

## SERMON

### INTRODUCTION

Good morning, church! My name is David and I am very happy to be here to share God's word with you.. Today I am sharing from Luke chapter 15, a very well known passage that includes The Lost Sheep, The Lost Coin and The Prodigal Son. Even though many of us may be familiar with these stories, I hope that today you'll be able to discover something new and meaningful from them.

I will begin with the first three verses of Luke 15:1-3 on who is among the crowd and why Jesus tells

about the parable. ("I will begin with the first three verses, focusing on who was in the crowd and why Jesus told the parable.")

Luke 15:1-3

Then all the tax collectors and the sinners drew near to Him to hear Him. And the Pharisees and scribes complained, saying, "This Man receives sinners and eats with them." So He spoke this parable to them.

The tax collectors and sinners were attracted to Jesus. The Pharisees and scribes were also always present because they could not wait to criticize and condemn Him. Although not explicitly stated, among the crowd there would have been all sorts of people from each town or city—men and women from all walks of life, including shepherds, farmers, and parents.

The sinners were at the bottom of the social ladder. They would be the thieves, beggars, liars and cheaters – they were not religious and did not attend synagogues.

On the next social level would be the tax collectors. These were among the most despised in the Jewish society. Why? Because they were Jews who collected taxes from fellow Jews on behalf of the Roman rulers - and often in collaboration with the Pharisees. At that time, there were all sorts of taxes: temple tax, property tax, income tax, agriculture tax, poll tax (headcount tax), including customs and duties, and tolls.

The next higher levels on the social ladder would be the shepherds and farmers, including sheep and cattle owners and the land owners. The shepherds themselves would most likely be hired by the sheep owners to look after the flocks.

The Pharisees and Scribes do not associate with the sinners and tax collectors because they are considered condemned. In their view, unlike themselves, such people would not be going to heaven.

In this chapter Jesus shares a parable. The word parable in Greek is “parabolé”.

Slide 1

Para means “beside” or “alongside”

Bolé = “thrown” or “placed”

So, Parabolé (parable) = “placed beside”

A parable is a teaching method where something unknown—such as a spiritual truth—is placed beside something familiar, like the everyday experience of being a shepherd or keeping coins. This helps listeners understand divine truths through common, relatable situations.

Why did Jesus tell parables?(stories)

Because parables help the audience better understand a situation or a lesson. They are built around experiences that the listeners are familiar with things they have likely encountered in their daily lives.

A parable is an earthly story with a heavenly meaning. It reveals spiritual truth to those who are open to receive it, and at the same time, it conceals that truth from those who are unwilling or unable to understand.

In verse 3, it says: “So He spoke this parable to them”

This means it is one parable that contains three connected stories. And the first story is:

The Lost Sheep

**Who were the Audience?**

Among those listening to Jesus would be young boys and shepherds. This story would appeal to them.

[Luke 15:4](#)

[“What man of you, having a hundred sheep, if he loses one of them, does not leave the ninety-nine in the wilderness, and go after the one which is lost until he finds it?”](#)

The Sheep & the Shepherd

Sheep are simple creatures. All they do is eat, sleep, and wander. They are helpless, unable to defend or protect themselves. That is why they need a shepherd—to guide them, protect them, and

bring them back when they stray.

In this story, one sheep has wandered off and gotten lost from the rest of the herd. The shepherd doesn't simply accept the loss. He leaves the ninety-nine in the wilderness and goes after the one that is lost—and he does not stop searching until he finds it.

### Significance

But what happens when the shepherd has found the sheep?

Luke 15:5 And when he has found it, he lays it on his shoulders, rejoicing, compassion, Not Condemnation

### Slide 2

Did the shepherd scold or slap the sheep? No! He gently carries the sheep on his shoulders—and he rejoices. Likewise, Christ Jesus is a good shepherd, he left the glory of heaven to seek out the lost- You and me. Through the darkest and the most difficult times in life, Christ carries us on His shoulders with love and compassion, not with anger or shame.

### Reflection Question

Do you think one person can save himself by doing good deeds and still go to heaven?

(Let's take a pause here and reflect or respond.)

The truth is: we are saved not by our own good works, but it by the grace—through Christ who came to find and rescue us.

Joy & Celebration

I say to you that likewise there will be more joy in heaven over one sinner who repents than over ninety-nine just persons who need no repentance (v7)

When we are found by Christ, are we punished?

No! There is joy and there is celebration.

Likewise, when a sinner repents and turns to Christ—heaven rejoices. That is the heart of the Father.

Not condemnation, but restoration.

Not rejection, but rejoicing.

