
“The Prodigal God: He Welcomes Sinners”
February 27-28, 2010
Luke 15:1-10

“But the Pharisees and the teachers of the law muttered, ‘This man welcomes sinners and eats with them.’” Luke 15:2

There are three ways to be lost:

Sheep = _____

Coin = _____

Son = _____

Notes

(Please use this space to note thoughts or insights you learned from today’s message.)

“Jesus’ teaching consistently attracted the irreligious while offending the Bible-believing, religious people of his day.”
“The Prodigal God”, pg 15

Quick Review

The message this week focused on the first two parables of Luke 15. There are different ways of being far from God. The sheep was lost through foolishness, the coin through thoughtlessness, and the son through willfulness. We talk about salvation by grace, but do we believe it? Many might say, “The ‘sinners’ in our world today are simply not even trying because look at the shape they are in. If only they were like us.” Do we welcome “sinners,” those different from us? Are we just like Jesus? What was one idea that really challenged you this week?

Small Groups

Getting to Know Each Other

1. If there was a movie of your life, what would the title be and which actor would you want to play you?
2. Have you ever had to search for something that was lost? What was it and why was it lost? Would the search have been different if the object was something valuable? As for the lost and found items, do you lose more than you find? Which items are still lost? Did you find anything recently that had been lost for a while? How did you feel?
3. As a child did you ever run away from home? Where did you go? What happened that made you run away? What made you return home?

Into the Bible

1. Jesus was in search of the lost. He wanted the message to be for all people, but some did not want any part of it. What was the purpose of Christ’s coming?

Luke 19:1-9 John 17:13-26

2. When something or someone is lost it requires someone to look for the person or thing that is lost. God had to come after us, as we were all lost. How does Ephesians 2:8-9 support this idea?

3. God has sought out his people and offers them the true riches found in Jesus Christ. Once God has found you, how does it change your attitude?

Philippians 3:7-11 2 Corinthians 5:11-17

Application

1. Jesus ate with the “sinners” and the tax collectors which meant he accepted them. How dare Jesus eat with these people. They don’t show up at synagogue, why do they want to listen to Jesus? Who in our world today do we see as those we want to keep far from us? What has this parable taught us about these people and how can we think about them differently? What would it look like if the church was as welcoming as Jesus?
2. Based upon the three ways that the sheep, coin and son were lost, what would you say most closely relates to the way you were lost? Why?
3. Have you ever strayed from the Christian faith? Who or what did God use to bring you back? If you were raised outside the faith who or what did God use to bring you in? How does it make you feel when you hear stories about those who run from God? Does this affect the relationships you have with others who are “lost”?

Prayer:

In your prayer time, ask that God guides your group to see those who are lost and in need of his love. Share with the group one way that they can pray for you or something going on in your life. To ensure a comfortable environment, please be mindful that comments shared should remain within the confines of the group unless they want it shared with the larger community for prayer.

Family Groups Into the Bible

Read Luke 15:1-10

Application

Ages 2-11

1. Have you ever been lost or been in a place that you didn’t know where mom or dad was? How did you feel? How do you think you got lost in the first place? How can you prevent from being lost ever again?
2. How do you think people can tell we are Christians? What are some ways that we might be able to share the good news about Jesus with friends, family or neighbors?

Ages 12-18

1. Have you ever tried or wanted to run away from home? What led you to feel like that? If you did go, where did you go? What led you to come back home?
2. Are you a lost sheep or a found sheep? Explain why. List some ways that you believe some people become lost and drift away from the church and God.
3. As a family, pretend you are a search and rescue squad that has been given the charge to find lost “sheep” (I know it sounds hokey, but just work with me). List some of the “equipment” you might need and figure out the places you might go. In what ways can God guide your “squad” to find lost “sheep”?

For Families of all ages:

Think of ways your family can show Jesus’ love to others in your life.

Prayer:

Dear God, thank you for our family, our church and our friends. They mean so much to us. Help us be responsive to their needs. Open our eyes to see and welcome the lost and those in danger of becoming lost. Help us act with wisdom and courage to take on the challenges we see around us. In Jesus name we pray, Amen!