

Luk 15:1-2 NIV Now the tax collectors and sinners were all gathering around to hear Jesus. 2 But the Pharisees and the teachers of the law muttered, "This man welcomes sinners and eats with them."

## God's Heart for the Lost

### **Sinners were drawn to Jesus - they came to him - GATHERING AROUND to hear**

- Luke 7:37 NIV A woman in that town who lived a sinful life learned that Jesus was eating at the Pharisee's house, ***so she came there*** with an alabaster jar of perfume.
- Matthew 9:10 NIV While Jesus was having dinner at Matthew's house, ***many tax collectors and sinners came and ate with him*** and his disciples.

### **“This man welcomes sinners and eats with them”**

The word for “welcomes” is used here to show an inviting and open heart

- Luke 10:38 NIV As Jesus and his disciples were on their way, he came to a village where a woman named Martha ***opened her home to him***.

Their indictment was a compliment

- Luke 7:34 NIV [the called him] ... a friend of tax collectors and sinners.'
- Rom 2:4 (b)... God's kindness is intended to lead you to repentance?

## **The Story of the Lost Sheep**

Luk 15:3 Then Jesus told them this parable: 4 "Suppose one of you has a hundred sheep and loses one of them. Doesn't he leave the ninety-nine in the open country and go after the lost sheep until he finds it? 5 And when he finds it, he joyfully puts it on his shoulders 6 and goes home. Then he calls his friends and neighbors together and says, 'Rejoice with me; I have found my lost sheep.'

### **He NOTICES EACH individual**

- When counting sheep - he noticed one missing
- A single sheep is precious to the LORD (this was not just 1 of 100 - but uniquely 1)
- Each is valuable to him

### **He uses this verbiage “and LOSES ONE OF THEM”**

- This shows care and concern rather than frustration

### **He will GO and keep going UNTIL HE FINDS IT**

- He takes initiative and is perseverant

### He JOYFULLY puts it on his shoulders

- It is not a burden to carry a lost sheep back home

### He CELEBRATES - calls friends and neighbors to REJOICE WITH HIM

- Call the neighbors together - I have found my lost sheep - everyone should rejoice
- Rejoicing (χαίρων — chairōn). “There is no upbraiding of the wandering sheep, nor murmuring at the trouble” (Plummer).

### WHAT IS IT LIKE IN HEAVEN?

Luk 15:7 I tell you that in the same way there will be ***more rejoicing in heaven over one sinner who repents*** than over ninety-nine righteous persons who do not need to repent.

## The Story of the Lost Coin

Luk 15:8 "Or suppose a woman has ten silver coins and loses one. Doesn't she light a lamp, sweep the house and search carefully until she finds it? 9 And when she finds it, she calls her friends and neighbors together and says, 'Rejoice with me; I have found my lost coin.'

### The same basic principles are here as in the story of the lost sheep

- A coin [one of ten] was lost - she ***noticed*** it
- She takes ***initiative and a diligent search*** is made (showing value)
- She calls friends and neighbors to ***rejoice*** with her when she found it

### To some, the value of the coin would not warrant such a search - But we are valued

- Matthew 10:31 NIV So don't be afraid; you are worth more than many sparrows.
- Romans 5:8 NIV But God demonstrates his own love for us in this: While we were still sinners, Christ died for us.
- Romans 8:32 NIV He who did not spare his own Son, but gave him up for us all--how will he not also, along with him, graciously give us all things?

### WHAT IS IT LIKE IN HEAVEN?

Luk 15:10 In the same way, I tell you, there is rejoicing ***in the presence of the angels of God*** over one sinner who repents."

## ***GOD*** IS REJOICING!!!

- Zephaniah 3:17 ESV The LORD your God is in your midst, a mighty one who will save; he will rejoice over you with gladness; he will quiet you by his love; he will exult over you with loud singing.

# The prodigal Son

Luk 15:11 Jesus continued: "There was a man who had two sons. 12 The younger one said to his father, 'Father, give me my share of the estate.' So he divided his property between them. 13 "Not long after that, the younger son got together all he had, set off for a distant country and there squandered his wealth in wild living.

