

The Stories of Jesus



DailyLife
Five Oaks Church

Week 3: January 16–22, 2016

Day 1

January 18



Pray | Thank God for his unconditional love and patience.

GOD IS THE shepherd, we are the sheep; saving even one is worth rejoicing.

The Pharisees publicly criticized Jesus for eating with tax collectors and sinners. Pharisees placed little value on the lives of these people, believing their behavior made them beyond saving. Jesus told three parables of the lost to confront the self-righteous attitudes. By having care and concern for the lost, Jesus showed the Pharisees what their attitude should be. We should have the same attitude, seeking and loving the sinners and the lost and not criticizing their behavior.

God's love for us is so deep that he seeks out each one of us and rejoices when we are found. He values each and every one of us and takes great pleasure in us.



Read | Luke 15:1-7



Reflect / Choose one or more of the following questions for reflection.

The shepherd left ninety-nine of his sheep to go find the one lost. The shepherd does not want even one sheep to perish. Reflect on how it feels to know that God loves everyone, and even though he has many followers, everyone is important. He will keep reaching out to you.

There are many ways that we get lost from God: just simply not paying attention and wandering away, taking our eyes off God for just a moment or two, or sometimes intentionally or subconsciously sneaking away to worship something else. How have you found yourself wandering from God recently?

The sheep wandered off and got lost. Reflect on a time that you have wandered from God. Did you feel him seeking you?

Day 2

January 19



Pray / Ask God to help you not judge others and instead ask for guidance.

WE ARE PRECIOUS to God; he seeks out all who are lost.

Jesus tells the Pharisees another parable of a woman who loses a coin and searches her home until she finds it. When the woman lost one of her ten coins, she cared enough to make every effort in finding it. She searched diligently until it was found, lighting a lamp and sweeping every corner of the house. When the woman finds the coin, she calls together her friends and neighbors to rejoice with her.

God will go through great lengths to seek those who are lost, and he rejoices when they are found. Like the woman who is searching for that coin with all she had, we should be pursuing those who do not have a relationship with God. We as Christians need to show God's love to those who are lost.



Read / Luke 15:8-10



Reflect / Choose one or more of the following questions for reflection.

Regardless of what you have done or have been a part of, God and those in heaven will rejoice if you return to God. Reflect on how it feels to know that no matter what our sins are or how far away we wander, God will diligently search to bring us back to him.

God wants us to feel joy when others turn away from evil to follow him. How can you increase your love for the lost and help God search for the lost sinners?

Are you the coin that is lost and unsure of following God, or, are you the woman searching and caring about those who are not close to God? Regardless of where you fit within this parable, remember that God is joyful whenever one of the lost has returned.

Day 3

January 20



Pray / Thank God for the gifts that he has given you.

GOD SHOWS MERCY and grace when we return to him and repent of our sins.

The third parable that Jesus tells the Pharisees is the story of the lost or prodigal son. The parable of the lost son is a story about God's redemptive grace and mercy, his love and forgiveness.

Sometimes we are like the prodigal son. We sometimes doubt the goodness of God. We take our God-given gifts and leave God to go out and try to find life and happiness through some other means. Maybe it's our work, our family, other relationships, hobbies, addictions, and so forth. Eventually we need to recognize that life without God is not working, and that we need to turn back to God. When we do, he will accept us with open arms, he will forgive us, and he will take us back. He loves us.



Read / Luke 15:11-32



Reflect | Choose one or more of the following questions for reflection.

The younger son wants to be independent and thinks that he can do a better job of managing his own life than this father can. We are the lost son every time we search for love and happiness apart from God. Reflect on a time in your life when you were like the prodigal son.

Reflect on your faith journey. At what points along the way have you been the prodigal son or the bitter, resentful older brother?

God gives us the freedom to accept or reject him. God loves each of us as a son and rejoices when we turn away from our sins and turn to following him. He is waiting with open arms for us to come home. Are you “lost” and nervous about returning to God? Why?

Day 4
January 21



Pray / *Ask God to help you have a loving heart toward the lost.*

NEGATIVE THOUGHTS ARE as sinful as poor outward behavior.

The lessons in the parable of the lost son are as much about the older brother as about the prodigal son. Sometimes we are like the older son. Our sins might not be as obvious because ours are on the inside: sins of bitterness, poor attitude, and judging. We can always find someone else whom we think has worse behavior than us, causing us to think that we are good. We need to evaluate our attitudes so that we don't become proud and self-righteousness. We are all sinners, and all are valuable to God.



Read / *Luke 15:11–32*



Reflect | Choose one or more of the following questions for reflection.

Going through the motions and obeying the rules does not always equate to righteousness. Reflect on a time when your outward behavior was good, yet you were sinning by having negative attitudes or judging the behavior of others.

The father in this story was a very generous and forgiving man, full of unconditional love for his sons. Are you full of love, being generous and forgiving toward others without expecting anything in return?

The prodigal son came home repenting and asking forgiveness. The father was so happy that he rejoiced and threw a lavish party in honor of the lost son returning. We should rejoice when the lost are found. How have you celebrated when the lost that you know have returned to God?

Day 5

January 22



Pray / Ask God to give you wisdom to lovingly guide the lost home to him.

EVERYONE IS IMPORTANT and loved by God. Everyone is worth searching for.

The lost sheep just wandered away, the lost coin is like a sinner that does not know that he is lost, and the lost son decided to leave on his own, thinking there was a better life out there for him and that he didn't need the guidance of his father.

In the parables of the lost sheep and lost coin, the owners actively search to find what is missing. In the parable of the prodigal son, the father lets his son go but waits anxiously for him to return home. The similarity is that all three stories celebrate the lost being found. God has joy when a sinner repents and returns home to him.



Read / Luke 15:1–32



Reflect / Choose one or more of the following questions for reflection.

Reflect on how these three parables about the lost make you feel about your value to God, regardless of where you are in your faith journey.

Spending time with the lost is a way to show God's love and help bring them back to God. How can these stories help your relationships with those you know who have wandered from faith?

What lessons did you learn from these three parables that you can apply to your own life?

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