

The Gospel of Luke

Lesson 27

In Luke 15, we find the first of three parables that Jesus tells, not only to tax collectors and sinners who had gathered around to hear Him, but also to Pharisees and teachers of the law, who were there complaining and muttering that “this man (Jesus) welcomes sinners and eats with them.”

In this parable, Jesus relates the story of a shepherd who diligently searches for one of his sheep that has gone astray. The shepherd does not give up his search until he has found the one that had been lost.

This story is presented as a picture of God, who as the Good Shepherd, searches for those of His flock who have gone astray until each one has finally been found. The Shepherd brings home the lost and calls His friends and neighbors together, saying, “Rejoice with me; I have found my lost sheep. I tell you, that in the same way there will be more rejoicing in heaven over one sinner who repents than over ninety-nine righteous persons who do not need to repent” (Luke 15:6-7).

While this story is a call to sinners to repent, it is also a challenge to those responsible for the welfare of God’s people and to all who are part of God’s family to seek the lost. In the parable, we examined what it means to repent as well as what it means to be made righteous before a holy God. We noted that the Scriptures teach that our efforts to earn righteousness through good works count for nothing. The only thing that matters is our standing in the righteousness of Jesus Christ, who knew no sin, yet became sin for us by dying on the cross in our place, bearing the just condemnation of God against us. In exchange for our sin, God imputes Christ’s righteousness to us.

In this lesson, we will study the two remaining parables in Luke 15. Before beginning, please take a moment to thank God the Father and God the Son, through the Holy Spirit, for the wonderful and only provision that has been made to bring us lost sheep into the fold of God. Then ask God for help completing the study questions so that you might grow in the grace, knowledge, love and joy of the Lord Jesus.

The Parable of the Lost Coin

1. Read Luke 15:8-10.
 - A. What has been lost?

 - B. Describe the efforts the woman makes to find what is lost.

 - C. Considering this effort and the fact that the lost coin is one of only ten, how valuable is it to her?

 - D. What does she do once the coin is found?

E. From verse 10:

- (1) What application does Jesus make from this story?

- (2) What does Jesus say about the response of the angels of God over those who repent?

- (3) From 1 Peter 1:3-12:
 - (a) Into what things do the angels long to look?

 - (b) What do repentant sinners receive from God?

 - (c) Whose promise and power works to protect those who repent?

 - (d) From 1 Peter 1:6, what challenges do repentant believers often face?

- (e) From your knowledge of the Bible or from experience, describe these trials.

- (f) From 1 Peter 1:7-9, what is the purpose of these trials? Persevering through trials results in what?

2. Read Luke 15:11-32.

A. From your reading of this parable, what do you observe about the younger son's

(1) attitude and character

(2) wisdom

(3) actions

(4) reason for repentance

B. After the younger son repents, what do you observe about his

(1) attitude and character

(2) wisdom

(3) actions

C. From this point in the story, what spiritual principles and warnings do you observe? What attitudes do you want to cultivate?

D. From your reading of this parable, what do you observe about the older son's

(1) attitude and character

(2) wisdom

(3) actions

E. From your observations of the older son, what spiritual principles and warnings do you observe? What attitudes do you want to cultivate? To avoid?

F. From your reading of this parable, what do you observe about the father's

(1) attitude and character

(2) wisdom

(3) actions

G. From your observations of the father, what spiritual principles do you observe? What attitudes do you want to cultivate? What actions do you want to emulate?

H. What is the outcome for

(1) the younger son

(2) the older son

(3) the father

3. For you personally, what truths, principles and encouragement are most meaningful from these parables?