

Heb 10:23-25

Let us hold fast the profession of our faith without wavering; (for he is faithful that promised;) And let us consider one another to provoke unto love and to good works: Not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as the manner of some is; but exhorting one another: and so much the more, as ye see the day approaching.

In 1999, according to the USDA's National Agricultural Statistic Service, 273,000 sheep and lambs lost their lives from various animal predators. That is quite a staggering number. By nature, sheep are very vulnerable to predators because they are basically defenseless, especially when they are alone. Since they are timid and unable to fight their protection is when they are together and under the watchful care of the shepherd. When they are frightened it is their instinct to run or flee back to the flock, however, when one strays from the flock due to curiosity or sickness, certain peril is likely. It is these stray or straggling sheep that predators are seeking for an easy kill. Throughout the scriptures God's people are likened to sheep. Christ referred to His church as His Flock and His followers as His sheep. He spoke *this parable unto them, saying, What man of you, having an hundred sheep, if he lose one of them, doth not leave the ninety and nine in the wilderness, and go after that which is lost, until he find it? And when he hath found it, he layeth it on his shoulders, rejoicing. And when he cometh home, he calleth together his friends and neighbours, saying unto them, Rejoice with me; for I have found my sheep which was lost* It is a very serious mistake when a sheep or lamb strays from the safety of the flock.....surely a large number of the 273,000 sheep which were killed in 1999 found this to be true. It is no different as it pertains to us as His sheep. We are told in 1 Peter 5:8 to *Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour.* Jesus told His disciples, *Behold, I send you forth as sheep in the midst of wolves: be ye therefore wise as serpents, and harmless as doves.* My friend, we are no match for Satan, the spiritual predator of the world, however, we are aware of his evil methods. The Apostle Paul wrote, *Lest Satan should get an advantage of us: for we are not ignorant of his devices.* One of these methods is to distract or entice us in order to lead us away from the safety of the flock and Shepherd. When we begin to stray from meeting together as a spiritual flock we can be certain peril is also likely in our lives. Isn't this the method in which so many each year lose their lives spiritually and many times physically by falling into spiritual ruin? The Lord desires that we humbly yield our selves under His total protection as our Great and Good Shepherd as we also submit to one another as members of His Flock. Let us keep our eyes off of the lusts and enticements of the world but let us continually look to Him.