

KINGDOM LOST AND FOUND | LUKE 15:1-32 | PASTOR MARK BOFILL | 4/19/2026

**I. Pursuit of the Straying Sheep (15:1-7) | II. Persistence of the Seeking Woman (15:8-10) | III. Parable of the Searching Father (15:11-32)*

INTRO: Have you ever Lost Something so valuable that everything else stops until you find it? – That's the picture Jesus gives in Luke 15. – He shows that God doesn't ignore the lost... He Pursues them, Searches for them, and Celebrates when they return, revealing a KINGDOM where what is LOST is relentlessly sought until it is FOUND. – Today's message is entitled: **KINGDOM LOST AND FOUND** *

I. PURSUIT OF STRAYING SHEEP (15:1-7) – READ (1-2): Jesus just told the multitudes of *the need to forsake all to be His disciple (14:25-35)*. Yet here, we find *Tax collectors and Sinners drawing near to hear His voice! (1)* – (John 10:27-28): *"My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me: and I give unto them eternal life"*. *This is in direct contrast to...*

A. The Criticism of the Pharisees (2-3): They Complained... *"This man receives sinners and eats with them!" (2)*. – Their issue wasn't ignorance... it was **Self-Righteous PRIDE**.

- Because they misunderstood God's heart... **Jesus GIVES THREE PARABLES (3)**. – Interestingly enough: **Each of these parables reveal the Efforts of the entire Godhead to reclaim the Lost for His Kingdom**. A Caring Shepherd, A Seeking Spirit, and A Gracious Father!

B. The Concerns of the Shepherd (4-5) – READ (4-7): The parable of the **Lost Sheep**. – Jesus is referred to as that *"Great Shepherd of the sheep!" (Heb 13:20)*. – His use of this parable reveals His Heart and Mission: The Shepherd leaves ninety-nine To Seek One! – **This shows intentional, sacrificial pursuit**. He searches *"until he finds it"* – **God doesn't passively wait for us to get our act right; He actively pursues Lost People!**

- **God Himself takes responsibility for the rescue mission. (Ezek 34:11-12)** *"Indeed I Myself will search for My sheep and seek them out."*

C. The Celebration of the Saved (5-7): The Lost Sheep is **Found, Carried, and Celebrated!** (5) – *Friends and Neighbors are invited to Rejoice (6)*, a theme which is emphasized in all three Parables.

1. **The Conclusion of the Sayings (7)** Jesus' statement: *"there will be More joy in heaven..."* provides **a contrasting perspective to consider: The Self-Righteous on earth complain about the inclusion of sinners, but God in heaven, rejoices when one sinner repents.** **(Zeph 3:17) God rejoices over His people with singing.**
2. **The Parable of the Lost Sheep demonstrates Jesus' willingness to associate with those deemed unworthy by the Pharisees.** He emphasizes that these *"sinners," like lost sheep*, have strayed from God, often through poor decisions, and **are in desperate need of rescue!**

P/A: Our attitude toward Lost People reveals what your true relationship with God is. – If God PURSUES THE LOST, **we must not ignore them!** – **Even NOW...** God is pursuing You or someone You know. – **No ONE is too far off, too broken, or TOO LOST..** **READ: ** I Was A Wandering Sheep (Page 4)**

Segue: But what if the lost condition isn't just wandering far away... **what if it's being Lost right at home?**

II. PERSISTENCE OF A SEEKING WOMAN (15:8-10) – READ: The parable of the **Lost Coin**. – **In Hebrew culture, a woman would publicly announce her marriage by stringing ten coins together and wearing them across her forehead. A coin was valuable both financially and sentimentally!**

A. Loss of the Coin (8a): *One Coin Lost among ten* was significant enough to cause her to turn her house upside down! – While a coin is inanimate, **it represents a Person who is Lost in the dust and dirt of the world.** – **Even in a LOST STATE, the coin retains its value and belongs to the owner!**

1. A Significant detail is that **The Coin was Lost “inside the house” (8b).** – It represents **Lost People** who are within the Church **but are not yet saved.** → *Therefore, CAREFUL SEARCH* is needed!

