

Verse of the week: Romans 8:1 “So now, the case is closed. There remains no accusing voice of condemnation against those who are joined in life-union with Jesus, the anointed one.”

Quote of the week: Rhonnie Van Hattem “Shhh! Be quiet and wait on Holy Spirit. Stop talking so much

It is safe to come home. You can feel safe at Impact Church.

**Luke 15** has been called **God’s Lost and Found Department**. In these 32 verses, Jesus uses 4 illustrations dealing with the lost and with God’s desire to see them saved and restored to fellowship with Himself. **Verses 3-7** record the **Illustration of the Lost Sheep**. **Verses 8-10** record the **Illustration of the Lost Silver**. **Verses 11-24** give us the **Illustration of the Lost Son**. And, **Verses 25-32** relate the **Illustration of the Lost Sibling**.

You can tell the value of something by how far you will go to retrieve it when it is lost.... right?

**LUKE 15** **Tax collectors and other notorious sinners often came to listen to Jesus teach.** <sup>2</sup> This made the Pharisees and teachers of religious law **complain** that he was **associating with such sinful people—even eating with them!** (NLT)

**15** **Then all the tax collectors and the sinners drew near to Him to hear Him.** <sup>2</sup> And the Pharisees and scribes **complained**, saying, “**This Man receives sinners and eats with them.**” <sup>3</sup> So He spoke this parable to them, saying... NKJV

“Receives” mean to allow access to oneself.

Jesus uses four illustrations to teach them the value of every lost soul. He even uses this parable to teach them that they themselves might not be as secure as they thought they were.

Jesus went to where the sinners were and earned favor and because of that, they continued to sit under his teaching.

If we would learn how to partner with God, we might learn how to set prisoners free!

Don't come down too hard on the Pharisees because they were great at keeping the rules. TO THE LETTER. If you ever wanted an example of commitment, then these people were the professionals!

Their job was to point out the sin in your life! Talk about judging someone, these people were experts. **The Pharisees loved to focus on the technicalities (Matthew 23:16-24).** The Pharisees set themselves up as the elite, based (to some degree) upon their expertise in very complex rules and regulations. **The Pharisees loved to restrict the “saved” to a select few, the elite of Judaism (Matthew 23:13).** The Jews, as a group, felt superior to the Gentiles, but the Pharisees felt superior to other Jews (John 7:45-49). They wanted to keep the “saved” to a very small number, and to keep the undesirable element out. Jesus, by association with the masses, the “*hoi polloi*,” threatened to pollute this pure group of pious people. **The Pharisees loved the place of honor at banquets (Matthew 23:5).** They loved attention. They found banquets to be occasions where they could attract attention to themselves, where they could be in the limelight.

**The Pharisees sought to protect and promote their own hypocrisy by concentrating on external “sins,” rather than inner attitudes and motivations**

The critical difference between Jesus and the Pharisees is that they cared about possessions, while Jesus cared about people.

SIDE NOTE: Judging is not your job. Judging is not your function because this earthly realm is not your jurisdiction. We need to stop being preoccupied by passing judgement!

I believe this is one of the reasons people feel uncomfortable in church. Matthew 7:1 “The standard you use in judging is the standard by which you will be judged.

JESUS CAME TO RE-PRESENT GOD.

### Matthew 23:27 New Living Translation

<sup>27</sup> “What sorrow awaits you teachers of religious law and you Pharisees. Hypocrites! For you are like whitewashed tombs—beautiful on the outside but filled on the inside with dead people’s bones and all sorts of impurity.

Luke 15:4-7 <sup>3</sup> So Jesus told them this story: <sup>4</sup> “If a man has a hundred sheep and one of them gets lost, what will he do? Won’t he leave the ninety-nine others in the wilderness and **go to search** for the **one that is lost** **until he finds it**? <sup>5</sup> **And when he has found it**, he will joyfully carry it home on his shoulders. <sup>6</sup> When he arrives, he will call together his friends and neighbors, saying, ‘Rejoice with me because I have found my lost sheep.’ <sup>7</sup> In the same way, there is more joy in heaven over one lost sinner who repents and returns to God than over ninety-nine others who are righteous and haven’t strayed away!

The Pharisees approach to ministry is much like some churches in 2022! Sadly, that concept of church is demonstrated way too much on the southshore!

I am so heartbroken hearing the stories of those hurt by a church, a minister or a member. They feel the 1 lost is deserving .

Jesus was willing to go after 1. He had 99 but he was still concerned about the 1 lost person. That is the definition of Christianity. Jesus is in a pursuit of lost humanity and so should we.

ALERT! Shepherds don’t have Sheep-Sheep have sheep. IF you catch, we will feed

IT IS SAFE TO COME HOME! YOU ARE SECURE HERE!