- It is like the father was “dead” to him - inheritance is given at the death
- He set off for a distant country - you can't do what you want in the presence of the Father
- He squandered his wealth in wild living

Luk 15:14 After he had spent everything, there was a severe famine in that whole country, and he began to be in need. 15 So he went and hired himself out to a citizen of that country, who sent him to his fields to feed pigs. 16 He longed to fill his stomach with the pods that the pigs were eating, but no one gave him anything.

- He spent everything
- He began to be in need
- He fed pigs - degrading for a Jew
- No one gave him anything - Pro 19:4 Wealth attracts many friends, but even the closest friend of the poor person deserts them.

## The Prodigal Son's Restoration

Luke 15:17 "When he came to his senses, he said, 'How many of my father's hired servants have food to spare, and here I am starving to death! 18 I will set out and go back to my father and say to him: Father, I have sinned against heaven and against you. 19 I am no longer worthy to be called your son; make me like one of your hired servants.' 20 So he got up and went to his Father...

- He came to his senses
- **Repentance** - a change of mind - my father's hired servants have plenty
- **Leading to a change of direction** - I will arise and go to my father
- **Confession** - I will say to him “Father I have sinned against heaven and before you”
- **Humility** - I am no longer worthy - thrust yourself onto the mercy and grace of God

## The Father's Reception

Luk 15:20(b)"But while he was still a long way off, his father saw him and was filled with compassion for him; he ran to his son, threw his arms around him and kissed him.

- Still a long way off - SAW - shows that the father had been LONGING & LOOKING for him
- FILLED with compassion for him
- RAN to his son
- THREW HIS ARMS AROUND HIM

- KISSED HIM (gk indicates he kissed him again and again)

Luk 15: 21 "The son said to him, 'Father, I have sinned against heaven and against you. I am no longer worthy to be called your son.' 22 "But the father said to his servants, 'Quick! Bring the best robe and put it on him. Put a ring on his finger and sandals on his feet. 23 Bring the fattened calf and kill it. Let's have a feast and celebrate. 24 For this son of mine was dead and is alive again; he was lost and is found.' So they began to celebrate.

- But the father said - He turned his attention on the joy of the moment..."quick bring..."
- The BEST robe - A ring and Sandals (slaves were barefoot)
  - Gen 41:41-42 NIV ***So Pharaoh said to Joseph***, "I hereby put you in charge of the whole land of Egypt." 42 Then Pharaoh took his signet ring from his finger and put it on Joseph's finger. He dressed him in robes of fine linen and put a gold chain around his neck.
- The fatted calf
- Let's celebrate - He was dead and is alive - was lost and is found

Luk 15:25 "Meanwhile, the older son was in the field. When he came near the house, he heard music and dancing. 26 So he called one of the servants and asked him what was going on. 27 'Your brother has come,' he replied, 'and your father has killed the fattened calf because he has him back safe and sound.' 28 "The older brother became angry and refused to go in. So his father went out and pleaded with him. 29 But he answered his father, 'Look! All these years I've been slaving for you and never disobeyed your orders. Yet you never gave me even a young goat so I could celebrate with my friends. 30 But when this son of yours who has squandered your property with prostitutes comes home, you kill the fattened calf for him!' 31 "'My son,' the father said, 'you are always with me, and everything I have is yours. 32 But we had to celebrate and be glad, because this brother of yours was dead and is alive again; he was lost and is found.'"

- The older son became angry
- The father PLEADED with him
- This "son of yours" - wouldn't even acknowledge him as his brother
- Everything I have is yours
- We HAD to celebrate he was DEAD and is ALIVE

### **In every story**

Something of Value is Lost

He takes initiative to Find it

He rejoices and calls for us to rejoice with him

Are you lost?

A prodigal?

A Parent with a Prodigal child?

Are you able to rejoice?

What if we were a church where publicans and sinners enjoyed coming?

Are we OK with that, or would we be more like Pharisees or the older brother?