

March 25, 2022

For Jesus...

[Luke 15:1-10](#)

15 ¹Now all the tax collectors and sinners were coming near to listen to him. ²And the Pharisees and the scribes were grumbling and saying, “This fellow welcomes sinners and eats with them.”

³ So he told them this parable: ⁴ “Which one of you, having a hundred sheep and losing one of them, does not leave the ninety-nine in the wilderness and go after the one that is lost until he finds it? ⁵ When he has found it, he lays it on his shoulders and rejoices. ⁶ And when he comes home, he calls together his friends and neighbors, saying to them, ‘Rejoice with me, for I have found my sheep that was lost.’ ⁷ Just so, I tell you, there will be more joy in heaven over one sinner who repents than over ninety-nine righteous persons who need no repentance.

In the thoughts of the Pharisees, Jesus is guilty of breaking the law and social norms of the day. In the Gospel stories, Jesus chooses to spend time with the tax collectors and sinners. The hard part for many in this world today is that they don't see themselves as sinners.

We all need a different starting point for others as well as ourselves. The starting point for Jesus is grace. For Jesus, everyone is invited. For Jesus, the defining characteristic of sin is not misbehavior but being lost.

The parables Jesus offers are about being lost. A sheep is lost. A coin is lost. Jesus' concern is for the one who is lost. The issue for Jesus is recovering and reclaiming the lost.

The point of these two parables is that Jesus makes it about God's character. They reveal God's grace. That grace and character are revealed in Jesus' searching, finding, and rejoicing. These are not three different things, but three demonstrations of God's one grace.

Depending on the circumstances of our lives, we experience grace differently. Ultimately, it means we all matter to Jesus. This Jesus who welcomes sinners and eats with them is constantly searching for us, finding us, and rejoicing over our presence at His table.

Prayer: *Lord Jesus, may we become more concerned for the lost. May we share the love of Jesus with all we can give. May we live for Jesus. AMEN*

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