



The Parable From Luke 15

Parable Reminders

- A Parable is ***not*** a straightforward description of an event, just as it occurred or will occur.
- A Parable is a ***casting or placing side by side*** to a real event or ***to compare likeness or similitude*** to reveal the true meaning by interpretation .



Context of Luke 15

- **Importance of Placing Scripture in Proper Context with Reflective Biblical Meditation**
 - The primary purpose of considering context is to derive the correct meaning and the intent of the author. With the Bible, reflective Biblical meditation is a way for us to become aware of our own state relative to God's desired state for us.
 - ✓ The contextual approach to Bible Study is to analyze specific portions of scripture within its given context (the words or ideas expressed before and after) to accurately understand, evaluate and interpret the ideas, in the passage.
 - ✓ Using reflective meditation with the Bible is a powerful way to received insight about our life and God's way of life.



Context of Luke 15

■ Jesus' Discussion in Luke 15 is Composed of 3 Distinct Illustrations

- The Lost Sheep
 - The Lost Coin
 - The Lost Son
- ✓ It is essentially one parable with three illustrations. Luke uses the singular 'this parable', when introduces the three illustrations in verse 3.



Context of Luke 15

■ Jesus' Discussion in Luke 15 is Composed of 3 Distinct Illustrations

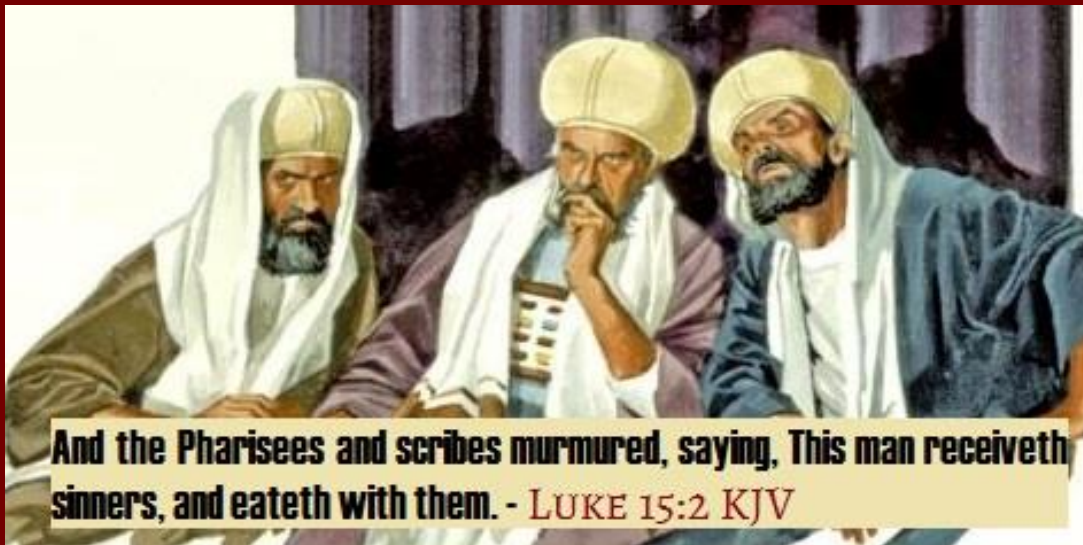
- Jesus seems to focus the minds of those hearing His parable that, He came into the world to seek and save the lost. The 3 illustrations, when seen as 1 parable present us with a complete picture of redemptive work of Jesus Christ.
- ✓ The sheep, the coin and the son are all lost and they were all worth saving.
- ✓ It was a serious matter to lose a sheep, worse to lose money and worst of all to lose a son.



Context of Luke 15

■ Luke 15:1-3

- This parable results from a statement made by the scribes and Pharisees, "This man receives sinners and eats with them" (Luke 15:2).
- As the end of Jesus' public ministry neared, the downtrodden, the despised, the lowly, and the sinful were drawn to Him. They were sincere in their desire to be raised out of their poor condition and genuine in their desire to follow Him, and He publicly identified Himself with them. Unlike the Pharisees, these sinners knew they were sinners and needed to be saved.



