The Good Shepherd

When Joseph's brothers stood before Pharaoh in Egypt, Pharaoh asked them, *"What is your occupation?"* (Gen. 47.3). They answered, *"Your servants are shepherds, both we and also our fathers"* (Gen. 47.3). Today, God has a spiritual flock, and that flock is the church (Acts 20.28). Actually, the Bible sets before us three shepherds: God is our Shepherd (Ps. 23.1), Jesus is the Good Shepherd (John 10.11), and the elders collectively shepherd the local congregation (1 Pet. 5.1,2). What is the purpose and function of a shepherd?

First, a shepherd feeds the flock. In Hebrew, the word for shepherd is *ro'eh*, meaning "one who feeds" (Gen. 46.32). In the New Testament, the Greek word is *poimen*, which also carries the idea of feeding and tending with affection (1 Pet. 5.2). Unlike the selfish shepherds of Israel who fed themselves while the flock starved (Ezek. 34.2,3), a true shepherd feeds the church the pure word of God (John 21.15-17) so our souls can lie down in *"green pastures"* fully satisfied (Ps. 23.2).

Second, a shepherd protects the flock. Paul told the Ephesian elders to *"take heed to yourselves and to all the flock, among which the Holy Spirit has made you overseers, to shepherd the church of God"* (Acts 20.28). "Overseers" comes from the Greek word *episkopos*. *Epi*, over. *Skopos*, to watch. Put it together, and a shepherd watches over the sheep because *"savage wolves will come in among you, not sparing the flock"* (Acts 20.29). In biblical times, a shepherd led his sheep into a natural cul-de-sac at night and lay down across the opening, literally becoming the door (John 10.7,9). Unlike a hireling who flees from danger (John 10.12,13), true shepherds guard the flock from false doctrine and sin.

Third, a shepherd leads and admonishes the flock. A shepherd does not lord his authority over God's people. He labors *"among"* the brethren as an example (1 Pet. 5.2,3). As God's steward, he leads the sheep in *"the paths of righteousness"* (Ps. 23.3) and uses the rod of God's word to gently warn, correct, and restore those who wander away (Ps. 23.4; Ezek. 34.4).

The Hebrew writer urges us, *"Obey those who rule over you, and be submissive, for they watch out for your souls, as those who must give account"* (Heb. 13.17). When we follow our Good Shepherd, we can walk toward heaven with contentment, courage, and confidence. Do you know the Shepherd? CLP

Northside Church of Christ **November 1, 2026**
2424 McCarran St.
North Las Vegas, NV 89030
(702) 642-3141 **www.nlvchurchofchrist.com**

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2424 McCarran St. | North Las Vegas, NV | 89030
Phone: (702) 642-3141 Email: pruittlc@nlvhchurchofchrist.com
Watch us live at www.nlvchurchofchrist.com
Youtube: Northside Las Vegas Church of Christ

"Go into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature"
-Mark 16.15

November 1, 2026

Meeting Times:
Sunday Morning Bible Class : 9:00 am
Sunday Morning Worship: 9:50 am
Sunday Evening Worship: 6:00 pm
Wednesday Evening Bible Class 7:00 pm

The Meaning of Thanksgiving

Can you believe we are already at that time of the year? Last night was Halloween, and we are now officially in the holiday season. It will only be a few weeks before Thanksgiving. So for the next four articles, we will be thinking about a heart of thanksgiving.

Thanksgiving is a foundational principle in the Bible. The word, "thanks" or "thanksgiving" appears over a hundred and thirty times in the Bible. Entire psalms center around giving thanks (Ps. 100). The peace offering was called a *"sacrifice of thanksgiving"* (Lev. 7.11-13). The Feast of Tabernacles was a celebration where the children of Israel rejoiced over God blessing them in their harvest (Deut. 16.15).

In the New Testament, Jesus sets before us an example of being thankful. Seven times Jesus gave thanks to God in prayer (Matt. 26.26; John 6.11; 11.41). You and I are commanded, *"in everything give thanks"* (1 Thess. 5.18). The word "thanks" is in the verb form of a continuous action. Even during difficult times, when we take our concerns to God, we are to do so *"with thanksgiving"* (Phil. 4.6).

