



Use Week of:

Unit 25 • Session 2

Three Parables

BIBLE PASSAGE:

Luke 15

STORY POINT:

Jesus came to save people
who do not know Him.

KEY PASSAGE:

Colossians 1:13

BIG PICTURE QUESTION:

How does God care for His creation?
God loves and rules over all He made.

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LEADER Bible Study

In Luke 19, Jesus went after Zacchaeus, a chief tax collector. Zacchaeus was not well liked, but his interaction with Jesus led him to repent of his wrongdoing. Jesus said to him, “The Son of Man has come to seek and to save the lost” (Luke 19:10).

Who is “the lost”? What does it mean to be lost? In Luke 15, Jesus told three parables to the crowd of tax collectors, sinners, Pharisees, and scribes. Jesus’ teaching brought gospel truth to the tax collectors and sinners—those whose unrighteousness separated them from God—and to the Pharisees and scribes—those whose relied on their own righteous efforts for salvation.

The first two parables are similar. In one, a man loses a sheep. He leaves his flock to find the missing sheep, and he rejoices when it is found. In the second, a woman loses a silver coin. The woman carefully searches until she finds it. Then she calls her neighbors and friends to celebrate with her. Heaven rejoices when even one sinner repents. Finally, Jesus told a parable about two sons. The younger son asked for his inheritance, wasted his money on immoral living, and decided to return to his father. Rather than rejecting his wayward son, the father embraced him. The older son, who had always been obedient to his father, reacted with anger.

As you read Luke 15, think about the crowd Jesus was speaking to. The focus is often placed on the younger son—the one with whom the tax collectors and sinners could identify—but Jesus also made a point about the older son. The older son was like the Pharisees and scribes, focused on his own morality and feeling entitled to his father’s favor.

Jesus taught what God is like. He seeks sinners who have wandered far from Him, and He seeks sinners who try to earn salvation by their good works. As you teach, help children understand being lost means not knowing Jesus as Lord and Savior. God loves us, and He actively seeks to bring sinners to Himself.

The BIBLE Story

Three Parables

Luke 15

Many people came to listen to Jesus teach. The religious leaders were angry that sinners came to listen to Jesus. They did not think Jesus should be friends with people who do wrong things. **So Jesus told them three parables, or stories, to teach them about God.**

Jesus said, “If a man has 100 sheep and one goes missing, he leaves the 99 sheep and looks everywhere for his lost sheep. And when he finds it, he tells his friends and neighbors, ‘Let’s celebrate because I have found my lost sheep!’”

Jesus told them, “In heaven, there will be more joy over one person who is sorry for his sin and turns back to God than over 99 good people who don’t need to be sorry.”

Then Jesus told a second story: “If a woman has 10 silver coins and loses one of them, she lights a lamp, sweeps the house, and searches until she finds it. Then she tells her friends and neighbors, ‘Let’s celebrate because I have found my lost coin!’”

Jesus said, “In heaven, God’s angels will celebrate when one person is sorry for his sin and turns back to God.”

Then Jesus told one more story: “A man had two sons. The



younger son told his father, 'Give me the money that will be mine someday.' So the father gave his son what was his.

"The younger son traveled to a faraway country. He spent all his money and made wrong choices. The son had nothing left, and the country he was in ran out of food. He got a job feeding pigs, but he was still hungry.

"The son was sorry for his wrong choices. He said, 'My father's workers have plenty of food. I do not deserve to be his son. I will ask to be his worker.' So he went home. His father ran to him and gave him a big hug and a kiss. The son started to say he was sorry, but the father told his servants, 'Bring the best clothes for my son to wear! Let's celebrate with a big meal! My son was lost, and now he is found!'

"The older son came home and asked, 'What's going on?' A servant said, 'Your brother is home. Your father is celebrating.'

"The father asked the older son to come inside and celebrate. But the older son was angry. He said, 'I always obeyed you, but you never threw a party for me.'

