

3-18-2026 – Found It!

Jesus ruffled feathers. One time, (**Luke 5**) the Pharisees complained to Jesus' disciples that he ate & drank with tax collectors and sinners — Jesus replied, "Healthy people don't need a doctor, sick people do. I have not come to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance."

Luke 15 – Tax collectors & other sinners were gathered around Jesus.

Pharisees again criticize Jesus for welcoming sinners & **eating** w/ them.

That says: He accepted them. **He welcomed rebels, runaways, strays.**

That prompted Jesus to **tell 3 parables** about finding something lost.

1 – Luke 15:3-7 – Lost Sheep

³ Then Jesus told them this parable: ⁴ "Suppose one of you has a hundred sheep and loses one of them. Doesn't he leave the ninety-nine in the open country and go after the lost sheep until he finds it? ⁵ And when he finds it, he joyfully puts it on his shoulders ⁶ and goes home. Then he calls his friends and neighbors together and says, 'Rejoice with me; I have found my lost sheep.' ⁷ I tell you that in the same way there will be more rejoicing in heaven over one sinner who repents than over ninety-nine righteous persons who do not need to repent."

2 – Luke 15:8-10 - Lost Coin

⁸ "Or suppose a woman has ten silver coins and loses one. Doesn't she light a lamp, sweep the house and search carefully until she finds it? ⁹ And when she finds it, she calls her friends and neighbors together and says, 'Rejoice with me; I have found my lost coin.' ¹⁰ In the same way, I tell you, there is rejoicing in the presence of the angels of God over one sinner who repents."

Jesus was explaining His mission on earth – He "**came to seek and to save the lost.**" – **Luke 19:10.**

- **Jesus is God. God** spoke to **Ezekiel** – said He was the **Good Shepherd** – **Ezekiel 24:16** – "I will search for the lost and bring back the strays. I will bind up the injured and strengthen the weak, but the sleek and the strong I will destroy. I will shepherd the flock with justice."

- Jesus didn't come to Earth to spend all His time w/the righteous.
 - He **taught** the righteous, He **sought out** the sinners
 - He was **intentional** about meeting w/ tax collectors & prostitutes. **Invited** himself... **waited for the woman/well**.
- Both of these parables remind us – **harvest fields are ripe**.
 - **Both remind us:** don't ignore or isolate from the **lost**.
 - **Lost:** those who are spiritually estranged from God;
 - They're unconnected . . . on a Rd to Nowhere . . . unaware of their need for salvation. **Our calling: shine the light.**

Both parables highlight the **successful search** of the **shepherd** for his sheep & the **woman** for her coin **AND** the **joyful celebration** in response

- There is **"rejoicing"** among the angels over 1 sinner who repents!
- Jesus is also implicitly saying - the sheep who wander away matter.
 - God doesn't discount people b/c of their mistakes/choices.
 - We aren't "**black sheep**" to God w/ bad reputation, just lost sheep.
- The parables also **contrast** the **joy & love** of the one searching w/ the **disdain** of the **pharisees**.
 - To bring the point home even more, Jesus tells of **Prodigal Son**
- **3 – Luke 15:11-32** - Lost Son . . .
- ²⁰ So he got up and went to his father. "But while he was still a long way off, his father saw him and was filled with compassion for him; he ran to his son, threw his arms around him and kissed him.
- ²¹ "The son said to him, 'Father, I have sinned against heaven and against you. I am no longer worthy to be called your son.'
- ²² "But the father said to his servants, 'Quick! Bring the best robe and put it on him. Put a ring on his finger and sandals on his feet. ²³ Bring the fattened calf and kill it. Let's have a feast and celebrate. ²⁴ For this son of mine was dead and is alive again; he was lost and is found.' So they began to celebrate.
- ²⁵ "Meanwhile, the older son was in the field. When he came near the house, he heard music and dancing. ²⁶ So he called one of the servants and asked him what was going on. ²⁷ 'Your brother has come,' he replied, 'and your father has killed the fattened calf because he has him back safe and sound.'

- ²⁸ "The older brother became angry and refused to go in. So his father went out and pleaded with him. ²⁹ But he answered his father, 'Look! All these years I've been slaving for you and never disobeyed your orders. Yet you never gave me even a young goat so I could celebrate with my friends. ³⁰ But when this son of yours who has squandered your property with prostitutes comes home, you kill the fattened calf for him!'
- ³¹ "'My son,' the father said, 'you are always with me, and everything I have is yours. ³² But we had to celebrate and be glad, because this brother of yours was dead and is alive again; he was lost and is found.'"
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- Focus on the Father & Older Son. Father has **joy**. Son – **bitterness**.
 - Father is **delighted**. Older son shows **disdain**.
 - Father goes to **meet** Lost Son. Older son **walks away**.
 - Father **embraces**; Son **distances**. Father **includes**, Son excludes. Father shows **accepting love**, Son shows **rejecting anger**.
 - Son seeks squandering resources, waste. Father sees lost, found.
 - Make no mistake – younger son did wrong; Father – forgives.
- Are we more like the Father? Or like the Son & the Pharisees?
 - Can we welcome & encourage? Or do we walk away & judge?
- The Parables highlight the mission Jesus invites us to join: **Seek out the lost and show them the way Home.**
- Help the **hurting find healing**; Help the **rejected find acceptance**; bring them to the **banquet table** . . . include them as family.
 - We can't live like we've **found** the **secret** of Jesus; No, after **finding it**, we have to **share it**. **Jesus isn't a secret, He's salvation.**
 - There's much joy when the lost have been found. (Cat story)

Have you found what matters? Or too distracted by life's problems? The most important discovery in life is finding Jesus. Finding heaven matters.