

Note: *This chapter contains three parables about losing and finding: a lost sheep, a lost coin, and a lost son. Each parable demonstrates the lengths to which God the Father will go to save anyone who has gone astray.*

Parable of the Lost Sheep

1. Who are some of the new kinds of people that have been coming to hear Jesus' teachings? (Luke 15:1)
2. What were the Pharisees and scribes grumbling about when they saw the crowd of people listening intently to Jesus? (Luke 15:2)
3. When we see a depiction of Christ as "the Good Shepherd," he is carrying a sheep on his shoulders, and not just guiding it back to the flock.
 - a. Why does he carry the sheep on his shoulders, and not just lead it back?
 - b. How does the parable of the Lost Sheep relate to Christ as the Good Shepherd?

Parable of the Lost Coin

4. When the woman lost a coin, she began a search for it.
 - a. What personal qualities (effort and activities) does the woman use to find the coin? (Luke 15:8)
 - b. Why are these qualities important for disciples of Jesus to develop and practice?

Parable of the Lost Son

Note: *The return of the prodigal son mirrors that of a penitent in the Sacrament of Reconciliation. The son examined his conscience, had contrition for his sins, desired to make reparation, journeyed home, confessed his sins, and entrusted himself to his father's mercy. He was then absolved and joyfully welcomed back into the family. The robe, ring, and banquet symbolize the new life of the penitent who is reconciled with God and the Church. (CCC1447-1449, 1482-1483, 1491-1492, 1699-1700)*

5. What did the younger son do with his inheritance? (Luke 15:13)
6. What type of employment did the younger son have that humiliated him? (Luke 15:14-16)
7. What are some of the father's actions that indicate his love for his returning wayward son was as strong as ever? (Luke 15:20-24)
8. How could you apply this parable if you saw the "sinners and tax collectors" as the younger son, and the Pharisees as the elder brother? Does it fit?
9. In the parables of the lost sheep and the lost coin, when the persons who found what was lost rejoiced, they shared their joy with their neighbors. What happened when the father rejoiced and tried to share his joy with the elder brother? (Luke 15:25-30) Has anything like this ever happened to you?

If you would like a challenge?

10. How do the three parables both comfort the crowd, and challenge the thinking of the Pharisees? How do the parables comfort and challenge us?