"'Son,' the father said, 'everything I have is yours. This is a day to celebrate because your brother was lost, but now he is found.'"

Christ Connection: Jesus told stories about people who were looking for things that were lost. Jesus told these stories to teach about Himself. Jesus looks for people who are lost, people who do not know Him. Jesus gave His life to save people from sin.

Bible Storytelling Tips

- **Change from sad to happy:** Draw a sad face on one side of a paper plate and a happy face on the other. When an item or person in the Bible story is lost, show the sad face. When that same item or person in the story is found, reveal the happy face.
- **Hear three parables:** Write the numbers 1-3 in large font on construction paper and draw a picture that indicates what the story is about (sheep, coin, son). Hold up the number 1/page as you tell the first parable, number 2 as you tell the second, and 3 as you tell the third.

INTRODUCE the Story



SESSION TITLE: Three Parables

BIBLE PASSAGE: Luke 15

STORY POINT: Jesus came to save people who do not know Him.

KEY PASSAGE: Colossians 1:13

BIG PICTURE QUESTION: How does God care for His creation? God loves and rules over all He made.

Welcome time

- “Jesus Reigns Forever” song
- offering basket
- Allergy Alert
- favorite toys related to the Bible story theme

Play a theme song in the background as you greet preschoolers and follow your church’s security procedures. Set an offering basket near the door to collect at an appropriate time. Post an allergy alert, if necessary. Set out a few favorite theme-related toys, such as puzzles and blocks.

Activity page

- “Find What’s Lost” activity page, 1 per child
- crayons or markers

Use the key to help preschoolers find and circle the lost sheep, coin, and man in the picture.

SAY • Have you ever lost something really special to you?

Did you look everywhere to find it? Jesus told stories about people looking for a lost sheep, a lost coin, and even a lost son to explain how God looks for people who are lost. Listen to our Bible story today to see what I mean!

LOW PREP

Suggestions:

- Your pet runs away.
- A neighbor finds your lost pet.
- You hurt your best friend’s feelings.
- Your friend forgives you.
- Your brother got the new toy you really wanted.
- Your brother shares his toy with you.

Play emotion charades

Describe a situation, then say, “I would feel ...,” and play out that emotion without saying anything. Invite children to guess your emotion. Allow volunteers to play out emotions one at a time. Use the suggested scenarios or make up your own. Ask, “How would you feel?” A child should silently play out her answer while the other children guess.

SAY • Most of us feel sad when we lose something special, and we feel happy when it is found. Some of us might feel excited if our brother got a cool new toy while some of us might feel jealous or angry. How we act when we feel those emotions is very important. In our Bible story today, we will hear about people who felt many different emotions.

Read a map

Show children a map of your building and explain how to read it. Point out where you are on the map and where other familiar features are, such as bathrooms and exits. Demonstrate how to follow an evacuation route, inviting input from the preschoolers about which way to turn as you practice using the map.

• map of your building
• walking rope
(optional)

SAY • I'm so glad we all know the way to get out safely now! It could be scary to be lost in an emergency. Everyone would be looking for you! We use things like evacuation maps to avoid getting lost. Jesus taught that not knowing Him as Lord and Savior is like being lost and in danger. Jesus looks for people who are lost and saves them because He loves them! We will hear more about that in today's Bible story.

Transition to teach the story

To gain the attention of all the preschoolers to move them to Bible study, show the countdown video, turn the lights off and on, or clap a simple rhythm for the children to copy. Invite preschoolers to hold their hands around their eyes like binoculars as they move to Bible study.

• countdown video
(optional)

TEACH the Story



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BIG PICTURE QUESTION: How does God care for His creation? God loves and rules over all He made.

Introduce the Bible story

- Bible
- bookmark
- Giant Timeline

Place a bookmark at Luke 15 in your Bible. Invite a preschooler to open it. Reverently display the open Bible.

SAY • Many different people wrote down God's true word in the Bible. Today we are reading stories that Jesus told in the Book of Luke.

