

THE BIG IDEA: Being lost means we can be found.

The Take-Off

And so we come to the last chapter in our “Lost+Found” miniseries, and in it we find 3 parables - stories - about lost things being found.

We’ll look at the first 2 today and end with the third one next week.

Have you ever lost something? Of course you have. We all lose things.

Keys, glasses, money.

I once “lost” my cell phone while I was talking on it!

Parents lose track of their children, and if you’ve never lost your child it’s because you don’t have children!!

Children lose things, too. Sydney’s favorite toy growing up was Brown Kitty, but being the favorite didn’t mean BK never got lost. It happened, and there was one time in particular, but we’ll come back to that in a bit.

For now, let’s read **Luke 15:1-10** and make 3 surprisingly obvious - and powerful - observations.

1. We’re always getting lost.

- a. Jesus talks in parables a lot, and so it’s important to understand who is who in these stories, because we have a tendency to think that we’re always the good guys.
- b. But in these 2 stories, we’re not. We’re the lost. When we read about the lost sheep and lost coin, we’re reading about our amazing ability to wander and get lost.
- c. Isn’t it odd how - no matter how well things could be going - we can begin to drift a little here and there until, one day, we’re way off course, alone, not sure how to get back.
- d. There’s a reason we’re compared to sheep, and it’s because we’re not that bright.
- e. Sheep can’t protect themselves, and while you’d think that would keep sheep close to the shepherd who could protect them, it doesn’t. Sheep follow, and wander, and need help getting back.
- f. **Isaiah 53:6** / We ALL, like sheep, have gone astray
- g. So, while it’s true that we can draw parallels and say we should seek for things like the man looked for the lost sheep and the woman looked for the lost coin, it’s critical that we understand that in these stories, the characters we relate to are the lost things because we’re always getting lost.
- h. That’s the biggest reason why we find three lost things in these parables
- i. Jesus wants the listeners to know that ALL OF THEM were lost - not just the air quote sinners
- j. I’ll just say that we need to be careful once we start to think that we can’t wander off
- k. I’m not talking about needing to continually be saved - **Ephesians 1:14** is clear that the Holy Spirit is able to keep us - but recognizing that no matter how long we’ve been following Jesus, we still have a knack for wandering off from Him
- l. “Prone to wander, Lord I feel it / Prone to leave the God I love / Here’s my heart Lord, take and seal it / Seal it for Thy courts above”
- m. Many of you are here this morning and you recognize it - you’re lost, in a bad place, far from Jesus and have absolutely no idea where to go.
- n. While being lost isn’t desirable, it does put us in the perfect place to be found, because we have a Father who is always looking for what’s been lost.

2. The Father is always looking for what’s lost.

- a. If the Father is always looking for what’s been lost, then **being lost means we can be found**.
- b. What a powerful truth - **being lost means we can be found**, not because we’re all that and a bag of chips, but because our heavenly Father is kind, compassionate, and never willing to call off the search party!
- c. **2 Peter 3:9** / He doesn’t want anyone to perish...
- d. **John 10:14** / I am the good shepherd...
- e. Think about that for a minute: Jesus calls Himself the good SHEPHERD!
- f. In this culture, being a shepherd wasn’t good; it was lowly, dirty.
- g. Shepherds weren’t the people who smelled all that good, they weren’t on the A list at parties
- h. Heck, they weren’t even at parties.
- i. But Jesus became one - **Philippians 2:5** - being found in appearance like a man
- j. Why? **Luke 19:10** / He came to seek and save the lost

- k. And look what He did when He found the lost sheep: He JOYFULLY put it on His shoulders and took it home
- l. The Good Shepherd didn't scold the sheep, lecture the sheep or beat the sheep
- m. He loved and cared for the sheep and returned the sheep to the FLOCK!
- n. Even in the next story, look how the woman searches for the lost coin: she lights the whole house, sweeps the whole house and looks CAREFULLY and ENDLESSLY until she finds it!
- o. That's our God. That's our Father, and who wouldn't want to be found by a Dad like that?
- p. Only those who fear being punished, and yet that's not the Father we have.
- q. Our Father is always looking for what's been lost, but He's also a Father who is always rejoicing over what's been found!

3. The Father is always rejoicing over what's found.

- a. Spoiler alert: God likes to party, and nothing makes Him rejoice like the lost being found
- b. We will most definitely see this in great detail next week when we look at story #3 in this chapter, but let me just point out to you the atmosphere of heaven when we recognize our lostness, repent of it and are found: loud and festive!
- c. Luke 15:6, 9 - "rejoice with me"
- d. Luke 15:7 / "rejoicing in heaven"
- e. Luke 15:10 / "rejoicing in the presence of the angels" - not by the angels, but in front of them
- f. God is doing the rejoicing!!
- g. He finds joy in finding us!!!
- h. ***There are 2 things that reflect the value of what's been lost:***
 - ***how hard we look for them, and***
 - ***how happy we are when we find them***
- i. We already know how hard God looks for the lost, but here we see how happy He is to find the lost
- j. I don't know when we made repentance such a miserable thing, because in God's house, repenting and rejoicing go together.
- k. They were never intended to be separated.

The Landing

We're always getting lost, God is always looking for what's been lost and He is always rejoicing over what's been found. That's really good news for people who have wandered off from the path and found themselves far from Him, and when we allow God to look for what matters most to us - lost identity, lost purpose, lost love - we find that His ability to find lost things can lead us to incredible peace.

I learned this one night when Sydney woke us up with a blood curling scream...

[IMAGE / Sydney and Brown Kitty]

Our Father sees lost things, and He finds lost things.

This morning, I'm praying that those truths give you hope, because **being lost means we can be found.**

Let's pray.