### The Lost Coin

Let take a look at the Background of the lost coin

During Jesus' time, on the day of engagement, it was the Jewish custom for the groom to give his fiancé 10 silver or gold coins. Those coins may contain the groom's family name or some symbol relating to his family. On the day of marriage, the bride will wear those coins on her head or as a necklace around her neck. From that day until the day of marriage, the bride will be constantly be cleaning or polishing those coins while thinking of her husband to be. The more those coins shine, the more she has thought of the groom. If those coins do not shine, then that will reflect the fiancé's

character – lazy and irresponsible. Worse! What if she has lost one of the coins? The marriage might not even take place because to the groom

she is either negligent or not interested in the groom.

The Audience: Among those listening to Jesus were young girls and women.

### Slide 3

They would easily relate to this story. They would understand the panic of losing such a precious coin and the overwhelming joy of finding it again.

#### Observation

Unlike the story of the Lost Sheep, which took place outdoors and involved a living creature, the Lost Coin takes place indoors and involves an inanimate object. The coin was likely lost in a dark, dusty corner. It would be impossible to find without effort. The woman had to light a lamp, sweep the floor, and search carefully until she found it.

This teaches us that sometimes the lost are not wandering far outside—they might be right next to us, in our homes or even in our churches—hidden in the shadows, unnoticed and untouched. And just like the woman in the parable,, we must be willing to light a lamp (God's Word), sweep the room (remove distractions), and search diligently until they are found and restored.

Significance :This indoor story holds a powerful truth:

A person can be part of a good environment—growing up in a Christian home, attending church regularly, even owning a Bible—yet still be lost if Christ is not truly present in their life. Being in the right surroundings does not automatically mean being in right relationship with God.

Like the coin, which is lifeless and unaware of its condition, a person can be spiritually lost without even realizing it. The coin didn't know it was missing—and in the same way, many people are unaware that they are separated from God. They may be living in sin or feeling deeply out of place in life, yet lack any sense of conviction or concern. Even among those who regularly attend church, some are physically present but spiritually distant. Instead of truly worshiping or listening to God's Word, their minds are elsewhere—scrolling through online shopping, daydreaming, or simply going through the motions with no real connection to God.

Another important point is this:

The coin was lost not because of its own actions, but due to someone else's carelessness. This reminds us that the choices—or neglect—of others can have serious spiritual consequences. A parent, leader, or fellow believer who fails to live responsibly may cause someone else to stumble and fall into spiritual darkness.

This parable is a wake-up call. It challenges us to be spiritually alert and responsible—not only for our personal walk with God but also for those whom God has entrusted to our care. Our lives influence others more than we realize, and we are called to lead by example—with integrity, love, and faithfulness.

Don't speak evil against each other, dear brothers and sisters .. James 4:11(a) Do not judge others, and you will not be judged .. Matthew 7:1 I have come across some friends who were once Christians. When I asked them why they did not return to the faith, most of them gave a similar answer: They had negative encounters with other Christians—friends, colleagues, or even bosses—who were backstabbing, selfish, or dishonest.

For example, one person shared about a Christian boss who took all the credit for their staff's work. That experience left a deep scar—not only in their professional life but also in their spiritual walk. It caused them to question: “If this is what Christianity looks like, why should I return to it?”

It's heartbreaking, but it's a real reminder:

Our lives are a testimony, for better or for worse. Sometimes people reject Christ not because of Him, but because of how poorly He has been represented by those who claim to follow Him. As believers, we are called to reflect Christ—not just in words, but in our character, our integrity, and our love. May we not be the reason someone walks away from God. Instead, may we be the light that leads them back.

A lost and unrepentant person may seem useless to God—unable to serve, unable to help others spiritually. But God does not give up. Just like the woman who searched diligently for the coin, the owner still seeks it because of its value.

Likewise, no matter how far we've fallen, no matter how deeply we are covered in sin or shame, we are still precious in God's sight.

Our worth does not disappear just because we are lost.

The woman did not say, “It's only one coin, I still have nine.” She searched until she found it.

God searches for us with that same persistence and love.

And when He finds us, He restores us—not to a lesser place—but to our full value and purpose in His kingdom.

Rejoice Luke 15:10

Likewise, I say to you, there is joy in the presence of the angels of God over one sinner who repents.”

When the coin was found, the woman rejoiced—and she called her friends and neighbors to rejoice with her. Just like in the previous story of the lost sheep, there is great rejoicing when what was lost is found.

This reminds us that heaven celebrates every single soul that returns to God.

No recovery is too small. No one is too insignificant. Whether it's one sheep, one coin, or one person—God rejoices, and all of heaven joins in.

