



“Lost and Found”

Part 1

Luke 15:1-10

August 27, 2023

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2 Both the Pharisees and the scribes began to grumble, saying, "This man receives sinners and eats with them."

3 So He told them this parable, saying,

4 "What man among you, if he has a hundred sheep and has lost one of them, does not leave the ninety-nine in the open pasture and go after the one which is lost until he finds it?"

5 "When he has found it, he lays it on his shoulders, rejoicing.

6 "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 which was lost!'

7 "I tell you that in the same way, there will be more joy in heaven over one sinner who repents than over ninety-nine righteous persons who need no repentance.

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1 **Now all the tax collectors and the sinners were coming near Him to listen to Him.**

“tax collectors” - were not government employees. They were entrepreneurs. Franchise owners. Exploiters, extortionists, “loan sharks”.

- They were despised. But not to God . . .

Luke 18:10-14

10 "Two men went up into the temple to pray, one a Pharisee and the other a tax collector.

11 "The Pharisee stood and was praying this to himself: 'God, I thank You that I am not like other people: swindlers, unjust, adulterers, or even like this tax collector.

12 'I fast twice a week; I pay tithes of all that I get.'

13 "But the tax collector, standing some distance away, was even unwilling to lift up his eyes to heaven, but was beating his breast, saying, 'God, be merciful to me, the sinner!'

14 "I tell you, this man went to his house justified rather than the other; for everyone who exalts himself will be humbled, but he who humbles himself will be exalted."

Matt 21:31

31 Jesus said to them, "Truly I say to you that the tax collectors and prostitutes will get into the kingdom of God before you.

1 Now all the tax collectors and the sinners were coming near Him to listen to Him.

- “sinners” - outcasts from society – the poor, the sick, the diseased, the prostitutes, the adulterers, thieves, gamblers, criminals, the scum of society.
- But these are the ones coming to Jesus.
- They come because Jesus has come to them.
- They have little. What do they have to lose? One who has nothing has nothing to lose.

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- 6 “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 which was lost!’”
- 7 “I tell you that in the same way, there will be more joy in heaven over one sinner who repents than over ninety-nine righteous persons who need no repentance.
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- But Jesus knows He is talking to people who are lost; tax collectors, lost; sinners, lost; Pharisees, lost; teachers of the law, lost; Scribes, lost; Sadducees, lost; Sanhedrin, lost.
- Eating to the Pharisees = contamination. Eating involves the same loaf, dipping in the same bowl, drinking of the same cup. Taking in the same food.
- However, Jesus received sinners - He ate with them – they felt comfortable enough to draw near to Him. He accepted their invitations.
- How do sinners feel around you?

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- Jesus will now tell them 3 parables. Like a song with 3 verses. Same theme, just different words.
- A sheep is lost. 1 of 100. Leaves the others to go find the lost sheep.
- It is hard work to find a lost sheep. Where do you start? Rocks, hills, crevices, rough terrain.
- Man has been lost since the Fall. God is seeking Adam after his sin.

Rom 5:6

6 For while we were still helpless, at the right time Christ died for the ungodly.

- Think what it means to be lost in this world – Who are you? Where are you? Where did you come from? Where are you going? What is your purpose for being here? What road should you take? What are your morals, values, standards?
- So who does the seeking – is it the sheep or is it God?

Scripture teaches us:

- I chose Him because He first chose me. (John 15:16)
- I love Him because He first loved me. (1 Jn. 4:19)
- I found Him because he first found me. (Luke 15:4)

If God does not do the seeking, no one will ever be found.

John 4:23

23 “But an hour is coming, and now is, when the true worshipers will worship the Father in spirit and truth; for such people the Father seeks to be His worshipers.”

The late Bible teacher, Harry Ironside, told of a new convert who gave his testimony at a church service. With a smile on his face and joy in his heart, the man related how he had been delivered from a life of sin. He gave the Lord all the glory, saying nothing about anything that he had done. The person in charge of the meeting was a legalistic man who did not understand the fact that salvation is totally by God's grace, apart from human merit or works. So he responded to the young man's comments by saying, "You seem to indicate that God did everything when He saved you. Didn't you do your part before God did His?" The new Christian jumped to his feet and said, "Oh, yes, I did. For more than 30 years I ran away from God as fast as my sins could carry me. That was my part. But God took out after me and ran me down. That was His part."

5 "When he has found it, he lays it on his shoulders, rejoicing.

- Average sheep weighs 80-250 lbs.



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- 6 "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 which was lost!'"
- 7 "I tell you that in the same way, there will be more joy in heaven over one sinner who repents than over ninety-nine righteous persons who need no repentance."
- 8 "Or what woman, if she has ten silver coins and loses one coin, does not light a lamp and sweep the house and search carefully until she finds it?"
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- The shepherd is so happy, that the weight matters little.

Heb 12:2

2 fixing our eyes on Jesus, the author and perfecter of faith, who for the **joy set before Him endured the cross**, despising the shame, and has sat down at the right hand of the throne of God.

John 10:27-29

- 27 "My sheep hear My voice, and I know them, and they follow Me;
- 28 and I give eternal life to them, and they will never perish; and **no one will snatch them out of My hand.**
- 29 "My Father, who has given them to Me, is greater than all; and **no one is able to snatch them out of the Father's hand.**

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"friends and neighbors" – this joy must be shared with others.

- So the shepherd calls others to experience the joy of finding a lost sheep.

7 "I tell you that in the same way, there will be more joy in heaven over one sinner who repents than over ninety-nine righteous persons who need no repentance.

- Great celebration. Cheering, shouting, rejoicing, fireworks.
- **Note:** It is a celebration that needs to be shared.
- **Note:** Repentance is important.
- **Think about it:** Of all the events going on in our world, this is the most significant. Everything else pales in comparison to that which has eternal value.

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Luke 19:10

- 10 "For the Son of Man has come to seek and to save that which was lost."

But aren't we glad He has found us? . . .

"A family put the following ad in the "Lost and Found" section of the paper: "Lost Dog: Crippled in front paw, blind in left eye, mange on back and neck, tail missing. Recently neutered. Answers to the name 'Lucky'" He truly was a lucky dog, because in spite of all that was wrong with him, somebody loved him enough to want him. Actually, we're all lucky dogs. Even better, we're blessed dogs. God loves us out of sheer grace. Marvel of marvels! Wonder of wonders! God loves us with an everlasting love."

- Adrian Rogers

Amazing Grace

Amazing Grace, how sweet the sound,
That saved a wretch like me.

I once was lost but now am found,
Was blind, but now I see.

-John Newton

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- Luke again uses a woman as an example to raise their status.
- Opposite of the Pharisees.
- Coin is lost and she frantically works to find it.
- Dirt floors. Poor lighting.
- Silver coin = 1 days wage.

9 "When she has found it, she calls together her friends and neighbors, saying, 'Rejoice with me, for I have found the coin which I had lost!'"

- Notice she has same reaction as the shepherd - celebration.
- Interesting that a coin is used as, even though lost, it still would bear the image of the emperor.
- Every person, even though lost, bears the image of God upon their life.

10 "In the same way, I tell you, there is joy in the presence of the angels of God over one sinner who repents."

- Always the same pattern –
 1. The lost are lost.
 2. God does the seeking.
 3. When the lost are found there is rejoicing in heaven.
- So who is rejoicing?
 - Lord Jesus.
 - God the Father.
 - Holy Spirit.
 - Angels.

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Application

1. If you have been found, it is the result of a sovereign, loving, gracious God who searched for you and found you.
2. Working in God's "lost and found" dept. is a great job.
3. Therefore let us go eat with tax collectors and sinners this week.