

The Lost

Luke 15

(All Scriptures NASB 1995 unless otherwise noted)

The Lost Sheep

“So He told them this parable, saying, ‘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? When he has found it, he lays it on his shoulders, rejoicing. 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!” 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.’” (Luke 15:3-7)

The Lost Sheep

- The figure of the shepherd, sheep, & sheepfold is found many times in the scriptures.

“The Lord is my shepherd, I shall not want. He makes me lie down in green pastures; He leads me beside quiet waters.” (Psalm 23:1-2)

“So we Your people and the sheep of Your pasture Will give thanks to You forever; To all generations we will tell of Your praise.” (Psalm 79:13)

“Know that the Lord Himself is God; It is He who has made us, and not we ourselves; We are His people and the sheep of His pasture.” (Psalm 100:3)

The Lost Sheep

- The figure of the shepherd, sheep, & sheepfold found many times in the scriptures.

“Woe to the shepherds who are destroying and scattering the sheep of My pasture!” declares the Lord.” (Jeremiah 23:1)

“Thus says the Lord God, ‘Behold, I am against the shepherds, and I will demand My sheep from them and make them cease from feeding sheep. So the shepherds will not feed themselves anymore, but I will deliver My flock from their mouth, so that they will not be food for them.’” (Ezekiel 34:10)

“As for you, My sheep, the sheep of My pasture, you are men, and I am your God,’ declares the Lord God.” (Ezekiel 34:31)

The Lost Sheep

- Jesus is our shepherd to lead us to Heaven.

“Truly, truly, I say to you, he who does not enter by the door into the fold of the sheep, but climbs up some other way, he is a thief and a robber. But he who enters by the door is a shepherd of the sheep. To him the doorkeeper opens, and the sheep hear his voice, and he calls his own sheep by name and leads them out. When he puts forth all his own, he goes ahead of them, and the sheep follow him because they know his voice. A stranger they simply will not follow, but will flee from him, because they do not know the voice of strangers.” (John 10:1-5)

“For you were continually straying like sheep, but now you have returned to the Shepherd and Guardian of your souls.” (1 Peter 2:25)

The Lost Sheep Lost Through Carelessness

- Thoughtlessness – Wandering Astray

“All of us like sheep have gone astray, each of us has turned to his own way; But the Lord has caused the iniquity of us all to fall on Him.” (Isaiah 53:6)

“For the teraphim speak iniquity, and the diviners see lying visions and tell false dreams; They comfort in vain. Therefore the people wander like sheep, they are afflicted, because there is no shepherd.” (Zechariah 10:2)

“A man who wanders from the way of understanding will rest in the assembly of the dead.” (Proverbs 21:16)

“For the love of money is a root of all sorts of evil, and some by longing for it have wandered away from the faith and pierced themselves with many griefs.” (1 Timothy 6:10)

The Lost Sheep Lost Through Carelessness

■ Deception – Being Led Astray

“Be on guard for yourselves and for all the flock, among which the Holy Spirit has made you overseers, to shepherd the church of God which He purchased with His own blood. I know that after my departure savage wolves will come in among you, not sparing the flock; and from among your own selves men will arise, speaking perverse things, to draw away the disciples after them.” (Acts 20:28-30)

“But false prophets also arose among the people, just as there will also be false teachers among you, who will secretly introduce destructive heresies, even denying the Master who bought them, bringing swift destruction upon themselves. Many will follow their sensuality, and because of them the way of the truth will be maligned; and in their greed they will exploit you with false words; their judgment from long ago is not idle, and their destruction is not asleep.” (2 Peter 2:1-3)

The Lost Sheep Lost Through Carelessness

■ Thoughtlessness.

■ We must pay attention!

“For this reason we must pay much closer attention to what we have heard, so that we do not drift away from it.” (Hebrews 2:1)

■ Jesus sees a multitude that had no real purpose in life.

“Seeing the people, He felt compassion for them, because they were distressed and dispirited like sheep without a shepherd.” (Matthew 9:36)

The Lost Sheep Lost Through Carelessness

■ Absorption in other matters.

■ Life.

“When one of those who were reclining at the table with Him heard this, he said to Him, ‘Blessed is everyone who will eat bread in the kingdom of God!’ But He said to him, ‘A man was giving a big dinner, and he invited many; and at the dinner hour he sent his slave to say to those who had been invited, ‘Come; for everything is ready now.’ But they all alike began to make excuses. The first one said to him, ‘I have bought a piece of land and I need to go out and look at it; please consider me excused.’ Another one said, ‘I have bought five yoke of oxen, and I am going to try them out; please consider me excused.’ Another one said, ‘I have married a wife, and for that reason I cannot come.’” (Luke 14:15-20)

The Lost Sheep Lost Through Carelessness

■ Absorption in other matters.

