Jesus, the Chief Shepherd, Knows Each Sheep

I say to you that likewise there will be more joy in heaven over one sinner who repents than over ninety-nine just persons who need no repentance. Luke 15:7, NKJV.

The minister is to be a shepherd. Our Redeemer is called the chief Shepherd. The apostle writes, "Now the God of peace, that brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus, that great shepherd of the sheep, through the blood of the everlasting covenant, make you perfect in every good work to do his will, working in you that which is well-pleasing in his sight, through Jesus Christ." However lowly, however elevated we may be, whether we are in the shadow of adversity or in the sunshine of prosperity, we are His sheep, the flock of His pasture, and under the care of the chief Shepherd.

But the chief Shepherd has His undershepherds, whom He has delegated to care for His sheep and lambs. The great Shepherd never loses one from His care, is never indifferent even to the feeblest one of His flock. The beautiful parable that Christ gave of the one lost sheep, of the shepherd that left the ninety and nine to go in search of that which was lost, illustrates the care of the great Shepherd. He did not look carelessly over the sheep of the fold, and say, "I have ninety and nine, and it will cost me too much trouble to go in search of the straying one; let it come back, and I will open the door of the sheepfold and let it in; but I cannot go after it."

No; for no sooner does the sheep go astray than the countenance of the shepherd is filled with grief and anxiety. He counts and recounts the flock, and when he is certain that one sheep is lost, he slumbereth not. He leaves the ninety and nine within the fold; however dark and tempestuous the night, however perilous and unpleasant the way, however long and tedious the search, he does not weary, he does not falter, until the lost is found.

But when it is found, does he act indifferently? Does he call the sheep, and command the straying one to follow him? Does he threaten and beat it, or drive it before him, recounting the bitterness and discomfiture and anxiety that he has had on its account? No; he lays the weary, exhausted, wandering sheep on his shoulder, and with cheerful gratitude that his search has not been in vain, he returns it to the fold. His gratitude finds expression in melodious songs of rejoicing, and heavenly choirs respond to the shepherd's note of joy.

When the lost is found, heaven and earth unite in rejoicing and thanksgiving.... Jesus says, "I am the good shepherd, and know my sheep, and am known of mine." Just as the shepherds of earth...
know their sheep, so does the chief Shepherd know His flock that are scattered throughout the whole world.--The Review and Herald, August 23, 1892.