

Episode 59

"Suppose one of you had a hundred sheep and lost one. Wouldn't you leave the ninety-nine in the wilderness and go after the lost one until you found it?"
- Luke 15:4-7

Whenever I read this story, I am reminded of an occasion when I was roped in to go track down a lost sheep on a friend's farm. The family lived in Underberg with land that stretched as far as the eye can see, and we were there because we wanted to show our deep appreciation for the role they had played in my wife giving her life to Jesus.

We had come a long way. My little Uno Fire had barely made it through the rugged terrain most farmers battled with. Dinner was about to be served, the family were gathered together, and the room was electric with the presence and pleasure of God. That was, at least, until we heard that a sheep was missing and we spent the next few hours on the back of a bakkie, bashing our way through bush and badlands to find this one silly sheep.

Rory likes to say that sheep are dumb, dirty and defenseless, but that's too high a complement. This chop - pun intended - had gotten itself stuck down in a valley, meaning we had to abandon the bakkie and make our way down on foot, all the while dreading having to carry a wiggling, wet, stinky sheep all the way back up. At this point I was looking forward to seeing if they break the sheeps leg and put it on their shoulders like I heard back in the city, but no, not even a moan, or rebuke or even the raising of a voice. Instead, we did all the hard work, we got full of the muck and manure stuck to this smelly sheepie, we took it all the way back home and put it with its friends and family, and the sheep lived to wander another day.

Apparently this happened more often than not. Which I am so very grateful to have learned, because exactly the same is true in my life, and my Shepherd has always come to my rescue without a moan, or rebuke, or a speech about how disappointed He is in me. Instead, He has done all the hard work, getting full of the muck and manure I get myself into, always taking me back home, even if it is to live to wander another day.

ONEB33