

# The Parable of the Lost Sheep



**Luke 15:1-32**

- In the Book of Matthew 13:10, Jesus began using parables to teach about the kingdom of heaven.
- According to Mark 4:34, “Jesus did not say anything to them without using a parable and when He was alone with His disciples He would explain what He meant.”
- Purpose: To assist us in growing in our understanding by exploring these divine truths found Christ teaching.
- Objective: To teach us what they mean and how they relate to our present and future life in Christ Jesus.
- Goal: To allow the Holy Spirit speak to our hearts and draw us closer to Jesus Christ.

○ The Parables that have been taught

- The Parable of the Sower. (Matthew 13:3-9, 18-23)
- The Parable of the Wheat and The Weeds (Matthew 13:24-30)
- The Parable of the Mustard Seed. (Matthew 13:31-32)
- The Parable of the Leaven (Matthew 13:33, Luke 13:20-21)
- The Parable of the Hidden Treasure (Matthew 13:44)
- The Parable of the Pearl of Great Price” (Matthew 13:45-46)
- The Parable of the Dragnet (Matthew 13:47-51)
- The Parable of the Householder (Matthew 13:51-53)
- The Parable of the Wineskins (Luke 5:34-39, Matthew 9:14-17, Mark 2:18-22)
- The Parable of the Talents (Matthew 25:14-30, Luke 19:12-26)
- The Parable of the Barren Fig Tree (Luke 13:6-9)
- The Parable of the Workers in the Vineyard (Matthew 20:1-16)
- The Parable of the Pompous Guest (Luke 14:1-14)

4. You will see yourself through one or more of these parables.

# The Parable of the Lost Sheep

## Luke 15:1-32

- Luke gives three of the most recognized and beloved parables in the Bible. These three parables reveal three amazing things about God: (Luke 15:1-32)
  1. God's love for the lost sinner. (vs. 1-7)
  2. God searching for the lost sinner. (vs. 8-10)
  3. God rejoicing for the lost sinner that repents and returns home. (vs. 11-32)
- Today we will begin to study and examine all three of these powerful parables and the lessons we can learn and grow from them. (Luke 15:1-7)
  
- Jesus Christ hears the accusations from the Pharisees and Scribes (vs. 1-2)
  - (vs. 1-2) – “Then “all” the tax collectors and sinners drew near to Jesus to hear Him. And the Pharisees and scribes, complained, saying, “This Man receives sinners and eat with them.”
  - 1. The first two groups of people were the “tax collectors and sinners” who genuinely came to Jesus to hear and receive a message from Jesus.
    - Tax collectors or Publicans worked for the Roman government. (vs. 1)
    - Publicans were considered wealthy non-Jewish men who was responsible for the taxes in a particular Roman district.
    - Tax collectors were Jewish men who were hired by the Publicans to collect money levied by the Roman government upon the Jewish people which included land tax, poll tax, and tax for the operation in the Temple.
    - They were despised and were called sinners among the Jewish people due to their greed and oppressive behavior. (Luke 3:12-13)
    - Sinners were known in Jesus day as immoral, unrighteous and known for not keeping the law.

- The term refers to a person who rejects Jesus Christ and remain living in a lifestyle of sinful behavior and pleasures.
  - Jesus was known to eat with tax collectors and sinners and even chose Matthew, who was a tax collector, as one of His disciples (Matthew 9:9-13).
  - Jesus states His reason for coming to earth, was not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance (Mark 2:13-17)
2. The second group of people were the “Pharisees and scribes”. (vs. 2)
- Pharisees were known as religionists or religious leaders who observed all 613 laws of God.
  - They believed that the only way to God was keeping the law.
  - They rejected people such as tax collectors, sinners, prostitutes, liars, thieves, murderers and required that other Jewish leaders have nothing to do with them.
  - Scribes were known as teachers or scribes of the Pharisees who interpreted the law.
  - Both the Pharisees and Scribes complained openly that “This Man,” referring to Jesus, lowers Himself by being found in the company with these sinners is beneath him. (vs. 2)
  - These sinners were to be rejected, avoided at all costs and no one with their status should ever be found in the company of them.
  - They were offended that “This Man” who taught in the temple and the synagogues would receive sinners and eat with them.
  - Jesus called them both hypocrites and blind leaders, due to their desire only to follow God through tradition, appearance and observance of the law, but not in their hearts. (Matthew 15:1-14)
  - Jesus was in the world to reach the lost sinner for God.
  - Jesus was not of the world or living a worldly life just like the lost sinner.
  - The same should be true for all believers. No believer should be in the world with lost sinners and both their lifestyle and conversations are worldly. (2 Corinthians 6:11-18, Ephesians 4:25-32, Colossians 4:5-6, 1 Peter 3:13-17)

