

# Found in the Dark

Why God won't let you go

**Time:**  
7-10 minutes

**Focus:**  
God's Love, Healing,  
Repentance

## Scriptures

Matthew 18:12-14  
Isaiah 40:11  
Psalm 23:4  
Ezekiel 34:11  
Psalm 139:9-12  
Isaiah 65:1  
Isaiah 46:4  
Deuteronomy 1:31  
Psalm 103:8  
Zephaniah 3:17  
Isaiah 62:5  
Isaiah 43:1  
Psalm 34:18  
Isaiah 61:1  
John 10:28  
1 John 3:1  
Psalm 30:11  
Psalm 32:8

## Parking lot

Write down distracting thoughts here:



View on web ↗

## Settle in

Take a deep breath. Turn off notifications on your phone. Ask God to help you believe that he loves you and to understand how much you matter to him.

## Thought starter

When we lose our way spiritually, God steps into the darkness of our lives to bring us home—like a shepherd who searches for a lost sheep.

Here's what you'll learn in this Quick Quiet Time:

- We matter enough to be searched for.
- God doesn't lecture us when we're lost; he lifts us up and carries us home.
- Heaven celebrates our healing, not our perfection.



## Scripture reflection

Read these two passages slowly. Then read them again. What do you learn about God's heart for you?

### Matthew 18:12-14 NIV

"What do you think? If a man owns a hundred sheep, and one of them wanders away, will he not leave the ninety-nine on the hills and go to look for the one that wandered off? And if he finds it, truly I tell you, he is happier about that one sheep than about the ninety-nine that did not wander off. In the same way your Father in heaven is not willing that any of these little ones should perish."

### Isaiah 40:11 NIV

He tends his flock like a shepherd: He gathers the lambs in his arms and carries them close to his heart; he gently leads those that have young.

## Setting the scene: The shepherd in the night

Picture this: A shepherd counts his flock at the end of the day. Ninety-seven... ninety-eight... ninety-nine... One is missing.

He doesn't shrug his shoulders. He doesn't wait for the sun to come up. He doesn't assume the sheep will eventually figure it out and come home on its own.

**Notes:**

He steps into the night.

The hills are freezing and the path is dangerous, but he doesn't care. He isn't listening for the sound of running feet, ready to scold the sheep for wandering. He's listening for the sound of weakness—the faint cry of a sheep that is stuck, shivering, and completely out of options.

When he finds it, he doesn't yell at the sheep for getting lost. He doesn't lecture it. He lifts it up, puts it on his shoulders, and carries it home.

This is how Jesus describes God's heart for each of us.

### **God pursues us in the dark.**

#### **Matthew 18:12 NIV**

“What do you think? If a man owns a hundred sheep, and one of them wanders away, will he not leave the ninety-nine on the hills and go to look for the one that wandered off?”

#### **Psalm 23:4 NLT**

Even when I walk through the darkest valley, I will not be afraid, for you are close beside me. Your rod and your staff protect and comfort me.

#### **Ezekiel 34:11 NIV**

“For this is what the Sovereign LORD says: ‘I myself will search for my sheep and look after them.’”

### **The point:**

Even when our lives feel dark or chaotic, God is the Shepherd who walks right in with our name on his lips.

- Many different things in our lives can make us feel like we are walking through a “dark valley”—like struggles with our emotional health, guilt that weighs us down, or confusion and uncertainty.
- Whatever our "darkness" is, it isn't a wall that keeps God out. It's the place where he comes to find us.

### **God's comfort always moves toward us.**

#### **Psalm 139:9-12 NIV**

If I rise on the wings of the dawn, if I settle on the far side of the sea, [10] even there your hand will guide me, your right hand will hold me fast. [11] If I say, “Surely the darkness will hide me and the light become night around me,” [12] even the darkness will not be dark to you; the night will shine like the day, for darkness is as light to you.

**Notes:****Isaiah 65:1 NIV**

“I revealed myself to those who did not ask for me; I was found by those who did not seek me. To a nation that did not call on my name, I said, ‘Here am I, here am I.’”

**The point:**

Think about sunlight. It travels millions of miles just to touch the earth. God’s comfort is like that.

- God’s presence moves toward us long before we ever think about moving toward him.
- Even our darkest night is not too dark for God.

