

Luke 15:1-10

We come today to a chapter full of parables.

1. The parable of the lost sheep
2. The parable of the lost silver
3. The parable of the lost son

The root meaning of each of these parables is essentially the same: **God desires the salvation of sinners.**

1. These parables are not referring to a backslidden believer...but to the lost.
2. These parables are not about the sinner's response to God, but about God's response to the sinner.

Since we won't have time to cover them all, we will spend our time looking at the first two parable today, and finish out the chapter next week.

READ/PRAY

We see three things about salvation in these parables.

I. Salvation is the Work of God v3-6

So He told them this parable, saying, 4 "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? 5 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 which was lost!'

In this parable we see very clearly that salvation is ultimately His work.

1. What does the sheep do?
 - a. All that the sheep has done is get lost.
 - b. He has gotten himself into mortal danger. He is as good as dead.
 - c. A sheep separated from the flock and left to wander by itself in the wilderness will die, even with an abundance of food and water all around.
2. It is only a matter of time before the lost sheep would succumb to the stress of being separated from the flock
 - a. This is a good time to pause and just mention the sad way so many have seemed to treat gathering together as optional A.C. After Covid.
 - b. The lone coal doesn't burn long departed from the fireplace.
 - c. If a sheep gets separated from the flock, it will face serious stress, and it will only be a matter of time before the lost sheep will be devoured by predators, or die due to exposure to the elements.
3. The sheep was as good as dead and all it did was get lost.

We are the lost sheep.

1. Isa 53:6 *All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned every one to his own way*
2. Just like that lost sheep, a lost person is as good as dead.
3. Eph 2:1-5 *And you were dead in your trespasses and sins, 2 in which you formerly walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, of the spirit that is now working in the sons of disobedience. 3 Among them we too all formerly lived in the lusts of our flesh, indulging the desires of the flesh and of the mind, and were by nature children of wrath, even as the rest. 4 But God, being rich in mercy, because of His great love with which He loved us, 5 even when we were dead in our transgressions, made us alive together with Christ (by grace you have been saved)*

The shepherd leaves the 99 and goes in search of the lost sheep.

1. So the shepherd's duty would be to leave his flock in a safe place together and go in search of the lost sheep.
2. That is exactly what the Lord did.
3. Luke 19:10 *For the Son of Man came to seek and to save the lost.*

The good shepherd seeks out the lost sheep

1. Ezek 34:11-12 *For thus says the Lord God: Behold, I, I myself will search for my sheep and will seek them out. As a shepherd seeks out his flock when he is among his sheep that have been scattered, so will I seek out my sheep, and I will rescue them from all places where they have been scattered on a day of clouds and thick darkness*
2. Ezek 34:15-16 *I myself will be the shepherd of my sheep, and I myself will make them lie down, declares the Lord God. I will seek the lost, and I will bring back the strayed, and I will bind up the injured, and I will strengthen the weak, and the fat and the strong I will destroy. I will feed them in justice.*

Not only does the shepherd go in search of the sheep, he picks it up and carries it to safety.

1. The shepherd lays the sheep on his shoulders and carries it back to the flock, back to the fold.
2. He doesn't even leave it to the sheep to travel home in his own power.
3. He lifts it up and carries it.
4. Isa 40:11 *He will tend his flock like a shepherd; he will gather the lambs in his arms; he will carry them in his bosom, and gently lead those that are with young.*
5. Isa 46:4 *I have made, and I will bear; I will carry and will save.*

The sheep does absolutely nothing in this parable.

1. The entire saving work is attributed to the shepherd.
2. Clearly, **salvation is God's work.**

II. Salvation is the Heart of God v8-9

8 "Or what woman, if she has ten silver coins and loses one coin, does not light a lamp and sweep the house and search carefully until she finds it? 9 When she has found it, she calls together her friends and neighbors, saying, 'Rejoice with me, for I have found the coin which I had lost!'

We see the heart of God in this parable

1. This woman so desired the lost silver that she thoroughly, consistently, and with great perseverance sought it until she found it.
2. She shines a light and sweeps the whole house.
3. She leaves nothing unturned.
4. When she comes to the end of her search, she can say, I have searched everywhere! And she seeks until she finds.