- Both the tax collectors and sinners were drawn to Jesus and wanted to hear His gospel message of love, forgiveness, hope, and redemption.
- Jesus didn't withdraw Himself when lost sinners showed up to hear His Kingdom message.
- Jesus didn't wait for the lost sinner to come to the temple or synagogues to hear His teaching on the Kingdom heaven.
- Jesus seized every opportunity to share His gospel message with the lost sinners in the world.
- The same should be true for all believers. (Mark 16:15) – “And He said to them, “Go into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature.”
  
- Both the Pharisees and scribes were offended and complained openly about Jesus' behavior. (vs. 2)
- Jesus receives and eats (or fellowship) with sinners and His time should only be spent with prominent Jewish leaders (religious).
- God has not called us as believers to remain in our “Holy Huddles” here at the church: (Matthew 5:13-16)
  - 1) To reject and be offended when lost sinners come to the church.
  - 2) To refuse to take Jesus Christ's message beyond these four walls where lost sinners are in the world.
  
- It should be every true believer's desire to please God and bring glory and honor to His name. (Colossians 3:16-17)
  - 1) There will always be those who are offended by our love for Jesus Christ and love for the lost sinners in the world.
  - 2) There will always be those who are offended by our commitment to serve Jesus Christ and share His gospel message to lost sinners in the world.
  - 3) Just make sure that they are offended due to your witness for Jesus Christ and not your worldly living.

- Jesus responded to the Pharisees and Scribes accusations with three parables. (vs. 3-32)
- The Parable of the Lost Sheep. (vs. 3-7)
- Jesus responded with a question for the Pharisees and scribes in this parable. (vs. 3-4)
- (vs. 3-4) – “So, He spoke this parable to them, saying, “What man of you, having a hundred sheep, if he loses one of them, does not leave the ninety-nine in the wilderness, and go after the one which is lost until he finds it?”
- 1. The Lost Sheep represents the unbeliever, sinner or backslider who wanders away in the wilderness (or in the world).
  - The word “lost” means to perish, to be destroyed, to be spiritually destitute, to be cut off and to lose eternal life.
  - It is a person who has gotten lost and remain astray from God.
  - As believers we are called “sheep” of God’s pastures. (Psalm 95:1-11, 100:1-5)
- 2. The True and Good Shepherd is Jesus Christ. (Psalm 23:1-6, John 10:7-16, Matthew 9:35-38)
  - The True Shepherd knows and loves His sheep. (John 10:7-16, 27-28)
  - The True Shepherd leads the sheep through the wilderness into green pastures. (Psalm 23:1-6)
  - The True Shepherd cares for and protects the sheep from wolves and predators that threaten to hurt or kill the sheep. He knows that sheep will not eat or rest if they feel threatened or in danger.
  - The sheep belong to God and not man.
  - The sheep follows the voice of the True Shepherd Jesus Christ.
  - The sheep will flee from the voice of strangers (false teachers and false prophets).
- There are Five characteristics of Sheep that cause them to get lost and remain astray. (Isaiah 53:1-6, Psalm 23:1-6)
- 1. The sheep become attracted and distracted by something out in the wilderness (the world). They think the grass is greener on the other side. (1 John 2:15-17)

- The wilderness (the world, worldly pleasures), appeals to the sinful or lustful desires of the flesh.
  - The sheep wanders off seeking and searching for greener pastures (recognition, acceptance, identity, wealth, position, power and authority).
2. The sheep is sick and begins to isolate itself from the flock of sheep.
  3. The sheep are known for being stubborn and stupid (nature and behaviors).
  4. The sheep cannot care for or protect themselves without a shepherd. (1 Peter 5:5-11)
    - The rugged terrain, narrow ridges and deep ravines threatens the life of the sheep.
    - The thick underbrush and thorn bushes can grab hold of the wool of the sheep, entrapping them and making them as easy prey for the predators to consume.
    - The sheep cannot protect themselves from dangerous predators in the wilderness.
  5. The sheep become disconnected from the shepherd and the other sheep (Hebrews 10:23-25). The sheep refuses to heed the warnings of the True Shepherd and can cause other sheep to wander away.
- The True Shepherd's love for the lost sheep. (vs. 4-5)
    1. The shepherd will leave the ninety-nine to search for the lost sheep. (vs. 4)
    2. The shepherd cannot rest and eagerly searches for the one sheep that is lost in the wilderness. (vs. 4)
  - There are three things that the shepherd does when he finds the lost and weary sheep. (vs. 5-6)
    - 1) He embraces it.
    - 2) He lays it over his shoulders. "The sheep is too weak and weary."
    - 3) He rejoices over the one lost sheep that is found.
    - The same is true about Jesus Christ – "The True Shepherd." (vs. 5-6)

