



# Daily Reflections

**June 28, 2019**

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## Scripture

### **Luke 15: 3-7**

Jesus addressed this parable to the Pharisees and scribes:

"What man among you having a hundred sheep and losing one of them would not leave the ninety-nine in the desert and go after the lost one until he finds it?

And when he does find it,

he sets it on his shoulders with great joy

and, upon his arrival home,

he calls together his friends and neighbors and says to them,

'Rejoice with me because I have found my lost sheep.'

I tell you, in just the same way

there will be more joy in heaven over one sinner who repents

than over ninety-nine righteous people

who have no need of repentance."

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## Our Scripture Reflection

Do you really believe the story about Jesus? If you really, really do, then today's Gospel reading should have you jumping for joy. To think that Our Heavenly Father sent His only Son to search out and save us lost sheep is incredible. He, literally, gave His life for us so that we might be rescued from our pitiful sins. And when we turn away from them and live the life He desires

for us....God rejoices! Isn't that absolutely amazing? How could we not want to turn back to Him?

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## **Food for your Journey**

Not long ago, I was in Beersheba, far south of Jerusalem, visiting the city's ancient tel, or hill. I was at an ancient well when I heard a commotion about 100 yards away. I glanced up and saw that a large, mature sheep had broken from a flock and was making a break for it.

It was scampering up a gentle slope of the hill and the shepherd, abandoning his flock momentarily, was in hot pursuit.

The sheep paid no attention to the shepherd's yells and cursing but continued to lumber up the hill. The shepherd now flung his staff at the sheep, but the staff merely glanced off the sheep's back harmlessly. Sticks and stones followed.

Long story short, the shepherd, a youth of about 18 or 19, caught the errant animal, grabbed it by its loose hide, whirled it around and gave it a few whacks with his open palm across the back. Then he literally dragged the bleating animal back down the hill. Nearing the flock, the sheep gave up its resistance and soon was reunited with the others. The shepherd resumed his post as the sheep grazed and moved before him.

As a pastor, I smiled, laughed out loud, actually, because I thought of a few recalcitrant members of my own "flock" who had, from time to time, "made a break" for it. I'd had to go chasing after them to attempt — sometimes unsuccessfully — to bring them back to the fold. Of course, I hadn't been able to fling a staff or hurl rocks and sticks, and I hadn't cursed or beaten anyone!

But then I thought about the Good Shepherd, and somehow I understood better some of the disciplinary methods that come into our lives which, if we understand them correctly, are merely strong measures to bring us back into the community of faith, and to a proper relationship with the Shepherd himself.

I thought that I'd done a lot of bleating myself over the years and that the Good Shepherd, regrettably, had had to go after me on too many occasions, But such is the mercy and grace of God.

## **A Prayer from the Heart**

Dear God, Your love and mercy know no limits. You desire nothing more than for me to turn away from my sinful ways and to return to You. Help me to show my gratitude for Your kindness by living the life You created me to live.  
Amen