The Lost Sheep

■ Luke 15:4-7

– Illustration of Lost Sheep

- The sheep that was lost was worth saving, and the shepherd's pity for it motivates him to rescue it.
- It was a serious matter to lose a sheep

■ Psalm 119:176

- “I have gone astray like a lost sheep; seek Your servant...”

■ Isaiah 53:6

- “All of us like sheep have gone astray, each of us has turned to his own way; But the Lord has caused the iniquity of us all to fall on Him.”

■ Jeremiah 50:6

- “My people have become lost sheep; their shepherds have led them astray...”

The Lost Sheep

■ Luke 15:4-7

– Illustration of Lost Sheep

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■ Ezekiel 34:11-16

- “For thus says the Lord God, “Behold, I Myself will search for My sheep and seek them out...I will care for My sheep and will deliver them...I will bring them out from the peoples...I will feed them in a good pasture...I will lead them to rest...I will seek the lost ...I will feed them with judgment.”

■ Psalm 23

- The shepherd is Jesus Christ.



The Lost Sheep

■ Luke 15:4-7

– Illustration of Lost Sheep

- The sheep that was lost was worth saving, and the shepherd's pity for it motivates him to rescue it.
- It was a serious matter to lose a sheep

■ Zechariah 11:16-17

- “...I am going to raise up a shepherd in the land, who will not care for the perishing, seek the scattered...Woe to the worthless shepherd...”

■ John 10:11-18

- Contrast the Good Shepherd (Jesus Christ) and the Hired Hand.
- Role of the pastor / elder in the Church - I Peter 2:25, 5:1-2

Possible Reasons for Lost Sheep

■ James 1:14

- “But each one is tempted when he is carried away and enticed by his own lust.”

■ Proverbs 19:27

- “Cease from listening, my Son, to discipline, and you will stray from the words of knowledge.”

■ II Timothy 4:3-4

- “For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine, but wanting to have their ear tickled, they will accumulate for themselves teachers in accordance to their own desires, and will turn away their ears from the truth and will turn to myths.”

The Lost Coin

■ Luke 15:8-10

– Illustration of the Lost Coin

- The value of the lost silver piece motivates the woman to search her house diligently until she finds it.
- It was a serious matter to lose a sheep; it was worse to lose money
- Joy after recovering something lost is a fundamental issue each of the Luke 15 illustrations.
- The lost coin is inside the house, in contrast to the lost sheep, which is wilderness.
- This could point to mismanagement in the handling of the item of value or careless misplacement.



The Lost Coin

■ Luke 15:8-10

– Illustration of the Lost Coin

- If the shepherd was interested in one in a hundred, it makes sense that the woman would be interested in one in ten. She did not just count the coin as lost and care nothing about it.
- Psalm 119:105 – “Your word is a lamp to my feet and a light to my path.”
- The Woman seeks diligently with the lamp. “I directed my mind to know, to investigate and to seek wisdom and an explanation, and to know the evil of folly and the foolishness of madness.” (Ecclesiastes 7:25).



The Lost Coin

■ Luke 15:8-10

– Illustration of the Lost Coin

- We don't often think of God as rejoicing, but this passage tells us that He does, and in what circumstances.
- "As the bridegroom rejoices over the bride, so shall your God rejoice over you" (Isaiah 62:5).
- "The LORD your God in your midst, The Mighty One, will save; He will rejoice over you with gladness, He will quiet you with His love, He will rejoice over you with singing" (Zephaniah 3:17).



