



Luke 15:1-7
New International Version

THE PARABLE OF THE LOST SHEEP

15 Now the tax collectors and sinners were all gathering around to hear Jesus. But the Pharisees and the teachers of the law muttered, “*This man welcomes sinners and eats with them.*” Then Jesus told them this parable:

“Suppose one of you has a hundred sheep and loses one of them. Doesn’t he leave the ninety-nine in the open country and go after the lost sheep until he finds it? And when he finds it, he joyfully puts it on his shoulders and goes home. Then he calls his friends and neighbors together and says, ‘Rejoice with me; I have found my lost sheep.’ I tell you that in the same way there will be more rejoicing in heaven over one sinner who repents than over ninety-nine righteous persons who do not need to repent.

“little stories that teach big truths”

If Jesus were to tell this story today, he might say, “Which of you, having a billion dollars and finding your checkbook balance shows a thousand-dollar error, would not spend all night balancing and re-balancing it until you found the mistake, and finding it call all your friends and say, ‘Rejoice with me, for I have found the thousand dollars that I lost!’”

A parent’s grief and anxiety is turned to joy when he finds the lost child and it is restored to the family. Jesus is on a rescue mission

Devouring wolves of the soul (ambition, pride, resentment, greed)



Sermon Notes

PARABLES: GLIMPSES OF A NEW REALITY

The Parable: “Does Love have **LIMITS?**”

God does not cut his losses. (We are Loved)

God does not wait to be asked. (Love pursues)

God does not condemn the lost. (Love Restores)

We don’t find Jesus, he finds us.

Rejoicing in **REPENTANCE**

1. **CONFESSION – REALIZE we are wrong!**

Confession begins with your mind and your mouth. You look at your life and who you are and where you’re going and what you’re doing, you think about it deeply and realize, “This is wrong. I’m headed for disaster.”

2. **CONTRITION - REMOURSE over what we’ve done.**

This is your emotions and your expressions. It hurts to think about your actions, your words, and your self-centeredness. It’s a heartfelt sorrow that says “Jesus, I walked away from you. I wounded you. This is not the person I want to be. I desperately need your help.”

3. **CHANGE – REARRANGE life’s priorities**

Intentionally moving, acting and pursuing a new destination, with a different attitude, and a new desire. “I want to walk with God and his people. I want to go where God leads, be what God sees in me, and do what God asks of me. I want to give my life, my heart and my soul to serve some noble purpose and be transformed by it.”

LIVING WORD

There is no need for us to pretend that we're in the fold when we're not. God searches for church members with the same urgency and passion as He searches for non-members. He loves us all the same. The death of Jesus Christ on the cross gives the same hope to us all. Each one is a lost sheep until the Shepherd-sheep encounter in which the sheep responds wholeheartedly to the love of the Shepherd.

Can you imagine His joy as He retrieves His lost sheep?

Can you see Him reaching out His arms as He comes close, bending down to pick you up and lifting you gently onto His shoulder?

Can you sense Him taking you away from your panic, from your failure, from your hurt, and letting you rest on His shoulder till you are strong enough to stand on your feet?

I've been there, and there are no words to describe the joy of being lifted onto the shoulder of the faithful, fatherly, forgiving Shepherd.

What magnificent love! What rejoicing when the relationship is restored! You're not just a number in the flock. You're the one He went searching for. You're the one He longs to celebrate. Let this image of being a sheep on His shoulder live in your memory and you will never ever feel hopeless.

Prayer

Heavenly Shepherd, thank You for loving us even when we stray. Thanks for lifting us onto Your shoulder when we're tired, hurt or trampled upon by other lost sheep; or when our vision is so blurred that we cannot see our way. Thanks for the peace and joy which come when our fellowship with You is restored, and we return to the fold. We pray with thanksgiving In Jesus' name. Amen.

Find a purpose to serve, not a lifestyle to regret.

Those we write off are precious to God

True Joy

George Bernard Shaw

This is the true joy of life, the being used up for a purpose recognized by yourself as a mighty one; being a force of nature instead of a feverish, selfish little clod of ailments and grievances, complaining that the world will not devote itself to making you happy. I am of the opinion that my life belongs to the community and as long as I live, it is my privilege to do for it whatever I can. I want to be thoroughly used up when I die, for the harder I work, the more I live.

Life is no "brief candle" to me. It is a sort of splendid torch which I have got hold of for a moment, and I want to make it burn as brightly as possible before handing it on to future generations.

God's heart is filled with joy when lost people are found. When we repent (confession, contrition, and change), God rejoices. Jesus says we're like sheep. We tend to wander and stray. If a sheep strays away from the flock and the shepherd, it is in grave danger. Jesus is the good shepherd who came down looking for his lost sheep. Every lost sheep needs a good shepherd and a good flock. We are also like the lost coin that God is searching for and devoted to finding. We can't find God any more than the coin finds the woman. God never gives up his search for his people. He searches until he finds them.

Leslie Newbegin said, "*The church is to mission as fire is to burning.*" Without fire there can be no burning. Without mission there

can be no church, or to put it another way, a church that doesn't exist to do mission is little more than a parody of a Christian community.