

## Luke 15

- Luke the fifteenth chapter is a very precious and priceless chapter.
- There is no chapter in the Bible more tender and more loving.
- It clearly reveals the joy of heaven when sinners come to repentance.
- It strongly implies we should have immense joy when sinners repent.
- The parables of Luke 15 manifest God's great love for outcasts and sinners of all kinds.

### Criticism Against Christ

LUK 15:1 **Now all the tax-gatherers and the sinners were coming near Him to listen to Him.**

1. This is a hyperbolic use of "all."
2. The idea is that large numbers "were coming near Him to listen to Him." See Matt. 3:5,6.

MAT 3:5 Then Jerusalem was going out to him, and all Judea, and all the district around the Jordan;  
MAT 3:6 and they were being baptized by him in the Jordan River, as they confessed their sins.

3. Many had written off these wicked men as un-savable or not worthy of salvation, but not Jesus.
4. These had "ears to hear." (Lk. 14:35). "He who ears to hear, let him hear."

LUK 15:2 **And both the Pharisees and the scribes began to grumble [mutter], saying, "This man receives [accepts] sinners and eats [has fellowship] with them."**

1. Jesus came to save sinner. (Lk. 19:10; 1 Tim. 1:15).

LUK 19:10 "For the Son of Man has come to seek and to save that which was lost.	1TI 1:15 It is a trustworthy statement, deserving full acceptance, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners, among whom I am foremost of all.
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2. "This man receives sinners and eats with them."

- a. Jesus was frequently criticized for receiving sinners. (Lk. 5:29-32; 7:39; 19:7).

LUK 5:29 And Levi gave a big reception for Him in his house; and there was a great crowd of tax-gatherers and other people who were reclining at the table with them.

LUK 5:30 And the Pharisees and their scribes began grumbling at His disciples, saying, "Why do you eat and drink with the tax-gatherers and sinners?"

LUK 5:31 And Jesus answered and said to them, "It is not those who are well who need a physician, but those

who are sick.

LUK 5:32 "I have not come to call the righteous but sinners to repentance."

LUK 7:39 Now when the Pharisee who had invited Him saw this, he said to himself, "If this man were a prophet He would know who and what sort of person this woman is who is touching Him, that she is a sinner."

LUK 19:7 And when they saw it, they all began to grumble, saying, "He has gone to be the guest of a man who is a sinner."

b. See Matt. 9:11; Mk. 2:16; Matt. 11:19.

MAT 9:11 And when the Pharisees saw this, they said to His disciples, "Why is your Teacher eating with the tax-gatherers and sinners?"

MAR 2:16 And when the scribes of the Pharisees saw that He was eating with the sinners and tax-gatherers, they began saying to His disciples, "Why is He eating and drinking with tax-gatherers and sinners?"

MAT 11:19 "The Son of Man came eating and drinking, and they say, 'Behold, a gluttonous man and a drunkard, a friend of tax-gatherers and sinners!' Yet wisdom is vindicated by her deeds."

3. It was horrible to receive sinners in the eyes of the Pharisees and scribes.

4. It was even worse to eat with them. See Gal. 2:12; Acts 11:3.

GAL 2:12 For prior to the coming of certain men from James, he used to eat with the Gentiles; but when they came, he began to withdraw and hold himself aloof, fearing the party of the circumcision.

ACT 11:3 saying, "You went to uncircumcised men and ate with them."

5. They were not interested in the kingdom themselves, yet they were angered when they saw Jesus welcome the moral outcasts and black sheep of Jewish society.

6. Jesus associated with sinners to offer them salvation, not to participate in their sins.

a. We must "be friends" of sinners if we are ever to win them.

b. We must be cautious that we do not go too far and participate in the evil deeds of the world. (Jas. 1:27; 4:4; Rom. 12:1, 2; 2 Cor.6:17).

## Parable Of The Lost Sheep

LUK 15:3 **And He told them this parable, saying,**

1. The singular "parable" is followed by several parables. (Lk. 15:4, 8, 11).

2. Here it likely means "a parabolic discourse."

LUK 15:4 **"What man among you, if he has a hundred sheep and has lost one of them, does not leave the ninety-nine in the open pasture, and go after the one which is lost, until he finds it?"**

1. It is horrible to be lost physically and even more so spiritually.

a. It means **separation from God and His blessings.**

b. It means **eternal damnation.**

## 2. Why some are lost.

a. Some are lost because they have never been a part of the flock.

1) This may be because of choice.

2) This may be because they have never heard the gospel message.

b. Some are lost because they have strayed away from the flock.

3. The words “until he finds it” reveals the persistence of the shepherd.

4. The shepherd will search and search until the lost sheep is found and restored.

5. He does not put forth some half-hearted effort to find the valuable sheep.

## Lost Sheep Found

LUK 15:5 **"And when he has found it, he lays it on his shoulders, rejoicing.**

1. Frequently a sheep that became lost was weak and could not get back to the flock or keep up with the flock.

2. The shepherd sometimes needed to carry it on his shoulders.

3. In Matthew 18:12-13 we have a similar parable.

MAT 18:12 "What do you think? If any man has a hundred sheep, and one of them has gone astray, does he not leave the ninety-nine on the mountains and go and search for the one that is straying?"

MAT 18:13 "And if it turns out that he finds it, truly I say to you, he rejoices over it more than over the ninety-nine which have not gone astray.

