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The Hound of Heaven

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The Hound of Heaven

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=lfW9H_T-CLM



"Surely Your goodness and unfailing love will pursue me all the days of my life."

Her name was Jewel, a lovable Labradoodle who occasionally came to our ranch with her owner, Jason, while he helped with various projects.

On this particular day, Jewel had only one thing on her mind—a squirrel she had proudly chased up a tree.

Standing on the deck, I called down to her, but suddenly her hearing had become very selective. It was impossible not to laugh. She sat perfectly still, eyes fixed on that tree, convinced that nothing else in the world mattered except that elusive squirrel.

Many hunting dogs are born with a powerful instinct to pursue their quarry. It's part of their nature, passed down through generations. Watching Jewel reminded me of the classic poem *The Hound of Heaven* by Francis Thompson.

Thompson's own life reflected the poem's message. Once part of a comfortable middle-class family, he descended into homelessness and a devastating opium addiction on the streets of London. Yet even in his darkest days, he sensed God relentlessly pursuing him. After finding redemption and freedom, he penned the poem while recovering, describing a God whose love never stopped chasing His wandering child.

The poem beautifully portrays God's unwavering pursuit of every heart that has drifted from Him.

David expressed this same truth in Psalm 23:6: "Surely Your goodness and unfailing love will pursue me all the days of my life."

Jesus echoed it in His parable of the lost sheep: "Suppose one of you has a hundred sheep and loses one of them. Doesn't he leave the ninety-nine... and go after the lost sheep until he finds it?" (Luke 15:4)

The same message is beautifully captured in Band Reeves' song Outrun You:

"You chased me down through the wind and rain... The Hound of Heaven kept calling my name... Finally hit my knees... No matter where my wandering heart ran to, I couldn't outrun You."

What comforting news for every one of us. We serve a God who refuses to abandon His children. He pursues us with mercy instead of condemnation, with grace instead of rejection, and with a love that never grows weary.

Like Jewel, whose eyes never left that tree, may we never lose sight of the One whose eyes have never left us. The Hound of Heaven is still pursuing every wandering heart—not to punish, but to rescue; not to condemn, but to bring us safely home.

Closing Prayer Father, thank You for never giving up on us. Even when we wander, Your love continues to pursue us with patience, mercy, and grace. Help us to stop running, to trust Your heart completely, and to rest in the peace only You can give. Amen.

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