

KB Christmas 2025

The Good Shepherd

Week 3 - Good Shepherd Rescues His Sheep

The sheep celebrate God rescuing them and will join God's rescue of His sheep!

Call To Worship

Read Scripture (Stand for the reading)

Ezekiel 34:11-16 ESV

11 “For thus says the Lord God: Behold, I, I myself will search for my sheep and will seek them out. **12** As a shepherd seeks out his flock when he is among his sheep that have been scattered, so will I seek out my sheep, and I will rescue them from all places where they have been scattered on a day of clouds and thick darkness. **13** And I will bring them out from the peoples and gather them from the countries, and will bring them into their own land. And I will feed them on the mountains of Israel, by the ravines, and in all the inhabited places of the country. **14** I will feed them with good pasture, and on the mountain heights of Israel shall be their grazing land. There they shall lie down in good grazing land, and on rich pasture they shall feed on the mountains of Israel. **15** I myself will be the shepherd of my sheep, and I myself will make them lie down, declares the Lord God. **16** I will seek the lost, and I will bring back the strayed, and I will bind up the injured, and I will strengthen the weak, and the fat and the strong I will destroy.[a] I will feed them in justice.

Pray

Gratitude – Thank you for stepping into our dark and hopeless situation and rescuing us! You are our Good Shepherd, and we are grateful to be Your rescued sheep!

Petition – Grow us in gratitude and worship toward you this Christmas. We needed rescue and you came and made us Your sheep! As Your sheep, include us in your ongoing rescue work to find more lost sheep.

Sermon

Series Graphic (SLIDE 1)

Opening Idea

The Great Raid - A nearly suicidal raid freed more than 500 prisoners of war

During World War II, the Pacific Theater threw up a gauntlet of seemingly insurmountable challenges to the Allies. One of them was the Japanese prison camp near Cabanatuan (kaa·buh·nuh·twaan) City, where hundreds of Americans and Filipinos were

incarcerated after the brutal [Bataan Death March](#). Conditions inside the camp were dire, and as the war dragged on and the Japanese army began to execute prisoners in other camps, those who remained feared they, too, would be killed.

Then, the Sixth Army staged a rescue operation that was almost suicidal in scope. With the aid of Filipino guerrillas, Army Rangers managed to get 35 miles behind Japanese lines, only to learn that scouts hadn't been able to scope out the camp itself because of heavy Japanese activity in the area. The locale was crawling with enemy forces, but Rangers [snuck](#) into the camp on January 30, 1945, overwhelmed the guards and managed to move the prisoners—many of whom were so sick or suspicious they wouldn't come out. In all, 510 prisoners were released with just two Army casualties. Today, the daring rescue mission is known as “The Great Raid” and is celebrated as one of the bravest of all time.

Read

Ezekiel 34:11-16 ESV

(SLIDE 2) **11** “For thus says the Lord God: Behold, I, I myself will search for my sheep and will seek them out. **12** As a shepherd seeks out his flock when he is among his sheep that have been scattered, so will I seek out my sheep, and I will rescue them from all places where they have been scattered on a day of clouds and thick darkness. **13** And I will bring them out from the peoples and gather them from the countries and will bring them into their own land.

(SLIDE 3) And I will feed them on the mountains of Israel, by the ravines, and in all the inhabited places of the country. **14** I will feed them with good pasture, and on the mountain heights of Israel shall be their grazing land. There they shall lie down in good grazing land, and on rich pasture they shall feed on the mountains of Israel. **15** I myself will be the shepherd of my sheep, and I myself will make them lie down, declares the Lord God.

(SLIDE 4) **16** I will seek the lost, and I will bring back the strayed, and I will bind up the injured, and I will strengthen the weak, and the fat and the strong I will destroy. I will feed them in justice.

Series Graphic (SLIDE 5)

Notes on Ezekiel 34:11-16 ESV

Context: God gives a prophetic word to Ezekiel against those in authority over and those leading Israel. God referred to those leaders as shepherds. These shepherds of Israel used their position for their own selfish gain. They took advantage of their position and influence for personal benefit and disregarded the needs of the people. Ultimately, the people were not cared for, were wounded, were killed, and scattered. God is speaking His word of judgement and rejection to these degenerate shepherds and declaring that He will shepherd the people.

