

Of Sheep and Shepherds

The heart of Christianity is a personal relationship with God through Jesus, often described in the Bible using the image of a shepherd and sheep.

In biblical times, this picture carried deep meaning.

Sheep lived closely with their shepherd for many years, learning to recognize his voice and trust his care.

The shepherd's life was devoted to the flock - guiding them to food and water, protecting them from danger, and ensuring none were lost. At night, he would even lie across the entrance of the sheepfold to guard them.

This close relationship helps us understand God's care for us.

In Psalm 23, God is described as a shepherd who provides, leads, restores, and stays with us even in life's darkest moments.

The shepherd's rod and staff symbolize both protection and guidance - showing that God defends us from harm and gently leads us when we stray.

Being compared to sheep may not sound flattering, as sheep are vulnerable and prone to wandering. The Bible acknowledges this, reminding us that we often lose our way. Yet, God does not abandon us. Instead, He seeks us out, as described in Ezekiel, and restores us.

Jesus builds on this image in the New Testament. He calls Himself the Good Shepherd who knows His sheep personally.

In Luke 15, He tells of a shepherd who leaves ninety-nine sheep to find one that is lost, showing that every person matters deeply to God.

Even more, Jesus demonstrates His love by laying down His life for His sheep, offering forgiveness and bringing us back into God's care.

This means we are known, loved, and never alone. God leads us, gives us rest, and remains with us through all of life. Even when we wander, He seeks us and brings us home.