■ Life.

“And the slave came back and reported this to his master. Then the head of the household became angry and said to his slave, ‘Go out at once into the streets and lanes of the city and bring in here the poor and crippled and blind and lame.’ And the slave said, ‘Master, what you commanded has been done, and still there is room.’ And the master said to the slave, ‘Go out into the highways and along the hedges, and compel them to come in, so that my house may be filled. For I tell you, none of those men who were invited shall taste of my dinner.’” (Luke 14:21-24)

The Lost Sheep Lost Through Carelessness

■ Lack of knowledge, spiritual interest and diligence.

■ We must be diligent!

“Be diligent to present yourself approved to God as a workman who does not need to be ashamed, accurately handling the word of truth.” (2 Timothy 2:15)

“Therefore let us be diligent to enter that rest, so that no one will fall, through following the same example of disobedience.” (Hebrews 4:11)

“I love those who love me; And those who diligently seek me will find me.” (Proverbs 8:17)

The Lost Sheep Lost Through Carelessness

■ Lack of knowledge, spiritual interest and diligence.

■ We must take heed (take care)

“Therefore let him who thinks he stands take heed that he does not fall.” (1 Corinthians 10:12)

“Take care, brethren, that there not be in any one of you an evil, unbelieving heart that falls away from the living God.” (Hebrews 3:12)

“So take diligent heed to yourselves to love the Lord your God.” (Joshua 23:11)

The Lost Sheep Lost Through Carelessness

- Lack of knowledge, spiritual interest and diligence.

- Failure to pursue these things means we are lost.

"My people are destroyed for lack of knowledge. Because you have rejected knowledge, I also will reject you from being My priest. Since you have forgotten the law of your God, I also will forget your children." (Hosea 4:6)

"Therefore having overlooked the times of ignorance, God is now declaring to men that all people everywhere should repent ..." (Acts 17:30)

"Incline your ear and hear the words of the wise, and apply your mind to my knowledge ..." (Proverbs 22:17)

The Lost Sheep Once Found Is Reason to Rejoice

"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!' 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." (Luke 15:6-7)

"For the Son of Man has come to seek and to save that which was lost." (Luke 19:10)

The Lost Coin

"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? 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!' In the same way, I tell you, there is joy in the presence of the angels of God over one sinner who repents." (Luke 15:8-10)

The Lost Coin Lost Through Uselessness

- This coin was of no value because it was "out of circulation."

- Many have changed from useful vessels into useless vessels, from vessels of honor into vessels of dishonor.

"Now in a large house there are not only gold and silver vessels, but also vessels of wood and of earthenware, and some to honor and some to dishonor. Therefore, if anyone cleanses himself from these things, he will be a vessel for honor, sanctified, useful to the Master, prepared for every good work." (2 Timothy 2:20-21)

The Lost Coin Lost Through Uselessness

- This coin was of no value because it was "out of circulation."

- Uselessness means loss of zeal for the Lord, loss of concern for others, and loss of influence.

"You are the salt of the earth; but if the salt has become tasteless, how can it be made salty again? It is no longer good for anything, except to be thrown out and trampled under foot by men. You are the light of the world. A city set on a hill cannot be hidden; nor does anyone light a lamp and put it under a basket, but on the lampstand, and it gives light to all who are in the house. Let your light shine before men in such a way that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father who is in heaven."

(Matthew 5:13-16)

The Lost Coin Lost Through Uselessness

- This coin was of no value because it was "out of circulation."

- The useless member is the one who has quit, or has not made God the #1 priority.

"And He said to another, 'Follow Me.' But he said, 'Lord, permit me first to go and bury my father.' But He said to him, 'Allow the dead to bury their own dead; but as for you, go and proclaim everywhere the kingdom of God.' Another also said, 'I will follow You, Lord; but first permit me to say good-bye to those at home.' But Jesus said to him, 'No one, after putting his hand to the plow and looking back, is fit for the kingdom of God.'"

(Luke 9:59-62)

The Lost Coin

Once Found Is Reason to Rejoice

"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!' In the same way, I tell you, there is joy in the presence of the angels of God over one sinner who repents." (Luke 15:9-10)

"For the Son of Man has come to seek and to save that which was lost." (Luke 19:10)

The Prodigal Son

"And He said, 'A man had two sons. The younger of them said to his father, "Father, give me the share of the estate that falls to me." So he divided his wealth between them.

