

THE SINNERS and THE SHEPHERDS of ISRAEL
Luke 15:1-3

Luke 15:1

(A) The love of the SAVIOR has attracted a very needy group!

I John 4:10 Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that he loved us, and sent his Son *to be* the propitiation for our sins.

(B) The searching love of GOD is the purpose of the coming of the MESSIAH JESUS CHRIST.

John 3:16 For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.

Romans 5:6 For when we were yet without strength, in due time Christ died for the ungodly

Romans 5:8 But God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us.

Luke 15:2

(A) JESUS is criticized by these shepherds of Israel.

(B) You an almost hear them say: *Why do you spend time with them?*

Psalms 8:4 What is man, that thou art mindful of him? and the son of man, that thou visitest him?

(C) GOD had long ago spoken of ceremonially clean and ritualistically proper shepherds.

Isaiah 56:10-12 His watchmen *are* blind: they are all ignorant, they *are* all dumb dogs, they cannot bark; sleeping, lying down, loving to slumber. 11. Yea, *they are* greedy dogs *which* can never have enough, and they *are* shepherds *that* cannot understand: they all look to their

own way, every one for his gain, from his quarter. 12. Come ye, *say they*, I will fetch wine, and we will fill ourselves with strong drink; and to morrow shall be as this day, *and* much more abundant.

Jeremiah 23:1 ff

Ezekiel 34:1-10,

(D) God had also foretold of the hatred of these worthless shepherds for the MESSIAH.

Zechariah 11:15-17 Then I cut asunder mine other staff, *even* Bands, that I might break the brotherhood between Judah and Israel. 11:15 And the LORD said unto me, Take unto thee yet the instruments of a foolish shepherd. 11:16 For, lo, I will raise up a shepherd in the land, *which* shall not visit those that be cut off, neither shall seek the young one, nor heal that that is broken, nor feed that that standeth still: but he shall eat the flesh of the fat, and tear their claws in pieces. 11:17 Woe to the idol shepherd that leaveth the flock! the sword *shall be* upon his arm, and upon his right eye: his arm shall be clean dried up, and his right eye shall be utterly darkened.

Luke 15:2

Luke 15:3

(A) *And HE spake this parable unto them...* Who is the *them*? obviously, the *Pharisees and Scribes* in V: 2

(B) JESUS' attitude is guilty as charged! And glad of it because JESUS is doing their job!

(C) Yet the MASTER is kind and wants to teach them they are a very needy group.

The sinners had already *drew near unto HIM (V:1)*. *It's the shepherds who are Still afar off among those present.*

THE PARABLE OF THE LOST SHEEP

Luke 15:4-7

Luke 15:4

(A) Can't you just imagine the Pharisees' and Scribes' reaction? It doesn't make good sense.

(B) To *leave the 99 in the wilderness* and go after the one lost sheep is just not natural. It's not human!

(C) A shepherd who had 100 sheep in Israel was very prosperous - He certainly didn't get that by throwing good money after bad!

(D) This is bad business. It's time to cut our losses and write it off! This Parable is what GOD is like as opposed to what man is like! God is better and kinder than man!

(E) Israel was the flock of GOD. Psalms 79:13

Psalm 100:3 Know ye that the LORD he *is* God: *it is* he *that* hath made us, and not we ourselves; *we are* his people, and the sheep of his pasture.

Matt. 15:24 But he answered and said, I am not sent but unto the lost sheep of the house of Israel.

(F) The LORD GOD is the SHEPHERD.

Psalms 23:1 The LORD *is* my shepherd; I shall not want.

John 10:11 I am the good shepherd: the good shepherd giveth his life for the sheep.

John 10:14 I am the good shepherd, and know my *sheep*, and am known of mine.

Hebrews 13:20 Now the God of peace, that brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus, that great shepherd of the sheep, through the blood of the everlasting covenant,

(G) The lost sheep –

How could these shepherds of Israel (the Pharisees) not put it all together?

Isaiah 53:6 All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned every one to his own way; and the LORD hath laid on him the iniquity of us all.

