

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.