### Parable of the Lost Coin

<sup>8</sup> “Or suppose a woman has ten silver coins<sup>[a]</sup> and loses one. Won’t she light a lamp and sweep the entire house and search carefully until she finds it? <sup>9</sup> And when she finds it, she will call in her friends and neighbors and say, ‘Rejoice with me because I have found my lost coin.’ <sup>10</sup> In the same way, there is joy in the presence of God’s angels when even one sinner repents.”

The Good Shepherd is constantly calling his sheep! He is on a mission. Shepherds lead with their voice.

Pastures in Israel were deserts and mountains, not the green fields of barley in North America. They lead the flocks through the desert. Shepherds don't lead with a stick. They didn't beat their sheep. The staff was for protection. Sheep will only follow a voice they are familiar with. They will not follow any other shepherds voice.

If you put multiple sheep in a different herd, they will only obey the shepherd they belong to. So, it is interesting to me how many modern days Christians get led astray by the darkened devilish voices they hear.

Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Joseph were all shepherds in a Desert. Where did God lead Moses for 40 years? In a Desert. He was a Shepherd leading Gods people. David was a Shepherd.

Psalm 23: The Lord is my Shepherd, I have all that I need. ( I shall not want) Man does not live on bread alone but by every word that proceeds out of the mouth of God.

"Green Meadows" is a great picture. It is on the mountainside, in the desert that these small areas would appear. It is the picture of just enough. The desert is the place where you trust the shepherd.

It is in the desert that we become people of the ears and not the eyes.

PODCAST BEMA DISCIPLESHIP with Marty Solomon with Brent Billings-26 Images of the Desert Shepherd

### I. [THE SHEPHERD LEAVING on a compassionate search.](#)

The sheep in this passage is said to be "*lost*". The sheep was lost because it is in a sheep's nature to wander. If a sheep sees a hole in a hedge, it will stick its head through and keep going. If the other sheep see the one going away, the rest will follow the leader, and soon, all will be lost.

Sheep are not strong animals. They are not smart. They are not swift. They need a shepherd, and if they become separated from the flock, they are unable to find their way back to the shepherd. He must go after the sheep, or they will be lost forever. If He doesn't go after them, they will die.

The word "*lost*" is the same word that is translated "*perish*" in [John 3:16](#). It means "*to be lost, ruined, or destroyed*".

Sheep cannot defend themselves. Sheep cannot find their own food and water, cannot outrun any enemies that would attack them. There is the possibility they will be devoured by wolves. There is the danger that they will fall into a crevasse, or off a cliff, and die.

There is the very real possibility that it will wander in the wilderness until it starves to death. This sheep will perish, unless the shepherd finds it.

This sheep is headed for ruin. This sheep is headed for destruction. The shepherd knows this. He understands the dangers, and he is concerned about the welfare of the sheep! He is moved to do something; he is moved to do everything in his power to save this lost sheep. When the shepherd in this story realizes that one sheep is missing, he goes after it.

This showed the Shepherd's Compassion for lost sheep! He is moved to do something and not ignore it. His compassionate search is also a consistent search. HE will not stop until that one last lost sheep is found.

Think about this in comparison to his quest to the cross until he was able to cry, "It is finished" John 19:30 Mark 10:35

He secures the other sheep in the "*wilderness.*" This word refers to "*their usual grazing place.*" He is willing to risk everything to retrieve the lost one. He secures the other sheep, and he goes after the lost sheep.

***Nothing is more helpless than a lost sheep, except for a lost sinner.***

God knows the lost condition of humanity,

- He knows the lost condition of your heart as well, **Rom. 5:12**.<sup>12</sup> When Adam sinned, sin entered the world. Adam's sin brought death, so death spread to everyone, for everyone sinned.
- He knows that you are lost because of the sin of Adam, but He also knows that you are a sinner because you choose to be one, **Isa. 53:6**! You went away because it is your nature to do so.
- He knows your life and He knows where you are headed. He knows that Hell is the end of the road for every soul that is not in a saving relationship with Jesus Christ
- He also knows that if He doesn't go after the lost sinner, they will never be saved!

This sheep may have wandered away from the shepherd, but it was still precious to Him. It was precious because it was His. He cared about that one little lost sheep.

### I. **The Shepherd Leaving**

### II. **THE SHEPHERD LOOKING**

Just one sheep was missing, yet the shepherd still went. For the shepherd, the search was dangerous, and death was a possibility. Which tells me this was a COSTLY SEARCH. Another shepherd might have counted the personal cost and decided to let that one sheep go. But this shepherd was not about to lose even one sheep, so he went after it. The shepherd did not stop until his mission had been completed and the sheep had been found! He went after the sheep until he located it.

While there was a possibility that the shepherd in the parable could be injured, for the Lord Jesus Christ, death was an absolute certainty,

Jesus, the Good Shepherd, came to this world to die for lost sheep.

