



Daily Reflections

April 17, 2016

Scripture

John 10:27-30

Jesus said:

“My sheep hear my voice;

I know them, and they follow me.

I give them eternal life, and they shall never perish.

No one can take them out of my hand.

My Father, who has given them to me, is greater than all,

and no one can take them out of the Father’s hand.

The Father and I are one.”

Our Scripture Reflection

That there was a problem with the religious leaders, the "shepherds" is quite clear after reading Ezekiel 34:1-16. God promised to remedy the corruption in the leadership and He did so by sending His only Son. Those who have faith listen for and hear the voice of their Good Shepherd. What

makes Jesus' shepherding different? He knows His sheep and He lays down His life for them.

Food for your Journey

In the highlands of Scotland, sheep will often wander off into the rocks and get into places that they can't get out of. The grass on these mountains is very sweet and the sheep like it, and they will jump down 10 or 12 feet, and then they can't jump back again, and the shepherd hears them bleating in distress.

They may be there for days, until they have eaten all the grass. The shepherd will wait until they are so faint they cannot stand, and then they will put a rope around them, and he will go over and pull the sheep up out of the jaws of death.

Why doesn't the shepherd go down there when the sheep first get there? "Because," replied one shepherd, "they are so very foolish they would dash right over the precipice and be killed if they did!"

Moral: Too often it's only when we give up trying to "go it alone" that we're ready to receive some help.

Not everyone is convinced that sheep are intelligent.

Consider the runaway sheep, writes Don Everts in *The Smell of Sin*. Confused, short-sighted, blind to wolves and cliffs and jagged rocks, the runaway sheep dumbly fumbles his way around. If he trips and falls on his side, he could just lie there and die. He would never figure out why the field has suddenly gone sideways. He has no capacity, in and of himself, to regain his equilibrium.

While still upright, he follows his nose. And his nose doesn't know much. The lone sheep is a picture of cluelessness, which is why "sheep without a shepherd" was a common metaphor for helplessness in the Hebrew Scriptures. Mark says that Jesus was sad, for "they were like sheep without a shepherd" (6:34).

We've all had times in which panic sets in. It's that shaky feeling of having no idea where we are or which way is up. We just want everything to make sense — for the wildly spinning room to just stop, for the sun to rise again.

"Sheep need a shepherd," writes Everts. "We always will."

Prayer from the Heart

Dear Good and Faithful Shepherd, Oh, how I need Your protection and guidance in this world filled with selfish wolves. Make me humble and open to Your voice which keeps me safe. Amen.
