



**Lesson Title:** The Lost Sheep, Coin, and Son

**Scripture Focus:** Luke 15:20-21

### The Lesson in Context

As believers, we recognize Jesus as our ultimate example of how we should live. He alone sets the standard of acceptable behavior. Some say our faith in God is worked out in human relationships. It is one thing to know in theory that we are to love others as He has loved us. However, the direct application and practice of that belief is not easy. In fact, it is often challenging, difficult work.

The Pharisees enforced a standard of their own creation. It is easy to quickly judge them, but prayerfully consider your own standards of valuing people. To whom do you give your best version of yourself? Who gets the most consideration and preference? Is it people you like (or are like you)? Jesus was demonstrating through His behavior and teaching that God's standard of value in people does not discriminate. Spiritual status is not the determining factor for His love and mercy. Whether they are sinners does not even matter. God loves people, period.

### Group Discussion

1. How did you feel when you were excluded and saw yourself as an outsider? If someone helped you feel welcome, what did they do?
2. How do you treat people others may consider "less than?" How can you love people as Jesus loves them?
3. What do you think of the younger son in this parable based on how he treated his father and his inheritance?
4. To which of the three parables in Luke 15 do you feel the greatest connection? What about the story resonates with you?
5. Think of a time in your life when Jesus Christ "received you" (welcomed and accepted you). What was that experience like?

### My Prayer for the Upcoming Week

How do you want to be different because of what you have experienced today?

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