

Lost and Found - Luke 15

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- I. Introduction
 - a. I lose things, Rachel finds them
 - b. In Luke 15: 1-3
 - 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

