



## "WHAT IS YOUR OPINION?"

By Alicia Rodriguez

### Today's Gospel

*Jesus said to his disciples:*

*"What is your opinion?*

*If a man has a hundred sheep and one of them goes astray,  
will he not leave the ninety-nine in the hills  
and go in search of the stray?*

*And if he finds it, amen, I say to you, he rejoices more over it  
than over the ninety-nine that did not stray.*

*In just the same way, it is not the will of your heavenly Father  
that one of these little ones be lost."*

**MATTHEW 18:12-14**

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Upon reflecting on today's gospel, the words "it is not the will of your heavenly father that one of these little ones be lost" really stood out to me. It made me wonder whose will it is! I came to the realization that it is our own free will that

leads us to be lost at times.

I remember as a child going shopping with my mom and being bored out of my mind. My mother had told me to stand next to her as she walked around looking at clothes. It felt like we had been there for ages and the boredom led me to disobey my mother; I went off on my own. I noticed that the clothes racks joined in the center (under all the clothes) and created a perfect chair for a child; however, it also hid me from view.

I remember my mom panicking trying to find me. After she found me, I remember being upset that she grounded me -- because in my mind it was her fault that I walked away because she was taking too long.

Now as an adult, I realize that it was my fault and I very much deserved to be grounded because my mom had given me a simple task ... but I decided to ignore her words.

It makes me wonder: how many times have I acted of my own accord because God is taking too long to answer my prayer? I think of the times where I have been upset with God because things didn't go the way I wanted and I felt like I was being punished .... when in reality, God was just trying to keep me safe.

God rejoices when we make our way back because we choose to do so out of our own free will that has been given to us.

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## For Pondering

- Can you think of a time when you have ignored/disobeyed God and taken matters into your own hands? What was the end result? What do you think the end result would have been if you would have done what God asked of you?
  - What are some ways that you can practice discerning the choices that you make so that they align with God's bigger plan for you?
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## For Prayer

*O God,  
Good Shepherd who leaves the flock for one stray,  
Grant me the humility to recognize that You are all-knowing  
And that Your love for me is infinite.  
Thank You for going out to find me when I choose to go astray.  
Please lead me to a path that brings me closer to You and to others.  
Amen.*

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