

THE PARABLE OF THE LOSTS:

SHEEP

Luke 15:1-7

COIN

Luke 15:8-10

SON

Luke 15:11-32

Ms

main street

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BIBLE VERSE

COMMITTING TO MEMORY

Luke 15:32

...we had to celebrate and be glad, because this brother of yours was dead and is alive again; he was lost and is found.



STORY LESSON

BIBLE STORY

¹By this time a lot of men and women of doubtful reputation were hanging around Jesus, listening intently. ²The Pharisees and religion scholars were not pleased, not at all pleased. They growled, "He takes in sinners and eats meals with them, treating them like old friends." ³Their grumbling triggered this story.

[Luke 15:1-3]

// lost_sheep //

⁴"Suppose one of you had a hundred sheep and lost one. Wouldn't you leave the ninety-nine in the wilderness and go after the lost one until you found it?

⁵When found, you can be sure you would put it across your shoulders, rejoicing, ⁶and when you got home call in your friends and neighbors, saying, "Celebrate with me! I've found my lost sheep!" ⁷Count on it--there's more joy in heaven over one sinner's rescued life than over ninety-nine good people in no need of rescue.

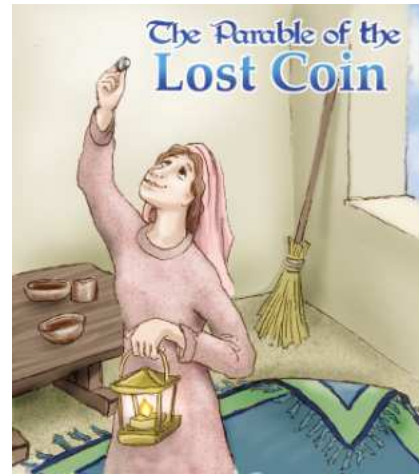
[Luke 15:4-7]



// lost_coin //

⁸"Or imagine a woman who has ten coins and loses one. Won't she light a lamp and scour the house, looking in every nook and cranny until she finds it? ⁹And when she finds it you can be sure she'll call her friends and neighbors: "Celebrate with me! I found my lost coin!" ¹⁰Count on it--that's the kind of party God's angels throw every time one lost soul turns to God."

[Luke 15:8-10]



// lost_son //

¹¹Then he said, "There was once a man who had two sons. ¹²The younger said to his father, 'Father, I want right now what's coming to me.' So the father divided the property between them.

¹³It wasn't long before the younger son packed his bags and left for a distant country. There, undisciplined and dissipated, he wasted everything he had. ¹⁴After he had gone through all his money, there was a bad famine all through that country and he began to hurt. ¹⁵He signed on with a citizen there who assigned him to his fields to slop the pigs. ¹⁶He was so hungry he would have eaten the corn cobs in the pig slop, but no one would give him any.

¹⁷That brought him to his senses. He said, 'All those farmhands working for my father sit down to three meals a day, and here I am starving to death. ¹⁸I'm going back to my father. I'll say to him, "Father, I've sinned against God, I've sinned before you; ¹⁹I don't deserve to be called your son. Take me on as a hired hand.'" ²⁰He got right up and went home to his father.



When he was still a long way off, his father saw him. His heart pounding, he ran out, embraced him, and kissed him.

²¹The son started his speech: 'Father, I've sinned against God, I've sinned before you; I don't deserve to be called your son ever again.'

²²But the father wasn't listening. He was calling to the servants, 'Quick. Bring a dean set of clothes and dress him. Put the family ring on his finger and sandals on his feet. ²³Then get a grain-fed heifer and roast it. We're

going to feast! We're going to have a wonderful time! ²⁴My son is here--given up for dead and now alive! Given up for lost and now found!' And they began to have a wonderful time.

²⁵All this time his older son was out in the field. When the day's work was done he came in. As he approached the house, he heard the music and dancing. ²⁶Calling over one of the houseboys, he asked what was going on. ²⁷He told him, 'Your brother came home. Your father has ordered a feast--barbecued beef!-because he has him home safe and sound.'

²⁸The older brother stalked off in an angry sulk and refused to join in. His father came out and tried to talk to him, but he wouldn't listen. ²⁹The son said, 'Look how many years I've

stayed here serving you, never giving you one moment of grief, but have you ever thrown a party for me and my friends? ³⁰Then this son of yours who has thrown away your money on whores shows up and you go all out with a feast!

³¹His father said, 'Son, you don't understand. You're with me all the time, and everything that is mine is yours-- ³²but this is a wonderful time, and we had to celebrate. This brother of yours was dead, and he's alive! He was lost, and he's found!'"

[Luke 15:11-32]





LIFE APPLICATION

MAKING IT REAL

God Seeks the Lost

It would seem very explicit through these parables that Jesus is emphasizing that God seeks after the lost. Jesus was pretty frustrated with the religious leaders of the day criticizing him for spending time with the ruffians of society. Jesus was reminding them through the parables that the purpose of the people of God was to seek and to save the lost, to be a light to all the nations. The only light the religious leaders were being was a light unto themselves. The mandate of God's people is not the management of itself, rather the enactment of God's kind of world in the current, contemporary world. Jesus was being for Israel, what Israel could not do for herself.

Thrust of the Parable?

These parables are rather harsh and pointed toward the religious leaders. Most of us assume that the parable of the lost son (prodigal son) has at its focus the return and acceptance of one who is lost but is now found. And yes, that is a perfectly true picture of God our heavenly father's heart. However, the thrust of the parable is on the ending of the story with the reaction and harsh words of the elder brother. Jesus was referring to Israel as the elder brother and critical of how they were treating those who they thought should stay lost because of their bad behavior and wicked ways—even though they may be repentant. God's kingdom is not an exclusive club, but a wide open invite for those who want to live God's kind of way, the entrance of which is extremely forgiving, laced with mercy and grace.



QUESTIONS

REMEMBERING

1. What was "lost" in the first story ? A sheep
2. What was "lost" in the second story? A coin
3. What was "lost" in the third story? A son
4. What does God think about "lost" things, people? He wants them to be found
5. Do you know anyone who is "lost" and needs to be found by God?



COLORING SHEET

ON THE NEXT PAGE



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