

=FAVORITE BIBLE CHAPTERS=

Lesson 2

Luke 15

INTRODUCTION: Jesus had been talking to sinners and trying to help them. The Pharisees began to murmur against Him in Luke 15:1 and 2. They criticized Him because He received sinners and ate with them. In other words, they were critical that He was concerned about the need and condition of sinners. To refute this attack, He gives the parable of the sheep, the parable of the lost coin, and the parable of the lost son, showing the world His love for sinners and His desire for them to come back to Himself.

I. THE PARABLE OF THE LOST SHEEP.

1. In the Bible unsaved people are called "lost sheep." Far too often we liken the lost sheep to the Christian who has drifted away, but this is not so. Jesus calls lost people lost sheep in Matthew 15:24, "But he answered and said, I am not sent but unto the lost sheep of the house of Israel." He likens lost people to lost sheep in Isaiah 53:6, "All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned every one to his own way; and the LORD hath laid on him the iniquity of us all." This is trying to show us the truth of I Timothy 1:15, "This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptance, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners; of whom I am chief."
2. The shepherd left the ninety and nine in the wilderness. See Luke 15:4. There is a song that says, "There were ninety and nine that safely lay in the shelter of the fold." The song is not true. These ninety and nine were not in the shelter of the fold; they were in the wilderness. However, there was much more concern for the one who had gone astray than for the ninety and nine, even though they were in the wilderness.
3. The shepherd went to get the lost sheep. Notice the word "go" in Luke 15:4. He did not "invite" the lost sheep home; he went to "get" him; he "sought" him. This is a picture of personal soul winning. We are not only to invite sinners to come to our church and come to Christ; we are to go seek them and bring them to Christ.
4. The shepherd sought until the sheep was found. Notice how long he sought. Notice in Luke 15:4 the words, "until he find it." He continued seeking; He did not give up.
5. The shepherd laid the sheep on his shoulders and carried him back. Notice Luke 15:5. This is the security of salvation; there is no "holding on"; there is complete security. The shepherd found the sheep and brought him back on his own shoulders.
6. The shepherd rejoiced! See Luke 15:6. He said to his friends and neighbors, "Rejoice with me; for I have found my sheep which was lost." This is why we read names at the altar when lost sheep come to God. God is concerned about them and wants us to rejoice when they come back. The same thing is found in Luke 15:9 and Luke 15:22-24 in the other two parables.
7. There was much rejoicing! Notice this in Luke 15:7. There is more joy over one sinner that repents "than over ninety and nine just persons, which need no repentance." How vital it is for us to be after the lost!

II. THE PARABLE OF THE LOST COIN. Here is a very interesting parable. A woman had 10 pieces of silver. These were not just 10 pieces of silver or 10 coins in her purse. These were coins worn on a cord or attached to a chain, making either a frontlet for her head or a necklace to be worn around her neck. It was given by the husband to the lady at marriage, much like a wedding ring is given now. These 10 coins were attached to each other and worn around the neck near the heart picturing the love of Christ for us. He wears us near His heart. The woman had lost one of the coins. This is much like a lady today losing her wedding ring. "Oh, what will my husband think when he returns?" she thought. "I must find it before he gets back!" Now this coin was worth only 15 to 20 cents in money, but it was worth everything to this lady. This shows something of the love of Christ and His desire to receive sinners back to Himself.

1. She lit a candle. See Luke 15:8. Why should she light a candle? The house was dark. That's where lost people are. Men love darkness because their deeds are evil. This is a dark world. We are to go into the darkness of this world and find the unsaved.
2. She swept the house. Notice this in Luke 15:8. In other words, we are to clean the house. The churches that find the most lost people are those that have the "cleanest houses." We are to be clean and separate from the world, thereby being able to find the unsaved more easily.

3. She sought diligently. See Luke 15:8. In other words, she sought with all of her heart to find the lost coin. Nothing else mattered; there was only one thing that she wanted to do. This should be the feeling of every Christian. We should diligently seek the unsaved.
4. She sought until the coin was found. Notice the words, “till she find it,” in Luke 15:8. She did not give up. She continued. It was the consuming passion of her life.
5. There was rejoicing! See Luke 15:9, 10. This is like unto the joy in verse 7.

III. THE PARABLE OF THE LOST SON. (Teacher: Tell the story of the prodigal son. Tell how he left home and was loved by his father.) One of the most interesting things about this story is the son who stayed at home. When the prodigal son returned home, he got all the attention. The son who stayed home became angry and said that he had never left. Why didn't he get the attention? Now we are back to the first part of this chapter. Remember, the Pharisees were criticizing Jesus for paying so much attention to sinners. Now this son who stayed at home is acting like the Pharisees. Our Lord is teaching them a lesson, and He likens them to this son.

CONCLUSION: Notice how much the Lord loves the unsaved. In the first parable, there was one lost sheep out of 100; in the second parable, there was one lost coin out of 10; in the third parable, there was one lost boy of only two. It matters not how many folks are saved or how many folks are lost. As long as there is one outside the fold, our Lord is burdened about him, concerned about him, and wants him to return. Jesus came into the world to save sinners. Luke 19:10 says, “For the Son of man is come to seek and to save that which was lost.” There is nothing as near to the heart of God as reaching unsaved people. This is why our church is continually after people who are not saved. The more we reach the lost, the more we will have all kinds of people coming to our services. They will sometimes disgust us, sometimes disappoint us, and sometimes nauseate us. They will not be the kind of people who will keep our buildings clean or help keep the behavior like it ought to be. The atmosphere will be a little uneasy, but these are sinners! These are the ones who are represented by the lost sheep, the lost coin, and the lost boy. These are the ones Jesus loves the most. Remember, He was interested in a Mary Magdalene, possessed of seven devils; a wicked Zacchæus, who was hated by all; the thief on the cross, who was dying because of his crime; and others. Our Lord loved sinners. He received sinners. May we do likewise!