## Celebration

LUK 15:6 **"And when he comes home, he calls together his friends and his neighbors, saying to them, 'Rejoice with me, for I have found my sheep which was lost!'"**

1. See Luke 15:9 - Lost coin found

2. “He calls together his friends and neighbors” is a detail not mentioned in the similar parable in Matthew. (Matt. 18:13).

MAT 18:13 "And if it turns out that he finds it, truly I say to you, he rejoices over it more than over the ninety-nine which have not gone astray.

LUK 15:7 **"I tell you that in the same way, there will be more joy in heaven over one sinner who repents, than over ninety-nine righteous persons who need no repentance.**

1. Jesus did not mean the Pharisees and scribes did not need to repent. (Lk. 10:13; 11:32; 13:3,5; Acts 2:38; 3:19; 17:30). See Matt. 23:1-33.

- a. Perhaps for the sake of argument Jesus accepts their self-righteous claims about themselves. He rebukes them, however, for not being joyful.
  - b. It is more likely that Jesus is using irony and has reference to the attitude of many of the Jews.
  - c. They had no need in their minds for repentance.
  - d. They were in reality very lost.
2. Jesus' argument implied the superior worth of a man over a sheep.
- 3. There was intense searching for the lost sheep and great rejoicing when found.**
4. Repentance is strongly emphasized in Luke. (Lk. 3:8; 5:32; 10:13; 11:32; 13:3,5).
- a. The words "in heaven" may be a circumlocution for God. **See Lk. 15:18, 21; 6:23; 10:20.**
  - b. This is a periphrasis or the use of many words to express what might be expressed by few or one.

## **Parable Of Lost Coin**

**LUK 15:8 "Or what woman, if she has ten silver coins and loses one coin, does not light a lamp and sweep the house and search carefully until she finds it?"**

- 1. Oriental houses were often windowless, so a light might be necessary even in the daytime.
- 2. The floors were packed earth, covered with dried reeds and rushes, so finding a coin would be difficult.
- 3. The "coin" represented a sizable sum of money to the woman.
  - a. The coin specified by Luke was a Greek "drachma" which was almost equivalent to a Roman "denarius."
  - b. This was about 17 to 20 cents or a day's wage.
- 4. These were necessary actions to find a lost coin in a dark, windowless house.

## **Celebration**

**LUK 15:9 "And when she has found it, she calls together her friends and neighbors, saying, 'Rejoice with me, for I have found the coin which I had lost!'"**

- 1. Again we find there is intense searching for the coin and great rejoicing when what was lost was found.
- 2. She had great satisfaction because she found the lost "coin," and there is great satisfaction that comes from rescuing men from a lost state.

## **"Angels Of God"**

**LUK 15:10 "In the same way, I tell you, there is joy in the presence of the angels of God over one sinner**

## **who repents."**

1. See Luke 15:7 - Lost sheep
  2. There is great joy in heaven "over one sinner who repents."
  3. **There should be great joy in the church over "one" sinner coming to repentance.**
  4. **Sometimes the church does not show much joy over men coming to God and this is sad.**
    - a. We should **search** for and **restore** the fallen. (Gal. 6:1).
    - b. We should be **joyful**, not resentful over the attention shown to restored sinners.
    - c. We should **forgive**, not bear grudges.
    - d. We should **encourage**, not discourage.
    - e. We should **bear burdens**, not impose unnecessary burdens. (Gal. 6:2).
  5. We must never lose sight of the value of even one soul.
    - a. This is easy in a world filled with billions of people.
    - b. This is easy to do especially in a large congregation.
  6. "Angels of God" are represented as viewing human behavior.
    - a. They rejoice when a sinner comes to repentance. (Lk. 15:10).
    - b. They witness the conduct of women who disregard authority.
- 1CO 11:10 Therefore the woman ought to have a symbol of authority on her head, because of the angels.
- c. They minister to Christians (Heb. 1:13), but details are not given.

## **Observations**

1. The "Amazing Grace Of God" is that lost man can be saved - not damned.
2. Man will not receive instruction about his lost condition until he understands that he really is lost and he needs help in finding his way.
  - a. Many people do not think they are lost. They believe their conduct is good enough to get them into heaven.
  - b. Others believe they are lost but they do not think being lost is a serious condition.
3. The sheep and the coin were useless in their lost condition, and man is useless in his lost condition.
4. Repentance has always been God's message and the blessing of heaven cannot be ours unless we repent.

- a. Some are ignoring the divine mandate for repentance prior to the forgiveness of sins.
  - b. They argue one is forgiven on the basis of faith only. (Acts 10:43; 16:31).
    - 1) It is argued that there is no mention of repentance in the two examples of above.
    - 2) Those who make this argument also teach that baptism is not necessary.
    - 3) Baptism was required in both instances. (Acts 10:48; 16:33). See Mk. 16:16; Acts 2:38; 1 Pet. 3:21.
    - 4) The Bible teaches that baptism is for the forgiveness of sins. (Acts 2:38; 22:16).
    - 5) Other scriptures teach that repentance was involved in the case of Cornelius and the Philippian jailor. (Lk. 13:3, 5; Acts 2:38; 3:19; Acts 17:30; 2 Pet. 3:9; Lk. 24:47).
5. There are many methods to win the lost, but all of them involve certain things.
- a. There must be strong preaching and teaching which emphasizes the importance of reconciliation to God. (2 Tim. 4:1-5).
  - b. There must be diligent effort put forth to rescue those who have never known God's grace or to restore those who have fallen from it.
  - c. Christian example is a powerful way to seek and save the lost.
  - d. The church must remember its highest priority, in regard to man, is to seek and save the lost.

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