The Lost Son

■ Luke 15:11-32

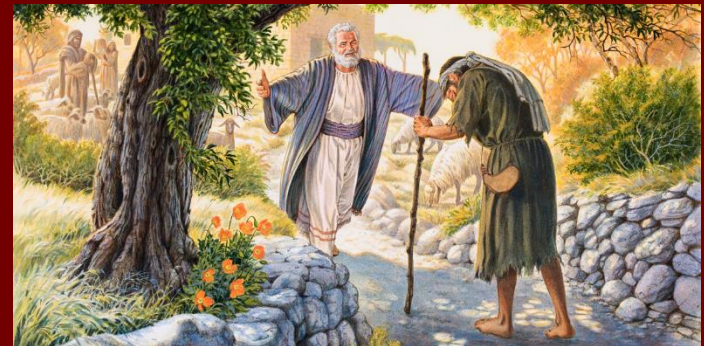
- **Younger Son**: The younger son shows a lack of respect for authority and deference to his elders.
- **He thinks primarily of himself, totally disregarding how it affects others. His request for his inheritance is not to benefit others but to pursue pleasure—especially entertainment (Proverbs 21:17).**
- **As a result, his unwise actions bring him to the point of despair and a re-evaluation of his life. “Father, I have sinned against heaven and before you”. Similar to Psalm 51:4; this appears to be a deep confession.**



The Lost Son

■ Luke 15:11-32

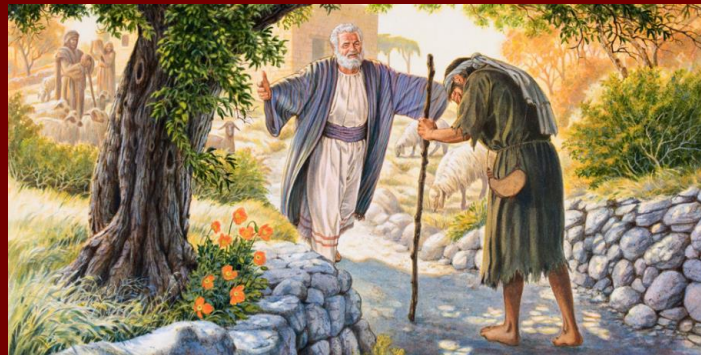
- **The Father**: The fact that the father saw the son when he was still far away suggests that he had hoped and watched for such a return.
- This father, who had most cause for bitterness and anger, ran towards his runaway son. And when they met, he embraced and kissed him, showing clearly that he still considered him his son. This pictures a relationship being restored.
- The father does not stop there though. 'Bring the fattened calf', he said, 'and kill it. We are going to have a feast in honor of my son's return'. He gives the reason for the celebration. The son had been as good as dead to him, but now had returned to life. He had been lost, but now was found.



The Lost Son

■ Luke 15:11-32

- **Older Son**: When the older brother learned from one of the servants what had happened, he became extremely angry, refusing even to enter into the house.
- He spoke of how he had 'slaved' for him for years without getting any special favors (Contrast to I John 5:3 – "...Love of God, that we keep His commandments and his commandments are not grievous.").
- His bitterness is shown by his description of his own relationship to his father as 'slavery', by his disowning of his brother in the phrase 'this son of yours', and by his probably unfounded accusation that his brother squandered his inheritance on prostitutes.



The Lost Son

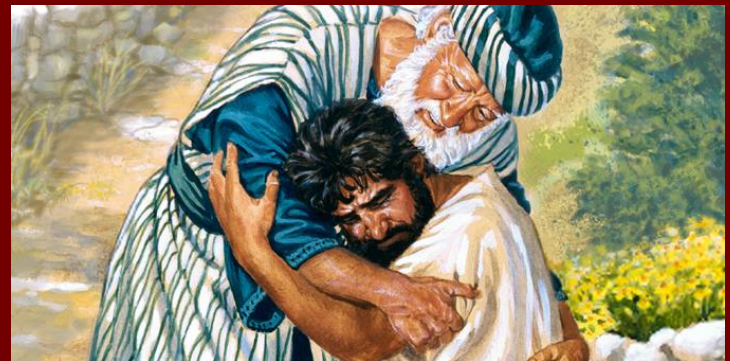
■ Luke 15:11-32

- The father's reply was as gentle as the son's complaint was harsh. He affirmed the faithfulness of the older brother and reminded him that all he owns belongs to him too. He also insisted on the appropriateness of rejoicing, repeating the words he had spoken to the servants – the younger son had been dead and was now alive; he had been lost and was found.
- In the letter to the Ephesians, Paul speaks of his readers as having been 'dead' in trespasses and sin, 'gratifying the cravings' of their sinful natures and being 'object of wrath'. ***Ephesians 2:13, But now in Christ Jesus you who once were far away have been brought near through the blood of Christ.***
- The thought appears to be similar to the lost son in the 'far country'. The sinner is like this son who traveled to a distant country. He is someone who wandered far away from the Father's house, from God.