And not many days later, the younger son gathered everything together and went on a journey into a distant country, and there he squandered his estate with loose living. Now when he had spent everything, a severe famine occurred in that country, and he began to be impoverished." (Luke 15:11-14)

The Prodigal Son

"So he went and hired himself out to one of the citizens of that country, and he sent him into his fields to feed swine. And he would have gladly filled his stomach with the pods that the swine were eating, and no one was giving anything to him. But when he came to his senses, he said, 'How many of my father's hired men have more than enough bread, but I am dying here with hunger! I will get up and go to my father, and will say to him, "Father, I have sinned against heaven, and in your sight; I am no longer worthy to be called your son; make me as one of your hired men."' (Luke 15:15-19)

The Prodigal Son

"So he got up and came to his father. But while he was still a long way off, his father saw him and felt compassion for him, and ran and embraced him and kissed him. And the son said to him, 'Father, I have sinned against heaven and in your sight; I am no longer worthy to be called your son.' But the father said to his slaves, 'Quickly bring out the best robe and put it on him, and put a ring on his hand and sandals on his feet; and bring the fattened calf, kill it, and let us eat and celebrate; for this son of mine was dead and has come to life again; he was lost and has been found.' And they began to celebrate." (Luke 15:20-24)

The Prodigal Son Lost Through Willfulness

- The Prodigal Son was lost willfully.
 - He willfully asked for his inheritance.
 - He willfully went into a distant country.
 - He willfully squandered his estate with loose living.

The Prodigal Son Lost Through Willfulness

- The Prodigal Son was lost willfully.

- Exaltation of "my will" over "God's will."

"For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men who suppress the truth in unrighteousness, because that which is known about God is evident within them; for God made it evident to them. For since the creation of the world His invisible attributes, His eternal power and divine nature, have been clearly seen, being understood through what has been made, so that they are without excuse. For even though they knew God, they did not honor Him as God or give thanks, but they became futile in their speculations, and their foolish heart was darkened. Professing to be wise, they became fools ..." (Romans 1:18-22)

The Prodigal Son

Lost Through Willfulness

■ The Prodigal Son was lost willfully.

■ Exaltation of “my will” over “God’s will.”

“For if we go on sinning willfully after receiving the knowledge of the truth, there no longer remains a sacrifice for sins, but a terrifying expectation of judgment and the fury of a fire which will consume the adversaries. Anyone who has set aside the Law of Moses dies without mercy on the testimony of two or three witnesses. How much severer punishment do you think he will deserve who has trampled under foot the Son of God, and has regarded as unclean the blood of the covenant by which he was sanctified, and has insulted the Spirit of grace? For we know Him who said, ‘VENGEANCE IS MINE, I WILL REPAY.’ And again, ‘THE LORD WILL JUDGE HIS PEOPLE.’ It is a terrifying thing to fall into the hands of the living God.” (Hebrews 10:26-31)

The Prodigal Son

Lost Through Willfulness

■ The Prodigal Son was lost willfully.

■ Exaltation of “my will” over “God’s will.”

“Thus says the Lord, ‘Stand by the ways and see and ask for the ancient paths, where the good way is, and walk in it; And you will find rest for your souls. But they said, ‘We will not walk in it.’ And I set watchmen over you, saying, ‘Listen to the sound of the trumpet!’ But they said, ‘We will not listen.’” (Jeremiah 6:16-17)

“I know, O Lord, that a man’s way is not in himself, nor is it in a man who walks to direct his steps.” (Jeremiah 10:23)

“There is a way which seems right to a man, but its end is the way of death.” (Proverbs 14:12 & 16:25)

“The heart is more deceitful than all else and is desperately sick; Who can understand it?” (Jeremiah 17:9)

The Prodigal Son

Lost Through Willfulness

■ The Prodigal Son was lost willfully.

■ Rebellion and defiance of authority.

[Absalom’s plot to murder his father David – 2 Samuel 15-18]

“So we shall come to him in one of the places where he can be found, and we will fall on him as the dew falls on the ground; and of him and of all the men who are with him, not even one will be left. If he withdraws into a city, then all Israel shall bring ropes to that city, and we will drag it into the valley until not even a small stone is found there.’ Then Absalom and all the men of Israel said, ‘The counsel of Hushai the Archite is better than the counsel of Ahithophel.’ For the Lord had ordained to thwart the good counsel of Ahithophel, so that the Lord might bring calamity on Absalom.” (2 Samuel 17:12-14)

The Prodigal Son

Once Found Was Reason to Rejoice

■ The Prodigal son becomes the Penitent son.

■ Humility and Repentance.