(H) The searching love of GOD for sinners! Go after.....until HE find it! Not just look not just search ... but it must be found! Until in Greek, heh-oce, a word of continuance even until, as far and as long is necessary -*until*.

Luke 19:10

Luke 15:5 GOD carrying us home! *HE layeth it on HIS shoulders.*

Isaiah 40:10-11 Behold, the Lord GOD will come with strong *hand*, and his arm shall rule for him: behold, his reward *is* with him, and his work before him. Isa 40:11 He shall feed his flock like a shepherd: he shall gather the lambs with his arm, and carry *them* in his bosom, *and* shall gently lead those that are with young.

Isaiah 46:3-4 Hearken unto me, O house of Jacob, and all the remnant of the house of Israel, which are borne *by me* from the belly, which are carried from the womb: Isa 46:4 And *even* to *your* old age I *am* he; and *even* to hoar hairs will I carry *you*: I have made, and I will bear; even I will carry, and will deliver *you*

I Peter 2:25 For ye were as sheep going astray; but are now returned unto the Shepherd and Bishop of your souls.

Luke 15:6

**(A) Has JESUS carried you home yet?
Well the, you must come to JESUS!**

Isaiah 53:6 All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned every one to his own way; and the LORD hath laid on him the iniquity of us all.

(B) Those strong arms were stretched out on a cross for you!

Luke 15:7

(A) The joy in Heaven over sinners that repent and come to JESUS.

Psalms 16:11 Thou wilt shew me the path of life: in thy presence *is* fulness of joy; at thy right hand *there are* pleasures for evermore.

Psalm 89:15 Blessed *is* the people that know the joyful sound: they shall walk, O LORD, in the light of thy countenance. 89:16 In thy name shall they rejoice all the day: and in thy righteousness shall they be exalted.

Psalm 132:16 I will also clothe her priests with salvation: and her saints shall shout aloud for joy.

Isaiah 12:1-3 And in that day thou shalt say, O LORD, I will praise thee: though thou wast angry with me, thine anger is turned away, and thou comfortedst me. 12:2 Behold, God *is* my salvation; I will trust, and not be afraid: for the LORD JEHOVAH *is* my strength and *my* song; he also is become my salvation. 12:3 Therefore with joy shall ye draw water out of the wells of salvation.

(B) It is an awesome responsibility to be a shepherd in the Church of Christ today.

Acts 20:28 Take heed therefore unto yourselves, and to all the flock, over the which the Holy Ghost hath made you overseers, to feed the church of God, which he hath purchased with his own blood. 20:29 For I know this, that after my departing shall grievous wolves enter in among you, not sparing the flock. 20:30 Also of your own selves shall men arise, speaking perverse things, to draw away disciples after them.

(C) So obey them

Hebrews 13:17 Obey them that have the rule over you, and submit yourselves: for they watch for your souls, as they that must give

account, that they may do it with joy, and not with grief: for that *is* unprofitable for you.

for in subjection to your elders and shepherds there is protection.

I Peter 5:1 The elders which are among you I exhort, who am also an elder, and a witness of the sufferings of Christ, and also a partaker of the glory that shall be revealed: 5:2 Feed the flock of God which is among you, taking the oversight *thereof*, not by constraint, but willingly; not for filthy lucre, but of a ready mind; 5:3 Neither as being lords over *God's* heritage, but being ensamples to the flock. 5:4 And when the chief Shepherd shall appear, ye shall receive a crown of glory that fadeth not away. 5:5 Likewise, ye younger, submit yourselves unto the elder. Yea, all *of you* be subject one to another, and be clothed with humility: for God resisteth the proud, and giveth grace to the humble.

THE PARABLE of THE LOST COIN

Luke 15:8-10

Luke 15:8

(A) *Ten pieces of silver* - The custom was for a woman who was betrothed to wear a frontlet of silver coins on her brow, signifying her betrothal prior to marriage. Israel was betrothed to GOD.

