

GOING DEEPER STUDY NOTES (Nov. 13, 2022)

FOR PERSONAL OR GROUP STUDY

Jesus taught in parables to teach us about God, His kingdom, and ourselves. He takes common, everyday images and puts them alongside God and the values of His Kingdom. In the two parables of Luke 15:1-10, Jesus picks a woman who does not demonstrate fiscal responsibility, and a shepherd who cannot keep track of his sheep. Odd. These are not flattering comparisons.

No one likes to lose anything or anyone. Perhaps you can relate to the Pharisees to whom our Lord tells these parables. They never lost anything. They had their lives put together and knew where all the pieces were. We have a little bit of Pharisee in each of us. Perhaps you can relate to the shepherd who lost his sheep or the woman who lost her coin. 'Losing' is what defines them; sometimes it defines us, too.

But the thing about parables is that they do not always provide a clean one-to-one comparison. Sometimes there's even a bit of mystery. Are we to compare ourselves with the one who seeks or that which is lost? Where do we fit? It is hard to say, which is a lot like life itself.

Our Lord told us these parables to remind us of who we are in the eyes of God and who others are in the eyes of God. He told them to teach us that the reason He came was to reveal to us our value and worth, and to reveal to us the love of God, which seeks to welcome the lost and sinners' home.

Found! (Luke 15:1-10)

Now the tax collectors and sinners were all drawing near to hear him.

² And the Pharisees and the scribes grumbled, saying, "This man receives sinners and eats with them."

³ So he told them this parable: ⁴ "What man of you, having a hundred sheep, if he has lost one of them, does not leave the ninety-nine in the open country, and go after the one that is lost, until he finds it? ⁵ And when he has found it, he lays it on his shoulders, rejoicing. ⁶ 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 that was lost.' ⁷ Just so, I tell you, there will be more joy in heaven over one

sinner who repents than over ninety-nine righteous persons who need no repentance.

⁸ "Or what woman, having ten silver coins, if she loses one coin, does not light a lamp and sweep the house and seek diligently until she finds it? ⁹ And when she has found it, she calls together her friends and neighbors, saying, 'Rejoice with me, for I have found the coin that I had lost.' ¹⁰ Just so, I tell you, there is joy before the angels of God over one sinner who repents.'"

WHAT DOES IT SAY?

1. What conversation sets up these two parables?
2. What does the shepherd do in the parable? The woman? How do they respond when their 'lost' item is found?

WHAT DOES IT MEAN?

3. Why does Jesus tell these two parables here?
4. What is the main point of the parable of the lost sheep? The lost coin?
5. What does each parable teach about God and how God relates to us?

WHAT IS GOD SAYING TO YOU?

6. What kind of feelings do these parables evoke? What questions do they raise in your mind?
7. When in your life have you lost something or someone? What was it like to find the 'lost'?
8. Have you ever been lost? What was it like to be found?
9. With whom do you relate most in the parable? Are you someone who feels lost? Are you someone who has life together?
10. In what ways do you feel lost today? What do you think Jesus would say to you?
11. How do these parables relate to the mission of the Church?

As you spend time praying, remember that prayer is meant to be the most natural, easy, and empowering part of your day. Pray for an understanding of who you as a child of God. Rest in the love of the

Father; receive the attention and care of the Good Shepherd. Pray for the ability to see others as our Lord sees them. Pray for the last, the least, and the lost. Give thanks to the Good Shepherd who gave his life on your behalf. God will help you because he loves you.