**👉 God carries us when we can’t carry ourselves.****Isaiah 46:4 NLT**

I will be your God throughout your lifetime- until your hair is white with age. I made you, and I will care for you. I will carry you along and save you.

**Deuteronomy 1:31 NLT**

“And you saw how the LORD your God cared for you all along the way as you traveled through the wilderness, just as a father cares for his child. Now he has brought you to this place.”

**Psalms 103:8 Voice**

The Eternal is compassionate and merciful. When we cross all the lines, He is patient with us. When we struggle against Him, He lovingly stays with us- changing, convicting, prodding.

**The point:**

When our strength snaps like a rope under too much weight, God becomes the shoulders beneath our burden.

- When we are stuck in darkness, God knows that walking the road back home can feel beyond our own strength.
- Even if it was our own sins and mistakes that led us into darkness, God doesn’t shame us for them. He just gently and kindly brings us back to him.
- God doesn’t demand that we drag ourselves down that path. He picks us up and carries us.

## Notes:

 **God rejoices when he finds us.****Matthew 18:12-13 NLT**

"If a man has a hundred sheep and one of them wanders away, what will he do? Won't he leave the ninety-nine others on the hills and go out to search for the one that is lost? [13] And if he finds it, I tell you the truth, **he will rejoice over it** more than over the ninety-nine that didn't wander away!

**Deuteronomy 1:31 NLT**

"The LORD your God is with you, the Mighty Warrior who saves. **He will take great delight in you;** in his love he will no longer rebuke you, but will rejoice over you with singing."

**Isaiah 62:5 NIV**

As a young man marries a young woman, so will your Builder marry you; as a bridegroom rejoices over his bride, so will your God rejoice over you.

**The point:**

Heaven doesn't wait to throw a party when we "finally" get our act together" or achieve a huge spiritual goal. The party starts the moment we are

- Think about the sheep the moment it is found—it's probably not at its strongest. But the shepherd rejoices.
- God's joy over being with us isn't dependent on our strength or performance. We don't earn it. He rejoices over us at our best and at our worst.

 **Truth bombs to carry today**

We matter enough to be searched for.

**Isaiah 43:1 NIV**

But now, this is what the LORD says—he who created you, Jacob, he who formed you, Israel: "Do not fear, for I have redeemed you; I have summoned you by name; you are mine."

We matter enough to be searched for.

**Psalms 34:18 NIV**

The LORD is close to the brokenhearted and saves those who are crushed in spirit.

## Notes:

Heaven celebrates our healing.

**Isaiah 61:1 NIV**

The Spirit of the Sovereign Lord is on me, because the LORD has anointed me to proclaim good news to the poor. He has sent me to bind up the brokenhearted, to proclaim freedom for the captives and release from darkness for the prisoners ...

 **The benefits of letting God find us**
 Security
**Isaiah 43:1 NIV**

But now, this is what the LORD says—he who created you, Jacob, he who formed you, Israel: “Do not fear, for I have redeemed you; I have summoned you by name; you are mine.”

Darkness and mistakes can make us feel like a lost cause. God reassures us that we are a sought-after treasure.

 Resilience
**Isaiah 40:11 NIV**

He tends his flock like a shepherd: He gathers the lambs in his arms and carries them close to his heart; he gently leads those that have young.

When life knocks the wind out of us, his arms become our strength.

 Identity
**1 John 3:1 NIV**

See what great love the Father has lavished on us, that we should be called children of God! And that is what we are! The reason the world does not know us is that it did not know him.

We belong to God. We are a child with a name.

 Joy
**Psalm 30:11 NIV**

You turned my wailing into dancing; you removed my sackcloth and clothed me with joy.

God celebrates us. He turns the darkness of our mourning into a new song.

## Notes:

 Direction**Psalm 32:8 NIV**

I will instruct you and teach you in the way you should go; I will counsel you with my loving eye on you.

God guides us. When our path disappears, his voice becomes our compass.

 **Quiet prayer**

“God, thank you for being the Shepherd who comes after me. Find me where I’ve stopped moving. Carry the weight I cannot lift on my own. And bring me home with your joy. Amen.”

**Humor break!**

What is a sheep’s favorite app? Ewetube.

**Share the inspiration!**

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