Hosea 2:19-23 And I will betroth thee unto me for ever; yea, I will betroth thee unto me in righteousness, and in judgment, and in loving kindness, and in mercies. 2:20 I will even betroth thee unto me in faithfulness: and thou shalt know the LORD. ... Hosea 2:23 And I will sow her unto me in the earth; and I will have mercy upon her that had not obtained mercy; and I will say to *them which were* not my people, Thou *art* my people; and they shall say, *Thou art* my God.

(B) The loss is traumatic, for it is a sign of fellowship with her beloved and must be restored.

Jeremiah 3:11-13 And the LORD said unto me, The backsliding Israel hath justified herself more than treacherous Judah. **3:12** Go and proclaim these words toward the north, and say, Return, thou backsliding Israel, saith the LORD; *and* I will not cause mine anger to fall upon you: for I *am* merciful, saith the LORD, *and* I will not keep *anger* for ever. **3:13** Only acknowledge thine iniquity, that thou hast transgressed against the LORD thy God, and hast scattered thy ways to the strangers under every green tree, and ye have not obeyed my voice, saith the LORD.

(C) Dark in the house - Israel, the Lord is the light.

Psalms 18:28 For thou wilt light my candle: the LORD my God will enlighten my darkness.

(D) It is lost in the house - lost in Israel.

Psalms 23:6 Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life: and I will dwell in the house of the LORD for ever.

(E) The floor of the house is dirt and straw. Even though the woman had to get her ceremonially clean hands dirty (Exodus 30:20) her beloved's gift, he token of their marriage, must be found.

Matthew 15:1-20

(F) *Seek diligently till she find it.*

***Till* is the same Greek word as is used in V: 4 and there translated *until*. The lost coin is so precious that the search is never ending until it is found!**

Luke 15:9

If any woman would search for a token and a symbol like this, how much more should these Pharisees and Scribes, these Rabbis, these Shepherds of Israel be searching for the lost? Especially when they prayed everyday the same ritualistic prayer: *I thank thee, O GOD, that you did not make me a woman!*

Luke 15:10

(A) What will GOD do to restore the lost to fellowship? Give HIS all!

Hebrews 12:2 Looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of *our* faith; who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God.

(B) *Joy in the presence of the Angels* - Who in Heaven is in the presence of the Angels?

GOD, JESUS and all HIS saints singing a new song. Rev 5:9-10 & 19:6-9

THE PARABLE of THE PRODIGAL SON

Luke 15:11-24

Luke 15:11

(A) What is GOD like? HE is like *a certain man who had two sons.*

(B) The Father (God) dominates the parable.

(C) He is the central character!

(D) The sons are only supporting characters.

(E) JESUS is about to teach you how much GOD loves you. The FATHER has excessive, unrestrained, extravagant and lavish love for you - you prodigal son, you!

Luke 15:12

(A) The younger son wouldn't ask if he had any doubt.

(B) What does this say about the FATHER?

(C) So I can get away - the stupidity of independence.

(D) This is not just a fling - this son is leaving for good!

(E) Did he know, or care, that he broke the FATHER'S heart?

Luke 15:13

(A) This son loved only possessions - but what did it realize him?

Deuteronomy 8:13-14 And *when* thy herds and thy flocks multiply, and thy silver and thy gold is multiplied, and all that thou hast is multiplied;

8:14 Then thine heart be lifted up, and thou forget the LORD thy God, which brought thee forth out of the land of Egypt, from the house of bondage;

(B) More tragedy- *and there wasted his substance with riotous living.*

Proverbs 23:5 Wilt thou set thine eyes upon that which is not? for *riches* certainly make themselves wings; they fly away as an eagle toward heaven.

Luke 15:14

(A) He *joined himself to a citizen of that country.* A dreaded unclean gentile! joined - Greek kol-lah-0: *to glue together, to stick together or to be pinned to* - a gentile.

Deuteronomy 15:6 For the LORD thy God blesseth thee, as he promised thee: and thou shalt lend unto many nations, but thou shalt not borrow; and thou shalt reign over many nations, but they shall not reign over thee.

Deuteronomy 26:19 And to make thee high above all nations which he hath made, in praise, and in name, and in honour; and that thou mayest be an holy people unto the LORD thy God, as he hath spoken.

