



“The Lost and Found”

Matthew 18:12–14

The Authority of the King

Introduction:

- The disciples are fighting over who among them was the greatest (cf. Matthew 18:1–10; 20:20–24; Mark 9:39)
- Jesus is trying to teach His disciples the value of every living soul; not just the “super-saints.” (Matthew 18:11)

Matthew 18:12–14 – “What do you think? If any man has a hundred sheep, and one of them has gone astray, does he not leave the ninety-nine on the mountains and go and search for the one that is straying? If it turns out that he finds it, truly I say to you, he rejoices over it more than over the ninety-nine which have not gone astray. So it is not the will of your Father who is in heaven that one of these little ones perish.”

Luke 15:1–7 – “Now all the tax collectors and the sinners were coming near Him to listen to Him. Both the Pharisees and the scribes began to grumble, saying, ‘This man receives sinners and eats with them.’ So He told them this parable, saying, ‘What man among you, if he has a hundred sheep and has lost one of them, does not leave the ninety-nine in the open pasture and go after the one which is lost until he finds it? When he has found it, he lays it on his shoulders, rejoicing. And when he comes home, he calls together his friends and his neighbors, saying to them, ‘Rejoice with me, for I have found my sheep which was lost!’ I tell you that in the same way, there will be more joy in heaven over one sinner who repents than over ninety-nine righteous persons who need no repentance.”

I. Recognizing Wandering Sheep

Matthew 18:12 “What do you think? If any man has a hundred sheep, and one of them has gone astray, does he not leave the ninety-nine on the mountains and go and search for the one that is straying?”

Psalms 23:1 – “The Lord is my shepherd”

Psalms 100:3 – “We are the sheep of his pasture.”

John 10:11 – “I am the GOOD shepherd.”

Hebrews 13:20 – “...the GREAT shepherd of the sheep”

Isaiah 53:6 – “All we like sheep have gone astray...”

1 Peter 2:25 – “For you were continually straying like sheep...”

The Problem of Straying Sheep

- Sheep stray looking for food.
- Sheep stray when they are left behind by other sheep.
- Sheep stray when they leave their protective boundary.
- Sheep stray when they are drawn aside by other sheep.
- Sheep stray when they are scared off.

Matthew 18:12 – “...If any man has a hundred sheep, and one of them has gone astray...”

James 5:19 – “My brethren, if any among you strays from the truth...”

“gone astray” or “strays” = Greek word *planao*—to roam, to be deceived, to be set out of the way, to wander, to be misled, to be deceived, and to be misguided.

II. Rescuing Straying Sheep

Matthew 18:12 – “What do you think? If any man has a hundred sheep, and one of them has gone astray, does he not leave the ninety-nine on the mountains and go and search for the one that is straying?”

1. Sometimes the Chief Shepherd will go after the strays himself.

Ezekiel 34:16 – “I will seek the lost, bring back the scattered sheep.”

2. Sometimes the Chief Shepherd will send his son.

1 John 4:9 – “By this the love of God was manifested in us, that God has sent His only begotten Son into the world so that we might live through Him.”

Matthew 18:11 – “For the Son of Man has come to save that which was lost.”

3. Sometimes the Chief Shepherd will send his servants to round up the strays for him.

James 5:19–20 – “My brethren, if any among you strays from the truth and one turns him back, let him know that he who turns a sinner from the error of his way will save his soul from death and will cover a multitude of sins.” (turns = Greek: *epistrepheo* = repent, turn back, revert, convert, take back, turn around, return – i.e., return for filling)

Matthew 18:12 – “If any man has a hundred sheep, and one of them has gone astray, does he not leave the ninety-nine on the mountains and go and search for the one that is straying?”

1 Peter 2:25 – “For you were continually straying like sheep, but now you have returned (Greek: *epistrepheo* = you have returned for filling) to the Shepherd and Guardian of your souls.”

III. Rejoicing in Finding Lost Sheep

- The Parable of the Lost Sheep (Luke 15:1–7)
- The Parable of the Lost Coin (Luke 15:8–10)
- The Parable of the Lost Son (Luke 15:11–32)

Matthew 18:13–14 – “If it turns out that he finds it, truly I say to you, he rejoices over it more than over the ninety-nine which have not gone astray. So it is not the will of your Father who is in heaven that one of these little ones perish.”

Luke 15:10 – “In the same way, I tell you, there is joy in the presence of the angels of God over one sinner who repents.”

Luke 15:24 – “‘...this son of mine was dead and has come to life again; he was lost and has been found.’ And they began to celebrate.”

The Chief Shepherd leaves the “found” (the “haves”) and searches for the “lost” (the “have nots”) so they can become the “found” (the “haves”) about whom heaven rejoices.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS & ACTION ITEMS:

1. In what ways are you like a wandering sheep?
2. How did the Chief Shepherd rescue you?
3. What does it mean to you personally to be “lost and found”?
4. Make a list of some lost sheep for whom you will pray. Make a plan to reach out to them soon.
5. What did you learn from this message?