- He cannot rest until every lost and wandering sheep is given the opportunity to return to His fold. (Matthew 11:25-30, Luke 19:10, 2 Peter 3:9)
  - He embraces and receives the lost sinner in the world regardless of their past.
  - He is filled with great joy.
  - He calls together those who were concerned, prayerful, waiting, hoping and believing, to rejoice with Him, that the lost sinner is found and returned home safely. (vs. 6)
  - The same is true in Heaven – “Jesus’ Heavenly Kingdom.” (vs. 7)
  - There will be “more joy” in heaven over one sinner who repents than over the ninety-nine just or righteous persons who need no repentance. (vs. 7)
  - The sheep represents a repentant sinner. (Acts 2:32-39, 3:17-26, Romans 10:1-13)
  - The word “repentance” means to change your mind, attitude and direction as it relates to sin and Jesus Christ.
  - The word “converted” means to turn or turning away from sin and toward a life of serving and obeying the Lord Jesus Christ.
  - The Church (the Body of Christ, believers) – should always rejoice over what heaven rejoices over when one lost sinner repents of their sins and believe and receive Jesus Christ in their hearts. (Romans 3:23, 1 Peter 2:25)
- Jesus responds to the Pharisees and Scribes accusations with a second parable. (vs. 8-10)
    - The Parable of the Lost Coin. (vs. 8-10)
      1. The parable of the lost sheep – “The sheep were lost in the wilderness (world).” (vs. 1-7)
      2. The parable of the lost coin – “The coin was lost in the house.” (vs. 8-10)
      3. Both of these parables have similar meaning as it relates to God and the lost sinner in the world and within the home.

- Jesus uses another parable to illustrate God’s love and the great measures He will take in order find and restore the lost sinner. (vs. 8)
- 1. We must understand the significance of both parables. (vs. 4, 8)
  - The parable of the lost sheep (vs. 4) – “Jesus highlights the relationship of the Shepherd and the lost sheep.”
  - The parable of the lost coin (vs. 8) – “Jesus highlights the great value the woman has for the lost coin.
- 2. There are Two important things that Jesus reveals in this parable about the woman and the ten silver coins. (vs. 8)
  - 1) The woman had ten silver coins all of extreme worth or value. (vs. 8)
  - 2) The woman take extreme measures in order find the lost coin of extreme value. (vs. 8)
    - The “lost coin” is considered highly valuable, precious treasure, priceless, extremely useful, considered needful, great worth, and greatly cherished.
    - The “lost coin” represents an unbeliever, sinner, or backslider that is lost, missing, or has gone astray.
    - The word “lost” means to perish, to stray away, to be spiritually separated, destitute, spiritually blind to truth, lack spiritual direction, and it implies being without God and His eternal salvation.
- The “house” is the place where the “lost coin” went missing which can represent (3) three important things:
  - 1) An unbeliever, sinner or backslider that is lost, missing or strayed away from God and His Heavenly Kingdom.
  - 2) An unbeliever, sinner or saint that remains lost, forgotten, neglected, missing, backslidden and misused while being in the church.
  - 3) An unsaved or backslidden family member such as a parent, spouse, child or close relative within the home.
  - Jesus also illustrates the extreme measures the woman will take in order find the lost coin of extreme value. (vs. 8)
  - There are (3) three things that Jesus mention about the woman in this parable to describe both her view and value toward the lost coin. (vs. 8)

1. There is no mentioning by Jesus on how the woman lost the coin. So, why are we as believers focusing more on the sin of the person, rather than the soul of the person who is lost in sin. (John 8:1-12, Romans 3:23, 6:23)

- The Bible is clear as it relates to both the world and mankind.
- Mankind lives in a fallen or sin cursed world. (Adam and Eve's disobedience in the Garden of Eden). (Genesis 3:1-24)
- Mankind is born with sinful flesh or sinful nature. (Psalm 51:5)
- Mankind is forgiven, restored, and have the right to eternal life because of Jesus Christ. (John 3:16-17, 10:10, Romans 5:17-21, Ephesians 2:8-10)
- All three will remain until Jesus Christ returns with His Church to rule and reign forever here upon the new heaven and new earth. (Revelation 21:1-6)

2. The woman will light a lamp. (vs. 8)

1) To expose darkness.