(B) But how did he *join* himself to this gentile? Our word servant comes from the following Greek words:

doo-los is a qualified sense of subjection or subserviency, a bond man, a top servant responsible for all other servants;

pahee-ce, a man servant;

pahee-dis-kay, a maid servant.

But the prodigal son was none of these. He was:

mis-thee-os - a hired slave - laborer of:

(C) Swine! *And he sent him into his fields to feed swine.* Leviticus 11:7,

Deuteronomy 14:8 And the swine, because it divideth the hoof, yet cheweth not the cud, it *is* unclean unto you: ye shall not eat of their flesh, nor touch their dead carcase.

(D) He is hungry and eats the husks the swing refuse!

(E) The insanity of sin! A pitiful end to the search for independence.

Ecclesiastes 9:3

(F) This was enough to make any Jew's teeth rattle! But for the Pharisees and Scribes, the ceremonially clean doctors of the law, this was the horror story of all horror stories!

(G) They could not imagine a worse sinner or a worse condition for a Jew to be in! And they certainly could not remember

Isaiah 1:18-19 Come now, and let us reason together, saith the LORD: though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool. 1:19 If ye be willing and obedient, ye shall eat the good of the land:

Luke 15:17

(A) *And when he came to himself, he saw himself as he really was!* He took an Look at himself. Have you really taken an honest look at yourself lately? Surely shames to silence the best of men!

II Corinthians 10:5 Casting down imaginations, and every high thing that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God, and bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ;

(B) *Hunger* drove the son.

Psalms 84:10 For a day in thy courts *is* better than a thousand. I had rather be a doorkeeper in the house of my God, than to dwell in the tents of wickedness.

Matthew 5:6 Blessed *are* they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness: for they shall be filled.

Luke 15:18

(A) He made the great decision and stopped right where he was - He halted because He was sorry!

Psalms 38:17-18 For I *am* ready to halt, and my sorrow *is* continually before me. 38:18 For I will declare mine iniquity; I will be sorry for my sin.

II Corinthians 7:10 For godly sorrow worketh repentance to salvation not to be repented of: but the sorrow of the world worketh death.

(B) *I will rise and go to my father* - Repentance involves a turning from sin to GOD. Cf: I Thessalonians 1:9

(C) *FATHER, I have sinned!* Your only hope is to own up to the FATHER, as King David did when he committed adultery and killed an innocent man (II Samuel 12:13). At that point God saw a change of heart He wants to see in all sinners. God then inspired David to write Psalm 51, so that all sinners could understand what type of brokenness of heart and sorrow is involved in real repentance! Study Psalm 51!

Luke 15:19

(A) He suffered from self condemnation.

1 John 3:20 For if our heart condemn us, God is greater than our heart, and knoweth all things.

(B) He felt unworthy- he was humbled cf: 1 Corinthians 15:9

Luke 15:20

(A) *But when he was yet a great way off, his father saw him* - The father was watching for the son! He's been looking, hoping and watching cf:

Hebrews 4:13-16 Neither is there any creature that is not manifest in his sight: but all things *are* naked and opened unto the eyes of him

with whom we have to do. 4:14 Seeing then that we have a great high priest, that is passed into the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold fast *our* profession. 4:15 For we have not an high priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted like as *we are, yet* without sin. 4:16 Let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need.

(B) *Compassion* - O the divine compassion of GOD for returning sinners. Cf: Deuteronomy 30:1-3, Psalms 78:38 and 86:15

(C) *And ran* - Have you seen God run? It was undignified for a father to run and a Pharisee certainly wouldn't to a returning sinner - even if were his son. But O The paternal love of GOD for his erring children.

(D) *And fell on his neck and kissed him* - God will not receive you at arms length. He wants to take you in his arms! Revelation 7:17 & 21:4

(E) Note: the son had not yet given the well-rehearsed confession for he does that in

Luke 15:21

(A) the grace of GOD! The unmerited love and favor of GOD!

(B) Forgiveness is offered before we ask.

Romans 5:6 For when we were yet without strength, in due time Christ died for the ungodly.

