

Parables of Jesus: Salvation

The Father's Love



This parable is often called “The Prodigal Son,” but it is really about different reactions to the prodigal. Most importantly is the reaction of the father who represents God’s love for the lost. The other is the reaction of the older son who represents Pharisee-like attitudes in the kingdom of heaven and in the church.

Introduction: Luke 15 contains three parables, “The Lost Sheep,” “The Lost Coin,” and the “Lost

Son.” Actually, the parable of the “Lost Son” is about two lost sons, one who knew it and one who did not.

A. What Does It Mean to Be Lost?

1. All of us have been lost: We experience lostness many ways—such as being dishonest. Charles Colson experienced this lostness but was ‘found’ in prison.
2. Lost Sheep: Sheep nibble their way to lostness. The sheep was lost because it foolishly wandered away!
3. Lost Coin: The coin was lost through no fault of its own. Some do not know they are lost.
4. Lost Son: He choose to be lost. Some simply choose to run from God.

B. What Does It Mean to Be Found?

God's great love reaches out and finds sinners no matter why or how they got lost.

1. The Lost Sheep: God’s love for each one is so great that He will go and search us out.
2. The Lost Coin: Just as a woman would rejoice at finding her lost coin, so the angels rejoice over a repentant sinner. Each individual is precious to God. He grieves over every loss and rejoices whenever one of his children is found and brought into the Kingdom.
3. The Lost Sons:
The Father's LOVE for both sons is obvious and the basis for this parable.
 - a. **The Prodigal—The First Son**: Even as the prodigal always had the option of repenting and returning home, so also all sinners, however wicked, may confess their sins and turn to God in repentance.
 - b. **The Father**: Even as the father went to elaborate lengths to offer reconciliation to the prodigal, so also God the Father through His son Jesus offers all people, however undeserving, lavish forgiveness of sins if they are willing to accept it.
 - c. **The Second Son**: Even as the older brother should not have resented his brother’s reinstatement but rather rejoiced in it, so those who claim to be God’s people should be glad and not mad when He extends His grace even to the most undeserving.

Lost and Found

Isaiah 53:6-7

:6 All we like sheep have gone astray; We have turned, every one, to his own way; and the LORD has laid on Him the iniquity of us all.

:7 He was oppressed and He was afflicted, yet He opened not His mouth; He was led as a lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep before its shearers is silent, So He opened not His mouth.

The Lost Sheep

Luke 15:1-7

:7 I say to you that likewise there will be more joy in heaven over one sinner who repents than over ninety-nine just persons who need no repentance.

The Lost Coin

Luke 15:8-10

:10 Likewise, I say to you, there is joy in the presence of the angels of God over one sinner who repents."

The Lost Son

Luke 15:11-32

(See other side)

:24 for this son of mine was dead and has now returned to life. He was lost, but now he is found.'

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