- The word "expose" means to bring to light, to unveil or uncover what is hidden, to convict, prevent from stumbling, and to bring order.
- It reveals the truth or the true nature of something or someone.
- Jesus Christ came to expose and destroy the works of darkness in the world due to sin. (John 10:10)

2) To provide visibility and direction. The light represents (4) four things in this parable. (vs. 8)

- a. Jesus Christ (John 3:18-22, 8:34-36, 9:5, 12:42-46, 14:6, 1John 3:7-9).
- b. The Holy Spirit (John 16:5-12, 13-15, 14:15-17, Romans 8:1-11).
- c. God's Word. (Matthew 4:4, Romans 10:17, James 1:22, Hebrews 4:12-13, Psalm 119:105, 2Timothy 2:15)
- d. True Followers and Witnesses of Jesus Christ (Matthew 5:13-16, Ephesians 5:8-14, 1John 1:5-10, 2:1-2, Acts 1:8).

3. The woman sweeps the house. (vs. 8)

- 1) The woman recognized that her house needed to be cleanse of all the dirt and filth in order to find the precious lost coin.
- 2) The word “sweep” means to cleanse, purge, purify, to prepare and to make way. (Psalm 51:1-13)
  - It is the removal of something (sin or sinful nature), or the searching of the heart (conviction) by the Holy Spirit that leads to repentance. (Ephesians 2:1-7, Romans 10:8-13, Isaiah 55:6-7)
  - It reveals the true spiritual nature and condition of a person. (Matthew 12:33-37, 43-45, 2 Corinthians 5:17, Galatians 5:16-26)
  - It represents God’s divine nature and character by His willingness to continue searching for those who heart is open toward Him. (2 Chronicles 16:9, Revelation 3:20)
  - It also represents a believer willingness to give up all to know and follow after Jesus Christ. (Luke 9:21-27, 14:25-33)
- 3) The believer should take personal responsibility and accountability of their spiritual life, health, growth and development. (Acts 17:10-12, 2Timothy 2:15)
  - The believer should be an example for others to follow after Christ and not a stumbling block or hindrance toward a lost sinner believing in Jesus Christ. (Matthew 18:6-9, 16:13-23, Revelation 3:14-17)
  - The believer should daily allow the Holy Spirit reveal, remove and expose anything in their life that do not bring glory and honor to God. (Hebrews 12:3-11)
  - The Holy Spirit helps a believer to live a holy and righteous life before God. (Romans 8:12-17, Colossians 3:1-11)
4. The woman searched carefully until she finds it. (vs. 8)
  - 1) The words “searched carefully” means to search diligently, intensive, deliberate, examine carefully, search out deeply, explore, give special attention to, and to be persistent.
  - 2) The woman “searched carefully” implies awareness that the coin was lost and needed to be found. The action that she took was intentional, deliberate, and heartfelt.
  - 3) The woman’s action in this parable is symbolic of the person of He the Holy Spirit.

- The Holy Spirit brings conviction to the lost sinner's heart to repent and believe on the name of Jesus Christ (John 16:8). And He also convicts the heart of believers to repent of their sins. (1 John 1:9)
  - The Holy Spirit is omnipresent. As God, He is ever-present with us and dwells within us at all times and in all places. (John 14:16-17)
  - The Holy Spirit provides our life with strength, comfort, peace, wisdom, and guidance. (John 14:25-27)
- 4) The lost coin in this parable represents a lost sinner or backslider should never be forgotten, overlooked, and neglected due to God's great love for them.
- God sees them through the death and life of His Son Jesus Christ. Jesus Christ sacrificed His life by shedding His blood and dying on the Cross for the life of all humanity.
  - God has need of them and desire to see His purpose being fulfilled in their lives.
  - The believer must allow the Holy Spirit to lead us to them and to see them as God sees them in Christ, as valuable, deserving of His love, peace, forgiveness, and redemption.
  - The believer should never throw them away, overlook them, or give up on them. As believers we are all witnesses of the love, grace, and mercy of God.
  - Keep praying for your love ones! Daily call their names out before God. They cannot outrun God or prayer! (2 Corinthians 10:4-5, James 5:16, Matthew 18:18-20, Ephesians 6:11-18)