

me, you still matter to Me! You really do!"
The truth of these stories in Luke 15, is that God our Savior, wants all men to be saved and to come to a knowledge of the truth.

This leads to the second common thread in Jesus' three stories...

2. That which was missing was important enough to warrant an all-out search.

- When the shepherd discovered he'd lost a sheep, he left his other sheep for a time, so he could go and search for that one lost sheep.
- When the woman discovered she'd lost 10% of her savings, she lit a lamp immediately and searched diligently till she found it.
- The father, whose son left of his own choice - runs to meet his son, when the son returned.

The point is, when you really value something and it is lost - you just naturally want to search for it. Jesus is teaching us that God values people so much that he searches for those who are lost and separated from him. In fact, Jesus' own life mission statement was this: *"The son of man [Jesus] came to seek and save the lost"* (Luke 19:10) (NIV). Elsewhere, John tells us... *"For God did not send his Son into the world to condemn the world, but to save the world through him"* (John 3:17).

This is why Jesus came! To reach out to lost people; love them and provide the way for them to be saved! He died on the cross for the sins of everyone, to provide

forgiveness and the gift of eternal life.

The third common thread that runs through the stories of Luke 15 is this.

3. After Salvations comes rejoicing!

- The shepherd retrieved the sheep and threw a party!
- The woman rediscovered her coin and threw another party!
- The son came home and the father threw the biggest party of all.

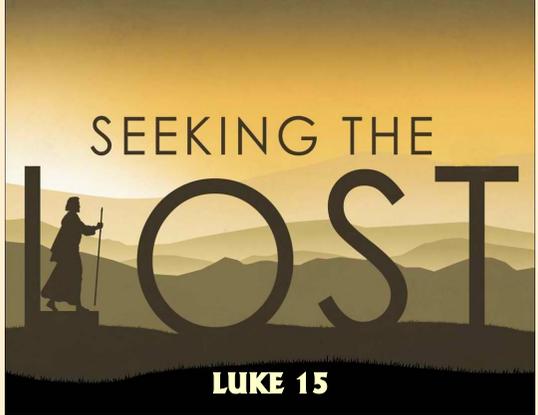
As Jesus told it, around the throne of heaven, the angels of God rejoice - they throw a party - when one person who has been lost — is found!

If you are struggling with feelings of lostness and emptiness in life, God wants to help you. Come to him and make him the Lord of your life. His greatest desire is for you to understand how much he loves and values you (John 3:16). Respond to him in faith, trust him and receive his free gift of salvation in Jesus Christ.

"Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and you will be saved" (Acts 16:31).

When John Newton, placed his faith in Jesus Christ, he wrote...

*"Amazing Grace how sweet the sound,
that saved a wretch like me;
I once was lost, but now I'm found,
was blind, but now I see."*



Bible CORRESPONDENCE FELLOWSHIP

PMA PO Box 2300, Port Orchard, WA 98366
www.prisonmission.org

"PMA provides Bible Correspondence courses in English and Spanish at no cost to inmates"

Seeking the Lost

Luke 15:1- 24

Have you ever lost your car keys? Or worse—your glasses—only to find them sitting right on top of your head? We laugh, but the truth is, all of us know the frustration of losing something valuable. **Now imagine losing something far more important than keys or glasses—your child.** In Luke 15, Jesus tells us heaven’s heart beats for the lost. Why? Because **we believe people matter to God—therefore they matter to us.**”

We believe all people matter to God, (John 3:16, 17; 1 Timothy 1:15, 2:4; 2 Peter 3:9) and therefore they matter to us—the church (Luke 5:30-32; Luke 15; 19:10, Matthew 18:14; Acts 26:18; 2 Corinthians 5:20).

Lost people matter to God - and they should matter to us as well. Have you ever lost something really important?

I’ll never forget the time as a young man just out of school, when I lost my wallet. It had a few dollars in it and some important cards, but not too much. However, it did mean a lot to me at that time. I searched for days trying to find it, to no avail. Actually, I never did find it and had to start all over again. We all know the pain of losing something that matters to us – whether it is a person, or an object, or even just computer work that is lost when a computer crashes. Our stomach gets this sinking feeling, and we begin to feel a bit panicky as the realization sets in that we’ve really LOST something!

In Luke 15, Jesus told three parables back to back, about lost things! As we take a look at these three stories, what we’re going to notice is Jesus driving home a very important point about how God feels about people just like us. As we examine the parables, seek to notice the common elements that stand out.

1. The Lost Sheep – (Luke 15:4-7)

Think about it. If one of you owned 100 sheep and you realized one was lost, what would you do? You’d leave those 99 in the safety of the fold and go searching for the lost one until you found it! Then when you find it – you’d put it up on your shoulders and bring it back to the fold. When you did, you’d gather all your friends and say “Let’s have a party – I’ve found my lost sheep!”

I tell you that just like this, there is more rejoicing in heaven over one sinner who repents, than over 99 people, righteous people already saved.

2. The Lost Coin – (Luke 15: 8-10)

Suppose a woman has ten silver coins and loses one. What would she do? Even if it was dark, she’d get up, light a lamp, sweep the entire house and search for it until she found it! Then when she finds it she calls all her friends and neighbours and says, “*Let’s have a party! I found my lost coin!*” In the same way, I tell you, the angels in heaven rejoice when one sinner repents of his sins.

3. The Lost Son - (Luke 15: 11-32)

There was a man who had two sons. The younger one said to his Dad: “Please give me my half of the estate now so I can start

enjoying it!” So the father did just that, dividing his property among his two sons. Not long after that, the younger son took off for a distant place, where he squandered his inheritance on wild living. After he’d spent everything, a famine hit the country and he found himself in a desperate situation: penniless, hungry, and alone. After much loss he came to his senses and returned home.

As he was finally walking up the road approaching his Father’s home, his father saw him and was filled with compassion and love for him. So against all social customs he RAN out to meet his son, threw his arms around him and kissed him. And threw a party saying, “*For this son of mine was dead and is alive again – he was lost and is found!*” And so the party began.

All three stories tell the same message. Jesus was saying, “**lost people matter to God.**” We know this because of the three common elements of these stories:

1. In each story, something of great value was missing.

- **the lost sheep** was a significant part of the livelihood of the shepherd.
- **the lost coin** - 1 tenth of the woman’s wealth, vital to the elderly woman’s survival
- **the lost son** was of great personal value to his father.

When people are separated from God by sin, He feels the loss, and in love still says “*Even though you are far away from*