



prayer *life!*

Weekly Prayer Focus

August 4, 2019

The Rescue

So he told them this parable: "What man of you, having a hundred sheep, if he has lost one of them, does not leave the ninety-nine in the open country, and go after the one that is lost, until he finds it? And when he has found it, he lays it on his shoulders, rejoicing. And when he comes home, he calls together his friends and his neighbors, saying to them, 'Rejoice with me, for I have found my sheep that was lost.' Just so, I tell you, there will be more joy in heaven over one sinner who repents than over ninety-nine righteous persons who need no repentance. —Luke 15:3-7

Jesus' story is a parable, not a fable. We don't live in a world of fantasy and myth but of history, and history is God's story. God's story is no endless cyclical conflicts, with epic protagonists and antagonists constantly vying for, achieving, then losing the victory. God's story is a rescue. Jesus is the rescuer, and He calls His people to be rescuers too.

People need to know that they are lost but loved, and the Church's mission is to acquaint them with this truth. Jesus' familiar story reveals our place in the world, God's love for the lost, and how lost humanity can connect with God. His point, though, is to remind us that His people are called not just to avoid sin but to seek the lost.

Mourned Loss: *All we like sheep have gone astray. We have turned—every one—to his own way (Isaiah 53:6a).* Everyone on earth shares that lost sheep's predicament. We've all strayed from our Maker and desperately need to find Him again. Our loss matters immensely to God, and His glory is on display in His efforts to save our fallen race.

We are lost by choice, and living the consequences of our own actions—separation from the God who loves us. Politics, science, education, ethics, morality etc. are all feeble attempts to fix what we have broken. Whether we ignore God, blame Him, or deny that He exists, the fact remains. A good God made us, but we've strayed from Him. All human energy is directed at futile attempts to make our world right. But the fact remains that we are hopelessly lost and need to be found.

The Hunt: From the beginning, God has been seeking lost humanity. As soon as Adam and Eve ate the forbidden fruit, they ran from God, when they heard His voice in the garden. Fear replaced fellowship, and their good God was now bad news. But after God dealt with their sin and informed them of its consequences, He provided the covering they desperately need but could never provide for themselves. God is the hunter who saves, and we live every day, only by His grace.

Celebrated Recovery: We are valuable, because God values us. No attempts at goodness can add to our worth. God loves us with an everlasting love and paid an infinite price to purchase our salvation. *For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life (John 3:16).* So heaven rejoices whenever anyone turns to Christ.

God's law is our teacher, and growing up involves learning to follow the rules, do good, and reject evil. But what's necessary is not enough. When obedience leads us to hate sinners, we've forgotten who we really are apart from Christ. We've left grace and put ourselves under God's condemnation along with those we condemn.

Our world is a mess, but no amount of laws, rules, or legislation will fix it. Our nation has abandoned Christ, but we'll never drive others to Him by denouncing misbehavior. God is love and He'll win the world back to Himself through His people, when we love Him by loving those who need Him and rejoicing when they return to Him.

To the praise of His glory.

Prayer

Ask God to make rescuers out of us at Northpoint. Pray that His Word will transform us into His image, so we can do the work He calls us to. Ask Him to develop in us a heart that desires to seek and to save the lost and to make disciples of Christ in this lost world.

Also, ask God to lead us to pastoral team who will equip and lead us to be like Christ and reach our lost world. Pray to take on the heart of the Redeemer who seeks to save His lost creation.

Continue to pray for our pastors and elders.

- 1. Our Pastors and Directors:** Scott Williams, Tony Chute, Taylor Mendoza, Terilyn Brown, Geoff Grant, and Marti Wiegman.
- 2. Our Lay Elders:** Tim East, Steve Flood, Mark Kiker, Mike Russell, Vinoj Zechariah, and new elders who come onto the board.
- 3. Our Church Staff:** Michelle Balga, Bob Brown, Andria Brucks, Chelsae Grant, Carolee Jefferson, Amber McEwen, Tamene Menna, Mark Norland, Corie Saunders, and Teri Vaughn.

Praise Record

Note when and how God answers your prayers. It will help you to see that He really is paying attention.

Date	Request	Date	Answer

For you were straying like sheep, but have now returned to the Shepherd and Overseer of your souls.
—Hebrews 11:6