Point to the Bible story picture on the giant timeline. Remind children that all the stories in the Bible fit together to tell an even bigger story. The Bible tells us the big story of how God rescues sinners through His Son, Jesus.

Watch or tell the Bible story

- Story Point Poster
- "Three Parables" video (optional)
- Bible Story Picture Poster

Show the video or tell the Bible story using the provided storytelling tips. Use the bolded version of the Bible story for young preschoolers.

SAY • Jesus told a lot of stories to teach people about God. Most people knew what it felt like to lose something special. They would search until they found it and then celebrate! Jesus told these stories to teach about Himself. Jesus looks for people who are lost, people who do not know Him. **Jesus came to save people who do not know Him.** He gave His life to save people from sin. All of heaven celebrates when one sinner comes back to God!

Practice the key passage

Place the key passage marker at Colossians 1:13. Invite a child to open your Bible to the key passage. Read the key passage aloud. Write each word or phrase of the key passage on separate pieces of paper and hide them around the room. Encourage children to find all the missing words. Put the key passage in order and celebrate when it is complete.

SAY • Jesus looks for people who do not know Him and brings them to Him. He gave His life to save people from sin and bring us into God's kingdom. God celebrates when people turn to Jesus whom He loves!

Sing the key passage song, "He Has Rescued Us," and the theme song, "Jesus Reigns Forever."

- Bible
- paper
- markers
- Key Passage Marker
- Key Passage Poster
- "He Has Rescued Us (Colossians 1:13)" song
- "Jesus Reigns Forever" song

Learn the big picture question

SAY • Jesus told stories to teach about Himself. Like a shepherd cares for his sheep, like a woman cares for her household, and like a father cares for his sons, God cares for everyone He made. ***How does God care for His creation? God loves and rules over all He made.***

- Big Picture Question Poster



Missions moment

Choose volunteers to hold up the "Soto Photos" for other children to see while you read the "Photo Captions," pointing to the corresponding photograph.

SAY • The Sotos are missionaries. They help people know about Jesus. **Jesus came to save people who do not know Him.** The Sotos want the people of Salt Lake City to know Jesus and be saved.

- "Soto Photos" printable
- "Photo Captions" printable

Pray and transition to experience the story

EXPERIENCE the Story



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BIG PICTURE QUESTION: How does God care for His creation? God loves and rules over all He made.

LOW PREP

Sing “Amazing Grace”

Teach the first verse of “Amazing Grace” to preschoolers. Remind children that being lost means not knowing Jesus as Lord and Savior. Point out to older preschoolers that the hymn-writer compares being lost to being blind. Remind preschoolers of last week’s Bible story where Jesus talked about people looking but not seeing. (Matthew 13:10-16) Repeat the song until preschoolers know it:

“Amazing Grace, how sweet the sound!

That saved a wretch like me!

I once was lost, but now am found,

Was blind, but now I see.”

SAY • Christians have sung this song for many years to remember what Jesus did for us. Jesus looks for people who are lost, people who do not know Him. **Jesus came to save people who do not know Him.** Only Jesus can “find” us and help us “see” how amazing His grace is. That sweet gift makes me want to sing praises to God!

Play “Shepherd, Where’s Your Sheep?”

Select one child to be the *shepherd* who will sit in the middle of the floor with a toy sheep behind his back. Guide the rest of the children to sit in a wide circle around the *shepherd*.

• toy sheep

Ask the *shepherd* to close his eyes while you silently invite another child to hide the sheep behind her back. When the sheep is hidden, invite preschoolers to chant, “Shepherd, shepherd, where’s your sheep?” Encourage the shepherd to open his eyes and guess who has his sheep. After three tries, reveal who has the sheep. Celebrate the found sheep. Choose another shepherd and play again.

SAY • Jesus told stories about people who were looking for things that were lost. He said a shepherd would search for one sheep that was lost until he found it. Jesus told these stories to teach about Himself. Jesus looks for people who are lost, people who do not know Him. **Jesus came to save people who do not know Him.** He is the Good Shepherd!

