

LOST AND FOUND (Luke 15:1-32)

Usually this chapter is broken up into three separate parables, The lost sheep, the lost silver, and the lost son. Actually the whole chapter is but one parable with three pictures. Without dealing with all three at this time we can say that they all culminate with a singular message: concern over something lost, and joy at the recovery of that which was found. It was serious to lose a sheep, worse to lose money, but worst of all to lose a son. Our study will focus on the lost son.

Luke 15:1-2 The two fold purpose of the parable was (1) Jesus love and compassion for lost sinners, (2) His rebuke of the Scribes and Pharisees for their cold hearted censorship toward needful sinners.

Luke 15:11-12 The '*RESTLESSNESS*' of the human heart. Though not a loving thing to do, the son was well within the Law when asking for his inheritance. The request would have been received by the father as asking a favor rather than a demand.

Luke 15:12; Dt. 30:19 The father in this story is a picture of God letting a sinner go his own way.

Luke 15:13-14; Prov. 23:7 The '*RUINATION*' by the sin nature. The young man wastes no time in fulfilling what has been in his heart for a long time and leaves the safe haven of the fathers house for the lustfulness of the world (**I Jn. 2:16**).

Luke 15:15-16 His financial disaster is followed by a natural disaster which he of course did not plan for. Once his wealth was gone so were his 'friends' (**Job 4:1-8**).

Luke 15:15-16; II Peter 2:19-21 This is a perfect picture of the state of a lost sinner or a rebellious believer who has turned back from the truth and becomes enslaved again to sin.

Luke 15:17-19 The '*REALIZATION & REPENTANCE*' of a sinner. The son reflects on his terrible condition and then thoughts of his fathers kindness, love and tenderness flood his soul and mind. Sometimes it takes falling to the bottom in order to realize the sin and error of our way (**Eph. 2:12-13**).

Luke 15:20-24 The '*RESTORATION*' of a sinner. Broken, humbled, tattered and filthy he makes his way to the fathers house with confession on his lips and an attitude that he is willing to give up all the rights he thought he had. Instead of "Give me" the portion that is mine, he is ready to tell his father "Make me" a servant in your house. True repentance and restoration is based on what we 'do' not say.

Luke 15:20-24 Jesus portrays the father as one who has been waiting, searching, hoping and praying for his son to appear. The father doesn't wait for his son but runs to him in an open show of love and joy at the sons return. He unconditionally forgives and accepts him back into the family.

The father orders 'the best robe' for the son signifying full restoration to his original position in the family, or spiritually "the robe of righteousness". He orders "a ring on his hand" a sign of authority and sonship. Finally he orders "shoes for his feet" signifying that he was a member of the family.

Luke 15:25-32 The tragic final episode of this wonderful story is that of the elder son. One of his duties in O.T. times would be that of reconciling the younger son with the father. He rejects the restoration of the younger son and will not forgive him for leaving the family and reminds the father of the severity of the young sons sins (**Matt. 7:3-5**). He then reminds his father of all his own wonderful works and loyalty to the father "these many years" (**Matt. 7:21-23**).

Who is the Father Do we not see a forgiving, tender, compassionate God who is quick to forgive and restore all who will repent and come to him with a need of forgiveness?

Who is the Prodigal All who will reject God's love through Jesus Christ and all who have gone back into the world in order to satisfy the sins of the flesh and waste their God given talents and substance.

Who is the Elder Brother He represents the Scribes and Pharisees attitude of resentment toward sinners. Un-compassionate, unloving, and unforgiving toward lost sinners and carnal Christians. Those that think they are good enough to make it into heaven by their own merits or their self-righteous religion of piety and good works.