

Matthew 18:12

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

How think ye? if a man have an hundred sheep, and one of them be gone astray, doth he not leave the ninety and nine, and goeth into the mountains, and seeketh that which is gone astray?

Analysis

This text illustrates key Reformed principles: *sola Scriptura*, *sola gratia*, and *sola fide*. The passage demonstrates how God's Word speaks authoritatively to human need, revealing both our depravity and God's merciful provision through Christ.

Historical Context

First-century Palestine was marked by religious fervor and political tension. The passage reflects interactions between Jesus and various groups: Pharisees, Sadducees, disciples, and crowds. Each audience received teaching tailored to their needs and spiritual condition.

Related Passages

Ephesians 2:8 — Salvation by grace through faith

Romans 10:9 — Confession and belief for salvation

Study Questions

1. What does this text reveal about human nature and God's grace?

2. How can you apply this teaching to current struggles or questions?
3. What changes in thinking or behavior does this passage require?

Interlinear Text

Tí	ὑμῖν	δοκεῖ	έὰν	γένηται	τινὶ	ἀνθρώπῳ	έκατὸν
How	ye	think	if	have	G5100	a man	an hundred
G5101	G5213	G1380	G1437	G1096		G444	G1540
πρόβατα	καὶ	πλανώμενον	ἐν	ἐξ	αὐτῶν	οὐχὶ	ἀφεῖς
sheep	and	be gone astray	one	of	them	not	doth he
G4263	G2532	G4105	G1520	G1537	G846	G3780	G863
τὸ	ἐννενήκονταεννέα,		ἐπὶ	τὸ		Ὥρη	
that which	the ninety and nine		into	that which	the mountains		
G3588	G1768		G1909	G3588	G3735		
πορευθεὶς	ζητεῖ		τὸ	πλανώμενον			
and goeth	and seeketh	that which	be gone astray				
G4198	G2212	G3588	G4105				

Additional Cross-References

Ezekiel 34:12 (Parallel theme): As a shepherd seeketh out his flock in the day that he is among his sheep that are scattered; so will I seek out my sheep, and will deliver them out of all places where they have been scattered in the cloudy and dark day.

Ezekiel 34:16 (Parallel theme): I will seek that which was lost, and bring again that which was driven away, and will bind up that which was broken, and will strengthen that which was sick: but I will destroy the fat and the strong; I will feed them with judgment.

Ezekiel 34:28 (Parallel theme): And they shall no more be a prey to the heathen, neither shall the beast of the land devour them; but they shall dwell safely, and none shall make them afraid.

Ezekiel 34:6 (Parallel theme): My sheep wandered through all the mountains, and upon every high hill: yea, my flock was scattered upon all the face of the earth, and none did search or seek after them.

1 Peter 2:25 (Parallel theme): For ye were as sheep going astray; but are now returned unto the Shepherd and Bishop of your souls.

Isaiah 53:6 (Parallel theme): All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned every one to his own way; and the LORD hath laid on him the iniquity of us all.

Jeremiah 50:6 (Parallel theme): My people hath been lost sheep: their shepherds have caused them to go astray, they have turned them away on the mountains: they have gone from mountain to hill, they have forgotten their restingplace.

Matthew 12:11 (Parallel theme): And he said unto them, What man shall there be among you, that shall have one sheep, and if it fall into a pit on the sabbath day, will he not lay hold on it, and lift it out?

Psalms 119:176 (Parallel theme): I have gone astray like a lost sheep; seek thy servant; for I do not forget thy commandments.

Matthew 21:28 (Parallel theme): But what think ye? A certain man had two sons; and he came to the first, and said, Son, go work to day in my vineyard.