

Luke 15 – The Lost Sheep, Coin, and Sons

Introduction

1. Luke's Writing Style: The main statement made or event given, and Jesus uses the event as a teaching moment
 - a. Luke 10 – The Good Samaritan
 - b. Luke 13 – The Rich Young Fool
 - c. Luke 14 – The Master at the Wedding Feast
 - d. Luke 15 – The Lost Sheep, Coin, and Sons
2. There is a progression in the parables: 1 sheep amongst ninety-nine, 1 coin amongst ten, and two sons

Grumbling & Gladness (Luke 15:1-2, 6-7, 9-10, 24, 33)

1. The Pharisees do not approve of Jesus and His friendship with sinners
 - a. Anyone not living up to their traditions, rules, and regulations are seen to be below them
 - b. Tax Collectors were seen as Jewish cheats in league with Rome
2. The sinners and tax collectors found Jesus attractive and unlike the Pharisees and Scribes
 - a. Jesus did not approve of their sinfulness, He called them to repent and receive mercy and forgiveness
3. Jesus explains to the Pharisees what is really happening when He welcomes sinners and tax collectors
 - a. God is seeking sinners
 - b. God is celebrating with the angels in Heaven when a sinner repents
4. Jesus contrasts the gladness of God with the grumbling Pharisees
 - a. The Pharisees are full of disdain for Jesus and the sinners He receives while the sinners are repentant & relieved with Jesus

God Seeks Sinners

1. The purpose of God is to seek worshippers (**John 4:23**)
 - a. Jesus seeks the sinner to repent (**Luke 5:31-32**)
 - b. Jesus seeks to save the lost (**Luke 19:9-10**)
2. The Lord is the Hound of Heaven pursuing His lost sheep, going after every lost coin, and rejoicing over every lost son who repents
3. What does it mean to be lost? The parables help answer this question

The Parables on the Lost and the Found (Luke 15)

The Lost Sheep (verses 3-7)

1. Sheep have an innate tendency to wander away from the shepherd
 - a. Sheep need shepherds because they follow anyone blindly
 - b. Sheep wander into danger
2. What does it mean to be lost? A natural tendency that exists in the fallen, human nature NOT to go after God, but to go away from Him
 - a. It is not human nature to seek God (**Romans 3:9-10, Isaiah 53:6**)
3. Jesus makes reference to the Old Testament Prophets about God mercifully pursuing to save His lost lambs (**Is 40:9-11, Ez 34:11-16**)
 - a. God seeks, the Son lays His life down for them (**John 10:11**)

The Lost Coin (verses 9-10)

1. A woman has lost 1/10 of her income and is diligently looking for it
 - a. It is a silver drachma, a day's wages
2. Jesus says I am the Good Shepherd who seeks His sheep, and I am like this woman who seeks out her lost coin
 - a. When I eat with sinners and tax collectors, I light the lamp, sweep the floors clean, and turn the house upside down to find the coin
 - b. I search out those things that are most precious/valuable to Me
3. The Purpose of the Lord is to gather to Himself a people to be His treasured possession – He seeks them and He finds them, they are His
4. Jesus lays His life down for His people; Every lost lamb will be found

The Lost Sons (verses 11-32)

1. Two lost sons: One is a slave to his pleasures, the other is a slave to his self-righteousness; one lives like a harlot, the other like a hypocrite
2. Neither son knows what it means to live in the presence of a loving, merciful father until one son repents and is brought back into the family
3. The Rebellious Agony of the Youngest Son (verses 11-16)
 - a. The youngest son insults his father asking for his inheritance now, which is like wishing his father dead
 - b. What is lostness? Lostness is to believe that you are free when you are not; it is utter rebellion to Divine authority, mutiny against the father
 - a. Responsible desires for independence from parents is good, but this son desires irresponsible self-indulgence (**Prov 17:25**)
 - c. We are the youngest son who wants things our way, doing things we know we ought not to do and not doing the things we should
 - d. God sends a famine – discomfort to bring this son to his senses
4. The Repentant Awakening of the Younger Son (verses 17-21)
 - a. He came to himself, seeing who he truly is and his misery in a pigsty in the far country alienated from his father's house
 - b. He rehearsed his speech – willing to confess his sin, but his desire to be a servant is off as well – he has nothing to offer (dishonest)
 - c. He was coming to his father with nothing – he needed to fall on his father's mercy (more than regret, repent!)
5. The Father's Lavish Love (verses 22-24)
 - a. The father actively looked out for his son – He felt compassion for him, ran to him, embraced him, kissed him, and celebrated
 - b. God welcomes repentant sinners w/ open arms, lavished w/ mercy
 - c. The relationship is reconciled and restored
 - d. God dances over us and sings over us (**Zephaniah 3:17**)
6. The Older, Critical Son (verses 25-28b)
 - a. The older son represents the Pharisee who is a slave to laborious ladder climbing to God with his own efforts; cynical & unforgiving
 - b. The father extends grace to the older son – entertains him, calls him his child, tells him he is always with him
 - c. The older son answers as a slave to a master, and is left open-ended – the Pharisee and hypocrite is offered salvation
7. The Third Son in the Story is the One Telling the Story
 - a. He went to the far country obediently to bear the sin of His sheep