We are more blessed than we will ever realize. Most of the blessings in our lives are taken for granted. To open your eyes in the morning is a blessing. To have food, clothing, and shelter is a blessing. We have innumerable spiritual blessings (Eph. 1.3). When we take the time to count our blessings, "it will surprise us what the Lord has done." CLP

From Defiance to Repentance

2 Samuel 12:13

Introduction:

1. Psalm 51 was written by David after he sinned with Bathsheba.
   a) Grace: David appeals to the grace of God. (Ps. 51.1)
   b) Guilt: David expressed guilt over his sin. (Ps. 51.1-3)
   c) Guile: David did *"evil in Your sight."* (Ps. 51.4)
2. What turned David from being defiant to developing a heart of contrition and repenting of his sins?

I. UNDERSTANDING THE TEXT

A. The commission of Nathan.
   1. **2 Samuel 12.1:** *"Then the LORD sent Nathan"*
   2. LORD (YHWH): The self-existing One. (Rev. 4.8)

B. The parable of Nathan.
   1. **2 Samuel 12.1-4:** Natahn tells David a parable.
   2. **2 Samuel 12.5,6:** David reacts to the parable.

C. The conviction of Nathan.
   1. **2 Samuel 12.7:** *"You are the man!"*
   2. **2 Samuel 12.7-12,14:** David sinned in spite of what God did for him. Thus punishment is coming.

D. The change that happened in David.
   1. **2 Samuel 12.13:** *"I have sinned against the LORD"*
   2. **2 Samuel 12.13-15:** God forgives, but there are consequences for sin. (cf. Lev. 20.10)

II. APPLYING THE TEXT

A. **2 Corinthians 7.10:** *"godly sorrow produces repentance"*
   1. Godly sorrow: Feeling grief because of our sin.
   2. Produces (katergomai): To work down.
   3. Repentance (metanoao): Change the way you think.

B. How can we bring grief into hearts when we sin?
   1. Paint a relatable word picture. (cf. 1 Sam. 16.11)
   2. Answer God's question, "Why?" (2 Sam. 12.9)
   3. Remind them of the consequences. (2 Sam. 12.14)

Conclusion: David named his third son after the man who brought his sin to his attention.

What Seems Right to You

How do you decide what is right and wrong? How do you determine the correct way to believe? Our culture insists that truth is relative. Right and wrong is measured by personal opinion. What we believe is determined by personal experience. So how you define what is right is not the same as how I define it. But the Bible presents righteousness and what we believe as matters of objective truth.

It is common for people to come to the conclusion of what is right and wrong from what they feel in their hearts. Many suggest, "follow your heart" and "trust your gut." However, there is an inherent danger of developing a belief system on personal opinions, feelings, and experiences. The prophet Jeremiah warns that *"The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked; Who can know it?"* (Jer. 17.9). Everyone has a heart that guides them, but more often than not, the heart will lead you astray.

We might also consider the warnings of Solomon. The Holy Spirit directed the wise man to write that *"there is a way that seems right to a man, but its end is the way of death"* (Prov. 14.12). You cannot rely on your own perception. You cannot assume that something is right just because it seems right to you. Earlier in his writings, Solomon writes, *"Trust in the LORD with all your heart, and lean not on your own understanding"* (Prov. 3.5). Look at the contrast. I might come to my own conclusions because of my own experiences or personal convictions. But I am not to depend on those conclusions as being right. Instead, I am to trust in the teachings of God.

The Bible does not present truth as subjective. Pilate asked, *"What is truth?"* (John 18.38). Jesus had already explained to Pilate that He came *"to bear witness to the truth"* (John 18.37). In the same verse, He said that *"everyone who is of the truth hears My voice."* Just one chapter earlier, Jesus prayed to the Father and said, *"Your word is truth"* (John 17.17). The way that I determine what to believe and what is right is to listen to the teachings of Jesus and the revealed word of God. Our belief system is not to be developed from subjective opinions. The word of God is to be the standard by which every belief is measured.

Jesus said that *"And you shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free"* (John 8.32). Contextually, Jesus was offering a promise of freedom from the bondage of sin (John 8.34-36). But the truth that makes you free is not a subjective interpretation. Back up one verse, and Jesus said, *"If you abide in My word, you are My disciples indeed"* (John 8.31). It is only when I live inside the objective truth spoken by Jesus that true freedom from sins is found. CLP