Romans 5:8 But God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us.

Luke 15:22

A) *Bring forth* - Quickly bring forth! What?

The best robe - In a household in Israel, the father had the best robe! The robe of a person is symbolic in Scripture of their righteousness.

Isaiah 64:6 But we are all as an unclean *thing*, and all our righteousnesses *are* as filthy rags; and we all do fade as a leaf; and our iniquities, like the wind, have taken us away.

But God is willing to provide us with HIS own robe (righteousness)

Isaiah 61:10 I will greatly rejoice in the LORD, my soul shall be joyful in my God; for he hath clothed me with the garments of salvation, he hath covered me with the robe of righteousness, as a bridegroom decketh *himself* with ornaments, and as a bride adorneth *herself* with her jewels.

Romans 1:16-17 For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth; to the Jew first, and also to the Greek. 1:17 For therein is the righteousness of God revealed from faith to faith: as it is written, The just shall live by faith.

Zechariah 3:1-4, 1 Corinthians 15:1-4, Romans 6:3-6 and II Corinthians 5:21. If you don't follow GOD'S way to receive a change of robe (righteousness) (John 10:1 and Matthew 22:11-14) you are standing in your own righteousness and lost forever. Romans 10:1-3 - Accept the grace of GOD!

Luke 15:23

(A) Spare nothing!

Luke 15:24

(A) The FATHER thought he was lost forever - but now he is found!

(B) To understand the celebration in these verses, you must check the context found in verses 6, 7 & 9, 10.

(C) Have you been kissed by GOD? If not, maybe you should start home!

Matthew 11:28-30 Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. 11:29 Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls. 11:30 For my yoke *is* easy, and my burden is light.

THE PARABLE OF THE ELDER SON

Luke 15:25-32

Luke 15:25

Now the plot thickens! Most of those who heard this parable – *the Pharisees and Scribes* (verses 1 and 2) could not identify with the sinning *prodigal son*.

Luke 15:26-27

Rage - white hot anger - Proverbs 16:32. Ecclesiastes 7:9 and

Matthew 5:22 But I say unto you, That whosoever is angry with his brother without a cause shall be in danger of the judgment: and whosoever shall say to his brother, Raca, shall be in danger of the council: but whosoever shall say, Thou fool, shall be in danger of hell fire.

Luke 15:28

(A) Had the world gone mad?

(B) *Came his father out and entreated him –*

The love of the FATHER entreats!

(C) The elder brother couldn't be at a banquet like that - Arrogant!

Luke 15:29

(A) *Lo, these many years do I serve thee.* He was responsible – but he had a double portion.

Deuteronomy 21:16-17 Then it shall be, when he maketh his sons to inherit *that* which he hath, *that* he may not make the son of the beloved firstborn before the son of the hated, *which is indeed* the firstborn: 21:17 But he shall acknowledge the son of the hated *for* the firstborn, by giving him a double portion of all that he hath: for he *is* the beginning of his strength; the right of the firstborn *is* his.

(B) He is not working out of love and faithfulness - it belonged to him!
(C) He forgot it was a trust, to be enjoyed with thankfulness! No joy - just determination.

(D) *Neither transgressed I at any time thy commandment.*

Surely the Pharisees could identify with this son now!

(E) No wonder he has the attitude he does He has no experience of grace!

(F) Childish - *never gave me a kid* - Where are the standards? He never missed a move.

Luke 15:30

(A) *Thy son* - self-righteous, self justifying relationship with the Father.

(B) Harlots - Where did that idea come from?

Luke 15:31

(A) Heartbreak! This son, though he had never left home ... had never been Home all along!

(B) *Son* - Greek, tek-non, my child, a word of tender endearment.

GOD is still calling the Pharisees and Scribes tenderly.

Will they hear their MESSIAH?

Luke 15:32

We end with Love's offer of arms out to the elder brother ...

Will the Pharisees and Scribes allow GOD to fall on their *neck and kiss* them?

What would have happened if the younger son

had met the elder son ...

instead of the Father on the way Home?

Would he have ever gotten there?

Have you ever met a younger son on his way home?