows just the help that you need.

And he brings that word to you. It's a personal relationship. That's a mark of somebody who knows the shepherd. We know him.

And he knows us. There's no life like it. There is no one but this good shepherd. Is he yours? And if not, why not?

Why would you continue in all the dangers? Do you know what he says to his sheep? He says, I give them eternal life. All of them. I give them eternal life.

And they will never perish. God so loved the world that he gave his one and only son. That whoever believes on him. Those are the sheep. They put themselves into his hands.

[41 : 26] They will never perish. Because I give them eternal life. And then Jesus says this. As the good shepherd of his sheep. No one can snatch them out of my hand. This God we've been singing about.

Who is like him? There's none like him. You're safe in his hand. And then he goes on and says, my father who's greater than all. No one can snatch them out of his hand. You're in double security.

That's what it means to be a sheep in Jesus' fold. So, if you've been wandering. Wandering away from him. Turn right now.

And cast yourself on this willing shepherd. Trust in what he's done. In dying for sinners to save you. And he will. If you don't know that shepherd personally.

I want to ask you. Does that sound like people around you are sad or happy to have Jesus as their shepherd? Lord, I've never met one believer that said, oh, I wish I would have gone a few more years in my way before I ever came to Jesus.

[42 : 32] I've met a lot of people who've regretted that they didn't come to him sooner. Oh, learn from those around you. We all were wandering sheep. And we have come back to the shepherd and overseer of our souls.

And are we happy? You come too. You'd like to talk further. Talk to anyone around you. Talk to one of the pastors. We would love to talk to you further. But have dealings with this good shepherd.

He turns none away. May the God of peace. Who through the blood of the eternal covenant. Brought back from the dead. Our Lord Jesus Christ.

That great shepherd of the sheep. And may he equip you with everything good for doing his will. And may he work in us what is pleasing to him. Through Jesus Christ.

To whom be glory forever and ever. Amen.