### **The Prodigal Son**

According to Jewish law, when a father dies, his property is divided—with the elder

son receiving a double portion. While a father could distribute his estate before death, it was not common. In this story, the younger son demanded his share while the father was still alive—implying that he cared more for the inheritance than for his father, almost as if he wished his father were dead.

So the son took his share of the property, and went to another country to enjoy life. He had forgot about his family. But as a father he has not forgotten his son.

Then things started to changed. The son wasted all his inheritance. A famine hit the land. He had no money, no food, no shelter. Desperate, he took a job feeding pigs—something shameful for a Jew, since pigs were considered unclean to the Jews..

What does this tell us about the younger son?

He was a Jew, yet so desperate that he was willing to work with pigs—animals considered unclean in Jewish culture.

He was so hungry he even thought about eating the pigs' food.

He had lost everything—his money, his dignity, and his self-respect.

In his lowest moment of his life, he came to his senses and made a decision to to return home to his father.

Significance

It's sad that many people turn to God only as a last resort.

But what a wonderful resort He is.

Sometimes, the end of ourselves is the beginning of something new with God.

When the son returned, the father didn't scold him—he celebrated!

He gave three things:

“But the father said to his servants, ‘bring out the best robe and put it on him, and put a ring on his hand and sandals on his feet. And bring the fatted calf here and kill it, and let us eat and be merry; for this my son was dead and is alive again; he was lost and is found.’ And they began to be merry (v22-24)

The best robe – showing the son was forgiven and made clean.

A ring – showing he was still part of the family, with identity and authority.

Sandals – showing he was not a slave, but a beloved son.

Then they killed the fattened calf and celebrated, for the lost son had come home.

What does this passage tell us about the father?

1. He was watching and waiting—his heart never gave up.
2. He ran to his son and didn't even let him finish his confession.
3. His deep love stirred repentance in the son's heart.
4. He had already forgiven his son before he returned—this is grace.
5. He protected, restored, and celebrated his son's return.
6. He asked no questions, gave no scolding—only open arms.

Here you can see how joyful the father was! He had the servants prepare a fattened calf for a joyful celebration. It was a time to be merry—because his son had come home.

Who was the happiest person in the story?

It wasn't the son.

It was the father—because what was lost had been found.

In Luke 15:28-30 tell us how the elder brother felt.

He was angry and would not go into the house. Therefore his father came out and pleaded with him.

So he answered and said to his father, 'Lo, these many years I have been serving you; I never transgressed your commandment at any time; and yet you never gave me a young goat, that I might make merry with my friends. But as soon as this son of yours came, who has devoured your livelihood with harlots, you killed the fatted calf for him.'

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The elder son was angry and did not want to join the celebration. The father repeatedly pleaded the elder son to join in the celebration. The elder son also stated that the younger brother wasted his inheritance on harlots (prostitutes), which was not stated in the story. The elder son just assumed it was so.

The elder son was angry and refused to join the celebration.

Even when the father came out and pleaded with him, he would not rejoice.

He accused his younger brother of wasting his inheritance on harlots—though the story never mentioned that. It was an assumption, revealing the elder son's bitterness and judgmental heart.

Luke 15:31-32

And he said to him, 'Son, you are always with me, and all that I have is yours. It was right that we should make merry and be glad, for your brother was dead and is alive again, and was lost and is found.'

The father gently reminded him:

It is right to celebrate—because the lost has been found, the dead is now alive.

Reflection

If you were the elder brother, how would you respond?

Would you choose resentment—or join in with joy?

## CONCLUSION

In this beautiful parable, Jesus reveals the heart of God through three characters:

The Father represents our God—gracious, patient, and overflowing with love.

The Elder Son reflects the Pharisees and scribes—outwardly religious, but inwardly lacking compassion and grace.

The Younger Son represents all of us who have wandered, made mistakes, and find ourselves in need of mercy.

So today, the question is not just, What did they do? but Who will you choose to be?

Will you be like the younger son—willing to admit your need, to repent, and to return to the Father's embrace?

Will you be like the elder brother—resentful, proud, and unwilling to extend the grace you yourself have received?

Or will you reflect the heart of the Father—reaching out in love, ready to forgive, rejoicing when the lost are found?

Today, our Heavenly Father is still waiting. He is still seeking. And He still rejoices—over every single soul that comes home.

With every eye closed, let's take a quiet moment before the Lord.

Let His Word search your heart.

Where do you stand today?

Who do you identify with?

The younger son who needs to come home?

The elder son who needs to let go of pride and bitterness?

Or the father's heart, who rejoices in restoration and lives to welcome others home?

May the Spirit of God help us respond—not just with emotion, but with action.

To return.

To forgive.

To become like the Father.

Amen.