Lost and Found - Luke 15
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I. Introduction
   a. I lose things, Rachel finds them
      i. Jesus is rebuked for associating too closely with sinful people
         1. Tax collectors – like Matthew and Zacchaeus
         2. Notable sinners – like the woman who wept at his feet and countless others who were taught and comforted by him
      ii. He tells three parables to rebuke those who would be offended with his message of repentance, restoration and hope for hopeless sinners

II. KEY THOUGHT – God is interested in seeking and saving the lost, we must participate and cheer on this work of reconciliation

III. The Lost Sheep (v. 4-7)
   a. God is like shepherd
      i. Not a wealthy one
      ii. He only has 100 sheep
   b. Focus - The sheep that was lost v. 6
      i. God seeks the lost out of compassion for the predicament they find themselves in
      ii. And the hopelessness of their position
   c. Why more rejoicing over the sinner who repents?

IV. The Lost Coin (v. 8-10)
   a. God is like a humble woman sweeping a dirt floor
      i. She only has 10 coins
      ii. She cannot spare a single penny
   b. Focus – the coin I have lost
      i. God seeks the lost because the lost soul has intrinsic value to him that He is seeking to recover
      ii. We are precious in His sight
   c. In both cases
      i. Rejoicing
      ii. Calls for others to participate in that joy
   d. How did Jesus feel about his project of seeking and saving the lost?
      i. Didn’t he desire others to join with him in rejoicing over his success?
      ii. Didn’t he long for others to join with him in his work of seeking the lost?
      iii. How often did he find those who were like minded?
      iv. What about us?

V. The Lost Son (v. 11-32)
   a. The Younger Brother
i. The horror of his descent into wickedness and misery
   1. Was a nobleman’s son, enjoying wealth, privilege, love and fellowship
   2. There might be something better – freedom from responsibility, restraint, dependence
   3. Departure from home – causing bitterness, sorrow, and guilt
   4. A far country – living in sin is living far from home no matter where you are
   5. Wasted his substance in riotous living
   6. Famine -> Nothing
   7. Slave to sin
   8. Involved in an occupation that would be perhaps the most detestable imaginable to a Jewish mind
      a. Feeding pigs and eating pig food

ii. There is no seeking, there is no sweeping
   1. Just watching

iii. This parable is about the lonely choice of deciding that sin is not worth it
   1. Each individual has to get sick of sin and turn away from it
   2. He could have done it sooner and acted more nobly
   3. But many will not give up sin until they have squeezed every deceitful pleasure out of it, and it has long since ceased to yield anything but corruption, decay, poison and pain in their lives
   4. Then, they finally turn their eyes back to the Father whose love they long ago scorned and ran away from
   5. And think, what have I done

iv. He is welcomed back
   1. He has truly repented, He confesses
   2. He is fully forgiven, accepted and restored
   3. What a joy, what a blessing!
   4. No matter how low a person may go in sin, they can return
      a. But that should be no encouragement to become lax with sin
      b. For every prodigal who returns, how many never, ever, ever come back?

b. The Older Brother
   i. The first two parables described what the Pharisees and religious leaders of his day should have done
      1. This part of the parable describes what they actually were doing
      2. For them God’s amazing grace was an offensive sound when it saved a wretch so much unlike them, in their own opinion
   ii. Is offended by the acceptance of the younger brother
1. Here the Pharisees and Jewish leaders are being perfectly portrayed
2. And urged to repent as well
3. They are working for the Father
4. But they cannot accept the return of the sinful brother
   a. They cannot call him brother, only “this son of yours”
   b. The parable sternly but with veiled language described his sinfulness
   c. The older brother seems to know all the details and relish casting them out against his brother, “he has devoured your livelihood with harlots”
   d. He is blind to his own faults, if he has any
      i. I have never transgressed your commandment at any time
   e. He is blind to the blessings he has received and to which he is entitled
      i. You never gave me a young goat
      ii. But he gets a fatted calf
   f. He is unable to accept fellowship even with the father if it requires accepting his younger brother
      i. He refused to go in

iii. Was it only for the Pharisees that this was written?
   1. How do we think of those who are weak in the faith
   2. Who sin over and over again
   3. Who have turned their back on the faith
   4. Who are acting shamefully before the world and cause the enemies of the Lord to blaspheme him and His church?
   5. How do we feel if they repent?
      a. In general, this congregation passes this test very well
      b. But it is easy to be self-righteous
         i. Forget we are sinners too
         ii. To hold weak Christians at arms-length
         iii. To hold their weaknesses over their heads
         iv. It ought not to be that way

VI. Application
   a. For the Found
      i. We must be like our Lord and Master
         1. Eager to find the lost
            a. Because of compassion they are sick and helpless and ready to die
               i. So eager that we will seek them out at great hazard and cost to bring them back to the fold
               ii. Rejoice greatly when they are restored
b. Because of the great value their precious soul represents to our Heavenly Father
   i. Search every corner to find them
   ii. Rejoice greatly when they are restored
2. Join with him in that work (Luke 19:10)

b. For the Lost
   i. God is looking for you
   ii. The saint are seeking your recovery
   iii. But like the younger son, only you can decide whether you will keep clinging to the dead corpse of sin seeking comfort and solace there, or if you will face whatever shame and difficulty may be demanded by repentance, in order to hear the God who made you say, “Bring out the best robe, a ring and sandals, let us feast and be merry, for this child of mine was dead and is alive again, was lost and is found”

VII. Conclusion
   a. Are you lost or found?
   b. Come to Jesus
   c. Invitation