**John 10:11** <sup>11</sup> “I am the good shepherd. The good shepherd sacrifices his life for the sheep

**Luke 19:10** For the Son of Man<sup>al</sup> came to seek and save those who are lost.”

**John 15:13**. There is no greater love than to lay down one’s life for one’s friends

The shepherd’s labor was not in vain. He went after the lost sheep and he looked until he found it. His labor was not wasted. He returned to the fold with the very thing He went after!

The same is true for the Lord Jesus Christ! It may appear to us that God’s cause is failing in this world. It may appear that the enemy is winning. Jesus Christ will not be disappointed by the harvest He reaps from this world! There is a harvest of souls happening right now that is mind boggling. Just because you can’t see it doesn’t mean it is not happening.

<https://www.gordonconwell.edu/center-for-global-christianity/wp-content/uploads/sites/13/2022/01/Status-of-Global-Christianity-2022.pdf>

1900-558,346,000    1970-1,225,395,000    2000- 1,981,177,00

Mid 2022-2,559,875,000    unevangelized population 2,223,554,000
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### I. The Shepherd Leaving

### II. The Shepherd Looking

### 3 THE SHEPHERD LIFTING

- The shepherd has located his sheep. There it lays, cold, wet, and terrified. The shepherd in love and compassion reaches out and touches the sheep. He saves it and rescues it from danger, disuse and death! The shepherd lifts the wayward sheep, places it on his shoulders and heads back to his flock.

This is what the Great Shepherd does for His sheep! He delivers them from the danger and the damage of their sins! We talk about being “*saved*” all the time around the church. The word “*saved*” means “*to rescue from all harm and danger*”. All of God’s sheep are delivered from sin and all that goes with it.

Look at verse 5 It does not say, *If* he finds it, it says, “*When* he found it”. He will never give up on you.

It is here we see the sheep rescued.

- The shepherd in the story was able to lift the little sheep and bear it upon his shoulders all the way back to the fold. He had sufficient stamina to finish what he had started. The Lord Jesus did not start His mission to fail. He went after the sheep for the express purpose of bringing them home!

It is here we see the Shepherd rewarded: His reward is the securing of the sheep! He secures it by his strength: The sheep finds comfort resting on the shoulders of the shepherd.

1 Peter 1:5 “kept by the power of God” It is his grace that leads the sheep home.

Thank God for the strength of the shepherd as he secures them by his stamina!

He lifted the sheep on his shoulders. He has sufficient stamina to finish what he started.

Notice His confidence:

- **Luke 19:10**, *“to seek and to save”*
- **John 6:37**, *“him that comes to me I will in no wise cast out”*
- **Heb. 13:5**, *“I will never leave you, nor forsake thee”*
- **John 3:16; John 5:24; John 6:47; John 10:28**.

#### I. The Shepherd Leaving

#### II. The Shepherd Looking

#### III. The Shepherd Lifting

#### IV. THE SHEPHERD LAUGHING

The shepherd takes the sheep back to the fold. Once it is safe, he wants everyone to know about what has happened. He calls his friends together and tells them his story of victory.

This shepherd was able to rejoice with his friends and neighbors because his lost sheep was found. He was overjoyed about the rescue of this one, lost sheep.

Jesus makes it clear that Heaven gets excited about the salvation of just ONE lost soul! Why?

- Heaven is excited because fellowship has been restored, **Eph. 2:12-17**.
- Heaven is excited because a sinner who was dead in trespasses and sins, has been restored to life.

**Eph. 2:1-4**! Once you were dead because of your disobedience and your many sins. <sup>2</sup> You used to live in sin, just like the rest of the world, obeying the devil—the commander of the powers in the unseen world.<sup>[a]</sup> He is the spirit at work in the hearts of those who refuse to obey God. <sup>3</sup> All of us used to live that way, following the passionate desires and inclinations of our sinful nature. By our very nature we were subject to God’s anger, just like everyone else.



<sup>4</sup> But God is so rich in mercy, and he loved us so much, <sup>5</sup> that even though we were dead because of our sins, he gave us life when he raised Christ from the dead. (It is only by God's grace that you have been saved!) <sup>6</sup> For he raised us from the dead along with Christ and seated us with him in the heavenly realms because we are united with Christ Jesus.

8. God saved you by his grace when you believed. And you can't take credit for this; it is a gift from God. <sup>9</sup> Salvation is not a reward for the good things we have done, so none of us can boast about it.

- Heaven is excited because one whose life was wasted by sin is restored to usefulness, **Eph. 2:10**. <sup>10</sup> For we are God's masterpiece. He has created us anew in Christ Jesus, so we can do the good things he planned for us long ago
- Heaven is excited because a sinner who was separated from God by sin, has been brought near by the grace of God.

**Eph. 2:13**. <sup>13</sup> But now you have been united with Christ Jesus. Once you were far away from God, but now you have been brought near to him through the blood of Christ.

The Lord Jesus will have the last laugh. He will rescue His people and take them all home to be with Him in Heaven.