

Introduction:

- Luke 15:1-32
- The theme connecting these three parables is when that which is lost is found, there is great rejoicing.
- Look at their criticism of Jesus: "This man welcomes sinners and eats with them." My response to that is, "Thank God He welcomes sinners, or I would never have a chance to know Him!"
- Why does Jesus tell these parables? He tells them because:

I. The Religious Community Lost Sight of Men

- A. Each parable has something missing. Lk 19:10 Jesus came to seek and save the lost.
 1. Lost sheep
 2. Lost coin - a coin of low value that was used in bridal head dress. Sentimental value.
 3. Lost son
 4. The saddest experience in life is to be lost. The scariest experience is to be lost. This is what a sheep experiences when lost.
 5. God is concerned with individuals. He left 99 to get the one.
- B. 15:1-2 The religious community complained that Jesus was associating and eating with sinful people. Chapter 14 is mostly about the religious community that had lost sight of men.
 1. If you are going to catch fish you have to go where the fish are.
 2. The religious had lost sight of what the Shepherd does.
 3. When the sheep is found the Shepherd goes to His friends and they rejoice over the one that has been found.
 - a) This is the exact opposite of what the Pharisees are doing because they lost sight of men.
 - b) Isn't it interesting that the sinners would go out to listen to Jesus but not the Pharisees.
- C. In this Parable, Jesus the Shepherd is the Son of God.
 1. In this parable, I am sure that His audience was reminded of Is. 53:6 *"We all like sheep have gone astray."*
 2. The emphasis is on the Shepherd and His willingness to leave the 99 to find the one lost.
 3. The Shepherd searches to save us. How are you partnering with Jesus to do this?
 4. Love motivates Him to go looking.
 5. That lost sheep mattered because it belonged to the Shepherd.

II. The Religious Community Lost Sight of Heaven's Joy

- A. Each parable reveals what happens when that which was lost is found. In all three of these parables, Jesus reports there is great rejoicing in heaven when one person turns from their sins and puts their faith in Jesus Christ.
 1. *"In the same way, there is more joy in heaven over one lost sinner who repents and returns to God than over ninety-nine others who are righteous and haven't strayed away!"* (Luke 15:7, NLT)
 2. *"In the same way, there is joy in the presence of God's angels when even one sinner repents."* (Luke 15:10, NLT)
 3. *"We had to celebrate this happy day. For your brother was dead and has come back to life! He was lost, but now he is found!"* (Luke 15:32, NLT)

- B. Heaven is happy because Jesus is happy.
 1. The Shepherd finds the sheep and joyfully carries it home and call the neighbors to come rejoice. He found his sheep!
 2. The woman when she finds the coin calls her friends and says, rejoice with me, I have found my coin.
 3. The Father has great joy because His son has come home. He sees him, he runs to him. he kisses him continually, get him new robe, new shoes, new ring, dead calf!
 4. The Pharisees had lost sight of what makes heaven happy. Jesus tells these parables to remind them of heavens perspective and how far off they are from it. What do you rejoice over? Are you concerned that heaven is happy?
 5. Heaven is happy because there is no joy like the like joy of being rescued by God.
- C. This parable is the focus of the Holy Spirit.
 1. Light
 2. Searching the dark.
 3. Sweeping everywhere looking.

III. The Religious Community Lost Sight of Father's Heart

- A. This third parable reintroduces to the Pharisee the heart of the Father. Though the focus by many is put upon the lost son. It is just as important to see the heart of the Father.
- B. It is one thing to be a happy shepherd or a happy woman who found her coin. What Jesus is saying to both the wayward sinner and the brother who was angry is that: This is life. Your heavenly Father has a heart for the lost and He just uses sheep and coins and rebellious child to drive home the point. YOU want to make me happy? "Bring the lost which is precious to me into the Kingdom!"
- C. The Father's heart was for both sons
 1. The rebellious one that became a slave to sin.
 2. The one whose heart was far from the Father because he had a slaves mindset.

Conclusion:

- God wants to remind us tonight of what is important to Him.
- Let's not lose sight of men, heaven's joy and the Father's heart.