

Notes:

Sermon Text

Subject

Spiritual "To Do List"
(things God has shown me today)



Why do sheep have shepherds? Because it is the nature of sheep to stray and get in harm's way, whether that be from hungry wolves or steep canyons. For centuries, shepherds have used various methods—from staff to dog—to keep sheep from straying from the safety of their care.

In recent times, shepherds have turned to other, more sophisticated, methods. One method is a metal, hoof-proof grid that is built into the ground around the sheep's territory. The animals cannot walk over the grid, which is eight feet wide. This works well in keeping sheep in the protection of the pen.

But early in 2006, shepherds in Yorkshire, England, found that they had a group of sheep to care for that were not only stubbornly prone to stray, but also crafty. One of the sheep figured out a way to transgress the boundaries: it lay down and rolled over the grid. The other sheep in the herd followed the example of the stray leader, and soon the sheep had spread over the countryside and found their way to neighborhood gardens, where they ate the food and flowers of local residents.

The shepherds eventually gathered up the troublesome sheep and returned them to their pen. But again they escaped and got into trouble. And again. While the special knowledge of escape of this entire herd of "black" sheep may have seemed like an exciting adventure, it actually placed the animals into harm's way, as several sheep wandered onto nearby roads, or were accosted by local residents' dogs.

Thankfully, our Good Shepherd found another way to deal with stubborn, straying sheep. "We all like sheep have gone astray, each of us has turned to his own way; and the LORD has laid on him [Jesus] the iniquity of us all" (Isaiah 53:6).

Jason Bellows, "The Great Sheep Escape," BBC online, (1-30-06); submitted by Brian Larson, Arlington Heights, Illinois www.preaching today.com Used for non-profit publication by permission

I AM
THE GOOD SHEPHERD,
AND KNOW MY SHEEP,
AND AM KNOWN
OF MINE.

JOHN 10:14