2. **Active Seeking:** **The Woman represents GOD,** who doesn't passively wait for sinners to find their way back, but **actively searches** for them. – **Because He loves you He Persistently Pursues You!**

- She **LIGHTS a LAMP** to EXPOSE what's Hidden (8b) → **Christ's LIGHT** reveals what is lost in darkness (John 8:12) *“I am the light of the world. He who follows Me shall not walk in darkness.”* → **Christ's WORD** keeps us from becoming LOST! (Ps 119:105) *Your Word is a light unto my feet and a lamp unto...*
- She **SWEEPS the HOUSE Diligently (8b)** – **The work of the Holy Spirit is to sweep in search of that which is lost.** → **Even without indwelling, the Holy Spirit works in human hearts, inspiring conscience, influencing moral decisions, and prompting people to consider Gospel truths! (John 16:8)**

B. Locating the Coin (9-10): When a person of *God's Kingdom is LOST and FOUND*, it is cause for **Great Rejoicing within the community!** – Notice again, **WHAT** they Rejoice in: **At the news of the Lost being Found!** → Jesus adds: **There is joy in the presence of angels over one sinner who repents.**

- These Two Parables help us understand **God's Heart for the Lost** and **How He VALUES THEM!**
– A **Lost Sheep** is of **NO VALUE** to a shepherd, much like a **Lost Coin** is of **NO VALUE** to its Owner... **This is Jesus' Point to the Scribes and Pharisee's.** – So, to answer their complaint... **YES... Jesus does receive Sinners... and He eats with them too!**

CLOSING THOUGHT: *Much like the Pharisee's... some are LOST but unaware... hidden in darkness, routine, or religion.* – So, as a **“Found One”... We must shine the light and search faithfully for them!**

Segue: Yet the deepest picture of being lost is not a sheep or a coin misplaced—it is a son rebelling...

III. PARABLE OF A SEARCHING FATHER (15:11-32): While many scholars have labeled this next parable as **The Prodigal Son**, the context has led me to focus on the **Actions of a Loving Father**, who's **Graciousness Outshines the Sinfulness of both of His LOST Son's!** *It begins with the first...*

A. Running from the Father (11-20) – **READ:** In (Deut 21:17) we read that **a firstborn son** was to receive a double portion of inheritance, in due time. But in this case we find **a younger son rising up...**

1. His Rebellion (11-13): *The Son demands his portion Now! (11-12)* – He wanted to **live his life HIS WAY** but was **not yet mature enough to understand his harsh demands.** – *Asking his father for his livelihood* at such a young age was like saying: **“I wish you were dead!”** (*Sin begins with self-will!*)

- **We must understand that Satan tricks people.** – If you listen to him, **you'll lose who you really are and what God wants you to be.** (*Nevertheless, the gracious father painfully allowed his son's request!*)
- We then find **the Son Squandering his Possessions (13).** – **Prodigal** means **wasteful**, spending money or resources freely and recklessly; **wastefully extravagant.** → **Self-Centered living wastes what God gives and leads away from God's will!** – **WORLDLY FACT:** **When you have money, you have friends.** But when your broke, **the Party is Over!** – *His resources soon ran out, which led to...*

2. His Ruin (14-16): *When he had spent all, he began to be in want!* – He went from **Fun**, to **Famine**, to **Feeding Swine**... Something went wrong! – **In his father's house he never missed a meal**, now **he's eating what pigs eat!** – **P/A:** This teaches that **Sin leads to Emptiness and Degradation!** – We must understand that **The world can NEVER SATISFY spiritual hunger!**

P/A – If the **SHEEP** was **lost through foolishness**, and the **COIN** was **lost by carelessness**, then this **SON** was **lost because of his willfulness!** – *This son didn't get into trouble until he left the safety of his father's house!*

3. His Realization (17-19): *"He came to himself"* – He considered his current state and **compared it to his father's servants.** / **When God is left OUT of our lives**, our **Enjoyment** soon becomes **Enslavement!**

- He soon **Remembered His Father's Goodness!** – An awakening which lead him to genuine repentance! → **Repentance begins with realization!** – **(Rom 2:4)** declares *"...the Goodness of God leads us to repentance."*
- He changed his mind **About Himself** by admitting **he was a sinner!** **(tt. Isa 55:6-7)**

4. His Return (20a): **Genuine repentance involves action!** Instead of running FROM the father, he **AROSE** and ran TOWARDS the father! *(A Contemplation and Action that we should do likewise!)*

B. Reception of the Father (20b-24) – **READ:** **This father's reaction illustrates the Gracious Attitude of God the Father, Who is merciful towards those who Return and Repent!** *Notice that...*

1. He was Always Looking for His Son (20b) – He **RAN to him**, offering grace, forgiveness, and mercy. – Likewise, **God's compassion is poured out with Lavish Love for His Lost ones.**