Salvation is God's Heart

1. 1 Tim 2:3-4 *This is good, and it is pleasing in the sight of God our Savior, who desires all people to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth*

2. God so desires that people be saved, that he has given us every opportunity to respond .

a. He has given us the witness of the heavens

1. At the moon
2. At the stars
3. At the uniqueness of the planets
4. At the power of the sun
5. Ps 19:1 *The heavens declare the glory of God; And the firmament shows His*

handiwork.

b. He has given us the witness of our conscious

1. There is a moral law in each of us that tells us that regardless of our beliefs some things are just wrong.
2. Rom 2:14-15 *For when Gentiles who do not have the Law do instinctively the things of the Law, these, not having the Law, are a law to themselves, in that they show the work of the Law written in their hearts, their conscience bearing witness, and their thoughts alternately accusing or else defending them,*
3. If there were no such moral law or conscious within us, the world would be in chaos
4. Who set these universal rules in the heart of mankind?

c. He has given us the witness of creation

1. Look around at the grass and trees and the diversity of the animal kingdom
2. Look up at the diversity of the birds and flying creatures
3. Look out at the ocean and the diversity of ocean life
4. Just look around!

- a. That eye that you are looking around with comes with

- b. automatic aiming
- c. automatic focusing
- d. automatic maintenance during one's sleep
- e. When stuck in the dark the eye can increase its ability to see 100,000 times

d. He has given us the witness of His Word

- 1. This book was written over a period of 1500 years on 3 separate continents
- 2. by more than 40 different authors in 3 different languages
- 3. Yet, despite its diversity, it comes together to present one story of God's plan to redeem mankind.

e. He has given us the witness of Himself

1. Phil 2:5-8 *Have this mind among yourselves, which is yours in Christ Jesus, 6 who, though he was in the form of God, did not count equality with God a thing to be grasped, 7 but made himself nothing, taking the form of a servant, being born in the likeness of men. 8 And being found in human form, he humbled himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross*

- 2. This is all the evidence that we need, that salvation is God's Heart

- a. He has turned on the light
- b. He has swept the room
- c. And He is seeking you out.

- 3. He wants you to be saved!

2 Corinthians 5:20-21 *Therefore, we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God were making an appeal through us; we beg you on behalf of Christ, be reconciled to God. 21 He made Him who knew no sin to be sin on our behalf, so that we might become the righteousness of God in Him.*

- 1. We, as ambassadors (messengers and representatives of Jesus Christ)...the Apostle Paul and Timothy who wrote this letter to the church at Corinth
- 2. God the Holy Spirit who inspired them...breathed out these words through their minds and pens
- 3. We also see God the Father alluded to...as though God were making an appeal through us!
- 4. We see Christ, God the Son, as well....we beg you on behalf of Christ.
- 5. Paul, Timothy, God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit are appealing to us, begging us to be reconciled to God.
- 6. Isn't this amazing! God wants you to be saved!

III. Salvation is the Joy of God

Notice the reason he told the 2 parables

15:1 Now all the tax collectors and the sinners were coming near Him to listen to Him. 2 Both the Pharisees and the scribes began to grumble, saying, "This man receives sinners and eats with them."

1. The Pharisees and the scribes were grumbling
2. They were grumbling because tax collectors and sinners (less important folks) were coming to Christ.
3. And not only that, Jesus is enjoying and rejoicing in the fact that they are coming to him.
4. This upset the religious crowd, so he told these parables.

Salvation is God's Joy

7 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.

10 In the same way, I tell you, there is joy in the presence of the angels of God over one sinner who repents."

1. This is the pleasure of God Himself
2. Notice that Jesus doesn't speak of the joy of the angels, but the joy in the presence of the angels and joy in heaven.
3. It is the joy of God Himself.

Salvation is God's Joy

1. The only feature of those 2 stories that seems exaggerated is the celebration.
2. Most people who find a lost coin or a lost animal wouldn't actually go to the trouble of calling friends and neighbors together and having a public party to rejoice.
3. This is a picture of heaven's joy over sinners repenting.
4. Heaven's joy over the redemption of sinners is an ecstatic joy, almost exaggerated.
5. That the Sovereign, Holy, Omnipresent, Omniscient, Omnipotent, Immutable, Eternal, All Powerful, Creator God would rejoice at the repentance of a totally depraved, ungodly, iniquity filled, sin filled, rebellious wicked sinners.

Salvation is His work, His heart, and it is His joy!

1. Are you a lost sheep this morning?
2. Are you a lost coin?
3. Jesus is here and he is searching, sweeping the room right now, shining His light on you right now. Would you come? Would you Repent and Believe the Gospel