“So he got up and came to his father. But while he was still a long way off, his father saw him and felt compassion for him, and ran and embraced him and kissed him. And the son said to him, ‘Father, I have sinned against heaven and in your sight; I am no longer worthy to be called your son.’ But the father said to his slaves, ‘Quickly bring out the best robe and put it on him, and put a ring on his hand and sandals on his feet; and bring the fattened calf, kill it, and let us eat and celebrate; for this son of mine was dead and has come to life again; he was lost and has been found.’ And they began to celebrate.” (Luke 15:20-24)

The Elder Brother

“Now his older son was in the field, and when he came and approached the house, he heard music and dancing. And he summoned one of the servants and began inquiring what these things could be. And he said to him, ‘Your brother has come, and your father has killed the fattened calf because he has received him back safe and sound.’ But he became angry and was not willing to go in; and his father came out and began pleading with him. But he answered and said to his father, ‘Look! For so many years I have been serving you and I have never neglected a command of yours; and yet you have never given me a young goat, so that I might celebrate with my friends; but when this son of yours came, who has devoured your wealth with prostitutes, you killed the fattened calf for him.’ And he said to him, ‘Son, you have always been with me, and all that is mine is yours. But we had to celebrate and rejoice, for this brother of yours was dead and has begun to live, and was lost and has been found.’” (Luke 15:25-32)

The Elder Brother Lost Through Bitterness Self Commendation

■ He was never guilty of the immoralities of his brother.

■ He had stayed in his father’s house.

■ He had served his father. **“Look! For so many years I have been serving you.”**

■ Guilty of Pride, Arrogance, Self-righteousness. **“I have never neglected a command of yours.”**

■ Lost because of his wrong attitude toward his brother.

Note: **“this son of YOURS” not “this brother of MINE.”**

■ He was angry, jealous, and had no sympathy for his brother.

■ The father recognizes the elder son’s faithfulness (**“you have always been with me”**)

■ He reassures the elder son that the remaining inheritance is his (**“all that is mine is yours”**)

The Elder Brother Lost Through Bitterness

- Bitterness to be put away.

"Let all bitterness and wrath and anger and clamor and slander be put away from you, along with all malice. Be kind to one another, tender-hearted, forgiving each other, just as God in Christ also has forgiven you." (Ephesians 4:31-32)

- Love for brethren is abundantly and plainly taught. It is actually "the sign of discipleship!"

"A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another, even as I have loved you, that you also love one another. By this all men will know that you are My disciples, if you have love for one another." (John 13:34-35)

The Elder Brother Lost Through Bitterness

- The elder brother represents the Pharisees and scribes, to whom Jesus addressed these parables.

"Now all the tax collectors and the sinners were coming near Him to listen to Him. Both the Pharisees and the scribes began to grumble, saying, 'This man receives sinners and eats with them.'" (Luke 15:1-2)

- The self-righteous stand condemned.

"Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you are like whitewashed tombs which on the outside appear beautiful, but inside they are full of dead men's bones and all uncleanness. So you, too, outwardly appear righteous to men, but inwardly you are full of hypocrisy and lawlessness." (Matthew 23:27-28)

The Elder Brother Lost Through Bitterness

- The self-righteous stand condemned.

"And He also told this parable to some people who trusted in themselves that they were righteous, and viewed others with contempt: 'Two men went up into the temple to pray, one a Pharisee and the other a tax collector. 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. I fast twice a week; I pay tithes of all that I get.'" 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!"' 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." (Luke 18:9-14)

The Lost Luke 15

The Lost Sheep – Careless. Verses 3-7

The Lost Coin – Useless. Verses 8-10

The Prodigal Son – Willful. Verses 11-24

The Elder Brother – Bitter. Verses 25-32

Are You Lost?

- God wants you to be saved!

"This is good and acceptable in the sight of God our Savior, who desires all men to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth." (1 Timothy 2:3-4)

"The Lord is not slow about His promise, as some count slowness, but is patient toward you, not wishing for any to perish but for all to come to repentance." (2 Peter 3:9)

"And working together with Him, we also urge you not to receive the grace of God in vain – for He says, 'AT THE ACCEPTABLE TIME I LISTENED TO YOU, AND ON THE DAY OF SALVATION I HELPED YOU.' Behold, now is 'THE ACCEPTABLE TIME,' behold, now is 'THE DAY OF SALVATION ...'" (2 Corinthians 6:1-2)

GOD'S PLAN OF SALVATION

HEAR THE WORD OF GOD

2 Thessalonians 2:14-15; James 1:21

BELIEVE THE GOSPEL MESSAGE

Romans 1:16-17; John 8:24

REPENT OF SINS

Luke 13:3; Acts 17:30-31

CONFESS JESUS CHRIST

Romans 10:9-10; Matthew 10:32-33

BE BAPTIZED FOR FORGIVENESS

Mark 16:16; Acts 2:38

REMAIN OBEDIENT

Matthew 7:21; Revelation 2:10b