2. He Heard His Son's Confession (21) – **"I have sinned"** {Gr. *hematon*} / **Confession is Necessary for Conciliation!** – (Acts 3:19) *"Repent therefore and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out, so that times of refreshing may come from the presence of the Lord..."* – Notice, the father **never** really allowed a full confession of every sin! *(A picture of God's willingness to forgive prodigals!)*

3. His Restoration (22-23) – Honor is restored immediately! – **P/A:** God restores **completely**, not **partially!** – Celebration then **Results** from **Reconciliation**, {Gr. *euphaino*} *i.e., to make merry!*

- **The Gifts (22)** symbolize **Honor** restored, **Authority** given, and **Full Restoration** (Eph 1:3; 2:4-8)
- **The Fatted Calf (23)** was reserved only for special occasions **and this was it!** ...**WHY?**...

4. His Reason (24) **His son was dead and alive again... he was Lost and now Found!** **(tt. Ps 103:10-14)**

- Restoration should result in Celebration – **They began to make merry!** (vv.7,10) *but there is more...*

C. Resentment Towards the Father (25-30) – **READ:** **Parable Insight...** While the **Prodigal Son** portrays publicans and sinners (v.1), this **Older Brother** illustrates the **Religious leaders (v.2)** who were **Blind to God's Grace**, because of their **Self-Righteous Hearts** **(tt. Matt 23:25-28)** – **Self-Righteous People** are quick to point out how others are not like them! – *Precisely what this son does...*

1. His Concern (25-27) – As he returns home, **this Older Son** hears a joyful noise, so **"he inquires."** – **He found that it was a Celebration** for **his wayward little brother** that had safely returned! – **This did not sit well with him!** **WHY?** Because he lacked the Grace of his father, **he responded in ANGER!**

2. **His Complaint (28-30)** – The witness of the Older Son was previously notable... He served faithfully, always obeyed, was never disrespectful and he had real friends! – But he was 'So Upset' that he couldn't even enter the house to say "Hi!" – His Self-Righteousness was rooted in PRIDE! –

- P/A: PRIDE will keep you outside of God's Joy! – Instead of Forgiving and Rejoicing; *Bitterness, Resentment, and Complaining* came like a flood! (cf. Eph 4:30-32) He was miserably lonesome!
- COMPARISON distorts your view of GOD'S GRACE and especially YOUR OWN!

D. Reminder of the Father's Grace (31-32) – READ: *The father also loved the Older Son!*

1. He Did Not Rebuke Him; He Tenderly Reassured him (31). "Son, you are always with me" and "All that I have is yours". – P/A: God does the same for all who remain close to Him! – Those faithful sons who often "feel overlooked" are usually the ones who struggle with Self-Righteousness. – They didn't WANDER, but in their minds they WONDER why doesn't my father bless me! (Martha)

2. He Did Teach Him of His Need for Compassion (32) – How? *By inviting him to rejoice...* "It was right that we should make merry and be glad" – P/A: This answered the complaint of the religious leaders that began the chapter. – If all heaven rejoices of one repentant sinner, we should too!

FINAL THOUGHT: In Luke 15, every story presses the same question into our hearts: Do we share God's heart for the lost? – The shepherd pursued, the woman searched, and the father ran... but the older son stood outside!

- This teaches that it's possible to be far from God in Rebellion... or just as far in Religion!
- So where are you? LOST and needing to return? Or NEAR, but refusing to rejoice?

Jesus prompts us to ANSWER... because In God's Kingdom, the Lost are Found—but Only those who respond enter the joy.

**** I Was A Wandering Sheep | Author: Horatius Bonar (1843)**

1 I was a wand'ring sheep,
I did not love the fold;
I did not love my Shepherd's voice...
I would not be controlled.
I was a wayward child,
I did not love my home;
I did not love my Father's voice,
I loved afar to roam.

2 The Shepherd sought his sheep,
the Father sought his child;
they followed me o'er vale and hill,
o'er deserts waste and wild:
they found me nigh to death,
famished and faint and lone;
they bound me with the bands of love...
they saved the wand'ring one.

3 Jesus my Shepherd is;
'twas he that loved my soul,
'twas he that washed me in his blood,
'twas he that made me whole;
'twas he that sought the lost,
that found the wand'ring sheep,
'twas he that brought me to the fold,
'tis he that still doth keep.

4 I was a wand'ring sheep,
I would not be controlled;
but now I love my Shepherd's voice,
I love, I love the fold.
I was a wayward child,
I once preferred to roam;
but now I love my Father's voice,
I love, I love his home.