

The Saving God

Over the course of September, October, and November we will be reinforcing our focus on our mission. Well rooted Christians are naturally devoted to sharing their faith. Last week we began in Matthew 13 and considered the parable of the sower in v. 1-8. We mentioned that the primary focus in it is on God ... not us. He teaches us that all soils are acceptable. God wants the gospel to be heard anywhere and everywhere. A great example of how Jesus did this is found in Luke 15. Here, Jesus does not allow the Pharisaical criticism to impede his mission. The whole purpose of Christianity is our redemption. Our mission is ultimately positive.

I. The Parable of the Lost Sheep

- A. Luke 15:4: *What man among you, who has a hundred sheep and loses one of them, does not leave the ninety-nine in the open field and go after the **lost** one until he finds it?*
 - 1. When the sheep was lost, he would go find that one.
 - 2. He seeks until he finds it no matter how much effort it takes.
- B. Luke 15:5-6: *When he has found it, he **joyfully** puts it on his shoulders,*
- C. Can't you see this in your mind?
 - 1. Joyfully...
 - 2. v. 6 - and when he gets home ... there is celebration. **Rejoice** with me for I have found my lost sheep!
- D. What's the point?
 - 1. The joy of the shepherd who sought and found the lost sheep.
 - 2. His joy is so profound that he needs to call a large group together to celebrate.

II. Application

- A. Luke 15:7: *I tell you, in the same way, there will be more **joy** in heaven over one sinner who repents than over ninety-nine righteous people who don't need repentance.*
- B. Unadulterated Joy
 - 1. The sinners return becomes the joy of heaven.
 - 2. The emphasis here is on the seeking heart of God who seeks until he finds the one that is lost.
 - 3. God goes after sinners! He doesn't seek to keep them away — he seeks to bring them in.
- C. Let's look at a few passages:
 - 1. Isaiah 62:5: *For as a young man marries a young woman, so your sons will marry you; and as a groom rejoices over his bride, so your God will rejoice **over you.***
 - 2. Jeremiah 32:41: *I will take **delight** in them to do what is good for them, and with all my heart and mind I will faithfully plant them in this land.*
 - 3. Zephaniah 3:17: *The Lord your God is among you, a warrior who saves. He will rejoice over you with gladness. He will be quiet in his love. He will delight in you with **singing.**"*
- D. Jesus is the Shepherd who Seeks the Lost
 - 1. Luke 19:10: *For the Son of Man has come to **seek** and to save the lost.*
 - 2. John 10:11: *I am the good shepherd. The good **shepherd** lays down his life for the sheep.*
 - 3. Isaiah 53:4: *Yet he himself bore our sicknesses, and he **carried** our pains; but we in turn regarded him stricken, struck down by God, and afflicted.*

III. As We Close...

- A. Don't be like a pharisee, Luke 15.7.
- B. Remember: Your own lostness; God's relentless pursuit; Be a seeker too; Celebrate redemption; Embrace Compassion Over Judgment; Deepen your relationship
- C. Do you need Jesus?