God Searches for His Sheep (v. 11)

The human shepherds failed, but God will prevail. The sheep who are wounded, scattered, starving, and lost have great hope. God is coming for them. God is not delegating this work to anyone else. Although He is the most High God and is in a place of royalty and honor, He values the sheep in deep ways that He finds it necessary and proper to search for and seek out His Sheep. God is coming for His people!

The Sheep are Scattered (v. 12)

God declares that He is a shepherd. As a shepherd, God has a flock of sheep that are His people. Just as a shepherd looks for his sheep when they have been scattered, God is looking for and gathering His people. The state of the sheep is such that God declares He will search for, seek, and go into all the places where they have been sent or scattered and rescue them. They are in dark places, unable to find their way to Him, and so God will go into the dark places and find His sheep. The sheep are at risk and He will save them.

The Shepherd Loves His Sheep (v. 13-15)

God's people are living in scattered places. They are living with people to whom they do not belong. They are living in places which are not theirs. In such disarray, they live as foreigners in strange lands. God will go to them. God will find them. He will not leave them where they live. God deeply loves the sheep, and He will go to where they are, call them out to come to Himself, and take them to a place He prepares for them. The land can be understood in the immediate moment, in the near future, and in the eternal future. God is pursuing His people to gather them to Himself and to care for them as they gather. God perfectly loves His sheep, and He demonstrates His love in searching for them, finding them, gathering them, feeding them, caring for them, and living with them for all time. The Good Shepherd loves His sheep!

God Cares for His Sheep (v. 16)

There is an interesting aspect of God showing care for His sheep in this verse. God publicly expresses what He will do to the "not shepherds" who exploited, harmed, killed, starved, and scattered God's people. God uses imagery of fat and strong to describe these degenerate shepherds. God uses these words to describe the "not shepherds" in derogatory ways. The term "fat" shows that they have worshipped their stomachs as idols and have gorged themselves, becoming fat. The term "strong" reveals that these degenerate shepherds have put themselves in a strong position of authority over God's people and have gained more authority, influence, and control while also keeping the people in a place of need, submission, and risk. The "not shepherds" have made themselves strong and have done wicked things in their strong position. God publicly declares that He will destroy the fat and the strong. God's care and shepherding includes provision, protection, and justice. God finishes this verse saying He will feed them in justice. God's actions toward His sheep and towards the degenerate shepherds will be acts of justice. The Good Shepherd cares for His sheep!

The Good Shepherd Rescues His Sheep (SLIDE 6)

Jesus Came Looking for You (SLIDE 7)

- You were scattered, lost, hurting, and starving
- The Good Shepherd left His place, came to you, and searched for you
- The baby born was The Good Shepherd coming for you!

You Were at Risk (SLIDE 8)

- You were manipulated by degenerate shepherds and at risk
- You were in dark places, blinded, ignorant, and unable to find the Good Shepherd
- God is your hope for rescue
- He promised to snatch you from darkness and secure you in peace
- The baby born was the Good Shepherd giving you hope and security!

Jesus Loves and Cares for You (SLIDE 9)

- God found you, fed you, tended your wounds, brought you into His family, God has given you a place to live
 - Now and for Eternity
- The baby born was the Good Shepherd demonstrating the greatest Love and care!

Christmas Response (SLIDE 10)

Celebrate Christmas – Jesus Found You and Showed You God’s Love and Care!

Christmas Life – Join the Search Party!

Read

Luke 15:3-7 ESV (SLIDE 11)

3 So (Jesus) told them this parable: **4** “What man of you, having a hundred sheep, if he has lost one of them, does not leave the ninety-nine in the open country, and go after the one that is lost, until he finds it? **5** And when he has found it, he lays it on his shoulders, rejoicing. **6** And when he comes home, he calls together his friends and his neighbors, saying to them, ‘Rejoice with me, for I have found my sheep that was lost.’ **7** Just so, I tell you, there will be more joy in heaven over one sinner who repents than over ninety-nine righteous persons who need no repentance.

Series Graphic (SLIDE 12)