

The lost sheep



MATTHEW 18:10–14; LUKE 15:1–7

Matthew writes:

Let me ask you this. What would you do if you had a hundred sheep and one of them wandered off? Wouldn't you leave the ninety-nine on the hillside and go and look for the one that had wandered away? I am sure that finding it would make you happier than having the ninety-nine that never

wandered off. That's how it is with your Father in heaven. He doesn't want any of these little ones to be lost.

Look at the end of this story—in fact at the end of each of the 'lost and found' stories Jesus tells—each one ends with a party! What is being celebrated? What do you think an angels' party is like? (Check out Luke 15:10 if you think I'm making this up!)

Hey! I'm a shepherd with a collie and a crook.
You want to see my sheep? Well, there, take a look!
They're my pride and joy and just in case you wondered,
I know each sheep by name, yup, all a hundred.

There's Shane and there's Sharon and there's Cherie and there's Shula
And there's little Charlene with her fleece all soft and woolly
And there's Sheena and there's Sheila and there's Shirley the sheep—
I could count out every one but you just might fall asleep.

But stop a minute! Wait a moment! Have I got it wrong?
Has my maths gone crazy or has one sheep gone?
I thought I counted ninety-nine, this is most distressing.
Shaggy the sheep! Oh no! He's missing!!!

Get my helicopter with the big searchlight!
Call the Land-Sea Rescue! Find my fast quad bike!
Fetch the dogs! Call 999! Start my speedy jeep!
I'm going off to search for my little lost sheep.

Shaggy? Where are you? The night is very black.
And this cliff-face here is crumbling but I can't go back
Until I've found you, Shaggy. Oh no, the wolves are howling
And in the forest something really sinister is growling...

Thunder's rolling, winds are wailing and the lightning's flashing
And sheets of freezing sleet against my poor old back are lashing,
Where are you, Shaggy? Let me get you warm!
Let me get you home and sheltered from this scary soaking storm.

I've walked for miles, I ache with cold, I'm soaked right to the skin.
I can't give up until I get that Shaggy safely in.
My hands are frozen, I won't talk about my blistered feet.
Wait a minute. Did you hear that tiny frightened bleat?

Shaggy! I've found you! Was your fleece stuck in the bush?
I'll set you free and hug you tight. Calm down, Shaggy, shush.
There's no more danger, now, young sheep. Look! You're safe and sound.
I'll take you home. Then let's tell everybody that you're found.

Look everyone! I've found my sheep! Come party on with me!
Let's celebrate his safe return. Hooray, huzzah, yippee!
Oh Shaggy! Are you glad that you've been brought back from so far?
Shaggy simply looked at us and calmly answered, Baa.

