

WE VALUE PEOPLE

Welcome Home: Part 3

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"People matter to us because they matter to God. Therefore, we will do anything short of sin to connect people to Jesus and the church family."

10 LESSONS OF LOSTNESS FROM LUKE 15

OF POSSESSIONS (vv. 1-10)

Tax collectors and other notorious sinners often came to listen to Jesus teach. ² This made the Pharisees and teachers of religious law complain that he was associating with such sinful people—even eating with them!

³ So Jesus told them this story: ⁴ "If a man has a hundred sheep and one of them gets lost, what will he do? Won't he leave the ninety-nine others in the wilderness and go to search for the one that is lost until he finds it? ⁵ And when he has found it, he will joyfully carry it home on his shoulders. ⁶ When he arrives, he will call together his friends and neighbors, saying, 'Rejoice with me because I have found my lost sheep.' ⁷ In the same way, there is more joy in heaven over one lost sinner who repents and returns to God than over ninety-nine others who are righteous and haven't strayed away!

⁸ "Or suppose a woman has ten silver coins and loses one. Won't she light a lamp and sweep the entire house and search carefully until she finds it? ⁹ And when she finds it, she will call in her friends and neighbors and say, 'Rejoice with me because I have found my lost coin.' ¹⁰ In the same way, there is joy in the presence of God's angels when even one sinner repents."

1. THE THING LOST IS OF GREAT VALUE.

"God paid a ransom to save you...he paid for you with the precious lifeblood of Christ, the sinless, spotless Lamb of God." (1 Peter 1:18–19, The Living Bible)

2. IT WARRANTS GOING ALL-OUT.

Three Characteristics of Going All-Out

- Passion
- Persistence
- Perspective

"I have become all things to all people so that by all possible means I might save some." (1 Corinthians 9:22b, NIV)

To reach those no one's reaching, we must DO WHAT NO ONE'S DOING.

3. TIME IS OF THE ESSENCE.

"We must quickly carry out the tasks assigned us by the one who sent us. The night is coming, and then no one can work." (John 9:4, NLT)

The longer something is lost the more LIKELY IT IS TO STAY LOST.

4. THE OWNER INITIATES THE RECOVERY.

"For the Son of Man came to seek and save those who are lost." (Luke 19:10, NLT)

To truly care, I have to get UNCOMFORTABLE.

5. THE RECOVERY IS WORTH THE EFFORT.

"...keeping our eyes on Jesus, the champion who initiates and perfects our faith. Because of the joy awaiting him, he endured the cross, disregarding its shame..." (Hebrews 12:2, NLT)

OF PEOPLE (vv. 11-32)

¹¹ *To illustrate the point further, Jesus told them this story: "A man had two sons." ¹² The younger son told his father, 'I want my share of your estate now before you die.' So his father agreed to divide his wealth between his sons.*

¹³ *"A few days later this younger son packed all his belongings and moved to a distant land, and there he wasted all his money in wild living. ¹⁴ About the time his money ran out, a great famine swept over the land, and he began to starve. ¹⁵ He persuaded a local farmer to hire him, and the man sent him into his fields to feed the pigs. ¹⁶ The young man became so hungry that even the pods he was feeding the pigs looked good to him. But no one gave him anything.*

¹⁷ *"When he finally came to his senses, he said to himself, 'At home even the hired servants have food enough to spare, and here I am dying of hunger!' ¹⁸ I will go home to my father and say, 'Father, I have sinned against both heaven and you, ¹⁹ and I am no longer worthy of being called your son. Please take me on as a hired servant.'" ¹⁹*

²⁰ *"So he returned home to his father. And while he was still a long way off, his father saw him coming. Filled with love and compassion, he ran to his son, embraced him, and kissed him. ²¹ His son said to him, 'Father, I have sinned against both heaven and you, and I am no longer worthy of being called your son.'*

²² *"But his father said to the servants, 'Quick! Bring the finest robe in the house and put it on him. Get a ring for his finger and sandals for his feet. ²³ And kill the calf we have been fattening. We must celebrate with a feast, ²⁴ for this son of mine was dead and has now returned to life. He was lost, but now he is found.' So the party began.*

²⁵ *"Meanwhile, the older son was in the fields working. When he returned home, he heard music and dancing in the house, ²⁶ and he asked one of the servants what was going on.*

²⁷ *'Your brother is back,' he was told, 'and your father has killed the fattened calf. We are celebrating because of his safe return.'*

²⁸ *"The older brother was angry and wouldn't go in. His father came out and begged him, ²⁹ but he replied, 'All these years I've slaved for you and never once refused to do a single thing*

you told me to. And in all that time you never gave me even one young goat for a feast with my friends. ³⁰ Yet when **this son of yours** comes back after squandering your money on prostitutes, you celebrate by killing the fattened calf!

³¹ "His father said to him, 'Look, dear son, you have always stayed by me, and everything I have is yours. ³² We had to celebrate this happy day. For your brother was dead and has come back to life! He was lost, but now he is found!' "

6. "LOSTNESS" IS ACTUALLY SEPARATION.

"And they heard the sound of the Lord God walking in the garden in the cool of the day, and the man and his wife hid themselves from the presence of the Lord God...But the Lord God called to the man and said to him, "[Adam], where are you?" (Genesis 3:8–9, ESV)

7. PEOPLE WILL DO A LOT OF CRAZY THINGS TRYING TO FIX THEIR LOSTNESS.

"When we were controlled by our old nature, sinful desires were at work within us, and the law aroused these evil desires that produced a harvest of sinful deeds, resulting in death." (Romans 7:5, NLT)

8. PAIN IS OFTEN THE KEY THAT POINTS US IN THE RIGHT DIRECTION.

"For God sometimes uses sorrow in our lives to help us turn away from sin and seek eternal life. We should never regret his sending it." (2 Corinthians 7:10a, The Living Bible)

9. THERE IS A DANGER FOR THE FOUND TO BECOME "LOST" WITHOUT EVEN REALIZING IT.

"Yet there is one thing wrong; you don't love me as at first! Think about those times of your first love (how different now!) and turn back to me again and work as you did before..." (Revelation 2:4–5, The Living Bible)

10. NEVER GIVE UP HOPE.

"...[God] does not want anyone to be lost, but he wants all people to change their hearts and lives." (2 Peter 3:9, NCV)

ACTION
Take 1st Base!