The Lost Son

■ Luke 15:11-32

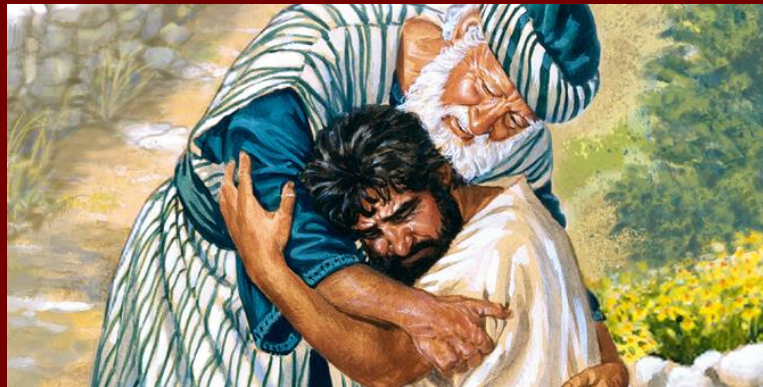
- Being “far away” or in a “far country” is a deadly situation for the sinner and there is only one thing that can undo it: repentance. The picture of the son coming to his senses, abandoning the far country and returning to his father to seek his mercy illustrates the repentance that Jesus calls for in us (II Corinthians 7:10-12).
- The decision to go home was initially motivated by a desire to improve his own situation of desperate need.
- Then he decided that in what he will tell his father, he will place himself at his discretion, asserting no rights. He recognized that he has forfeited all claim to be received as a son. He just wanted to have the possibility of being hired as a day laborer (*misthios*).
- ‘I am not worthy to be called your son’



The Lost Son

■ Luke 15:11-32

- *"But when he was still a great way off, his father saw him and had **compassion**... (Luke 15:20)"*
- **This word 'compassion' in Greek comes from the word *splagchnon* which, in Classical Greek, is used to speak of the upper viscera of animals, as the heart, lungs and liver. By metaphor, it came to mean the deep-seated feeling within you. To have compassion is to feel with your inward being.**



The Lost Son

■ Luke 15:11-32

- The older son is unmoved by the return of his brother. In fact, he is angry. He has been a model son. He has done everything his father ever asked of him. He has 'slaved' for his father's benefit. But he has never had the recognition now given to the prodigal son.
- While the resentment of this elder brother is easy to understand, his protest reveals the same sort of self-righteousness shown by the religious leaders of Jesus' day.
- The Pharisees and the scribes also claimed to be righteous and in tune with God but their rejection of Jesus and His ministry to sinners (Luke 15:1-2) showed how far they were from the God they said they were serving.

The Lost Son

■ Key Take-Aways

- In Luke 15, the concept of “lost” and its effects are things for us to consider.
 - In the first illustration, the shepherd, who seeks his lost sheep as if it is the only one he possesses, suffers along with the straying sheep.
 - The woman deeply feels the loss of her coin, which is an item without life and feeling. Her condition requires that she find it, so she searches diligently for it.
 - The father feels a depth of agony and his sons do not share, the same feeling. The father is heartbroken over the loss of his younger son. Though he still has another son who has no desire to leave home, his father's heart goes out to the missing son in spite of his willful wickedness. God has the capacity for compassion for those who are lost in sin, as well as for us, in our sin.
- Can we see ourselves in the Luke 15 illustrations?
 - We can stray (lost sheep) from The Way
 - We can be guilty of carelessness / mismanagement (lost coin) of the value truths of God.
 - We can also make foolish decisions with the inheritance (lost son).
 - We can see ourselves in the older brother (Feeling like we are not appreciated / given credit, as we ought to be) and being critical of those we see as having failed to live up to our standards, even if our standards are not theirs.
- Thankfully, we serve a loving Father, elder Brother and Good Shepherd that see the value in us!

Group Discussion