Throw a party

Post an allergy alert. Set up the room for a celebration. Invite preschoolers to help spread tablecloths, set the table, and decorate the room. Wear party hats or other festive accessories. Shout, “Let’s celebrate!” Serve a special snack while you review the Bible story.

- Allergy Alert
- tablecloths
- plastic tableware
- party decorations
- festive accessories
- special snack

SAY • Jesus told stories about people who were looking for things that were lost. Each time the people found what had been lost, they told their friends, “Let’s celebrate!” and threw a big party! Jesus told these stories to teach about Himself. Jesus looks for people who are lost, people who do not know Him. **Jesus came to save people who do not know Him.** Jesus said, “In heaven, God’s angels will celebrate when one person is sorry for his sin and turns back to God.”

- coin
- flashlights

Search the room

Hide a coin in the room when preschoolers are not looking. Tell preschoolers a coin is lost in the room and ask them to find it. Provide flashlights for preschoolers to use while searching. Celebrate when the coin is found. Play again as time allows.

SAY • Jesus told stories about people who were looking for things that were lost. He said a woman would light lamps and clean the whole house to search for one coin that was lost. Jesus told these stories to teach about Himself. Jesus looks for people who are lost, people who do not know Him. **Jesus came to save people who do not know Him.** He celebrates when just one person comes to know Him!



Make a missions banner

- “Soto Photos” printable
- “Photo Captions” printable
- scissors (adult use)
- glue sticks
- poster board or a large sheet of paper
- markers or crayons

Write *Pray for Salt Lake City, Utah!* at the top of a sheet of poster board or a large sheet of paper. Cut apart the “Photo Captions.” Display the “Soto Photos.” Invite children to work together to glue the photos to the poster board. Read the captions and help children glue each one to its corresponding photo. Encourage children to decorate the white spaces on the poster with markers or crayons. Display the banner in your room or in a hallway.

SAY • **Jesus came to save people who do not know Him.**

Missionaries like the Soto family tell the good news about Jesus to people who don’t know Him. As we learn about missionaries, we know better how to pray for them. When others see our missions banner, they can learn about and pray for the Soto’s too!

Snack and review

Play the countdown video to signal the end of activities. Wash hands and gather preschoolers for snack time. Pray, thanking God for the snack.

Serve party food, such as punch and cupcakes for snack. Talk about how in each story Jesus told, the person threw a party to celebrate finding what was lost. Jesus told these stories to teach about Himself. **Jesus came to save people who do not know Him.** Jesus said God's angels celebrate when one person is sorry for his sin and turns back to God.

Show the Bible story picture as you ask the following questions. Retell parts of the Bible story as needed.

1. Who told stories to teach people about God? (*Jesus*)
2. What did the man who lost one of his sheep do? (*He left his other sheep to find the one that was lost.*)
3. What did the woman who lost a coin do? (*She searched until she found it.*)
4. Did the younger son make good choices? (*no*)
5. What did the father do when his younger son came home? (*welcomed him and celebrated*)
6. ***How does God care for His creation? God loves and rules over all He made.***

Transition

When preschoolers finish their snack, they may color the Bible story coloring page, play a simple game to practice the key passage or big picture question, or sing along to the key passage or theme song.

If parents are picking up their children at this time, tell them something that their child enjoyed doing or did well during the session. Distribute the preschool big picture cards for families.

- countdown video (optional)
- Allergy Alert
- paper cups and napkins
- snack food
- Bible Story Picture Poster
- Big Picture Question Poster
- party food (optional)

- Bible Story Coloring Page
- crayons
- Key Passage Poster
- Big Picture Question Poster
- "He Has Rescued Us (Colossians 1:13)" song
- "Jesus Reigns Forever" song
- Big Picture Cards for Families: Babies, Toddlers, and Preschoolers