

Salvation: Three Pictures in Three Parables

by Wayne Goff

Luke 15 portrays three concepts in three parables relating to salvation. I would like to share these thoughts with you.

Parable Of The Lost Sheep

Verses 1-7 depict the lost people in the world. Jesus spoke this parable because the religious men of the day complained that “*this Man receives sinners and eats with them*” (**v. 2**). So Jesus responded by saying that all men belong to Him, and He associated with sinners for the purpose of bringing them back to His fold.

All mankind is born innocent and free of sin. Therefore, all men belong to God. It is sin that separates man from God, and **Romans 3:9** reminds us that “*they are all under sin.*” Not one accountable man lives free from sin. But Jesus, in this parable, says that He wants them to come back to the fold! “*I am the good shepherd. The good shepherd gives His life for the sheep*” (**John 10:10**). Jesus died to forgive men of their sins, and when they meet the conditions of pardon offered (**Mark 16:15-16**), the blood of Jesus Christ forgives and forgets their sin (**Ephesians 1:7**). There is great joy in heaven when one person accepts the invitation of Jesus Christ to partake of His blood and come back to the loving fellowship of God!

Parable Of The Lost Coin

Verses 8-10 of **Luke 15** tell of a woman who lost one of her ten coins in her own house. She carefully searches for it until it is found. Perhaps this idea suggests to us that there are even some *lost* in the household of God. It is very possible to appear religious, attend all the church services, and put on a good face for all to see – *and still be lost*. Conversion (**Acts 3:19**) begins with the heart (**Matthew 13:14-15**). The outward affects are well and good, provided that the heart has been changed. Some have changed their faces without ever having a true heart change. Such folks are *lost* in the house of God. They are valuable, just like the silver coin, but until they are *found* in a righteous heart and a changed life, they are unable to be used for the Master’s purposes. **Romans 12:1-2** begs all saints to be transformed in their hearts and lives so that they can prove what is good, acceptable and perfect in God’s will. The Christian who is *lost in the house* can do much damage and even cause some to speak reproachfully of the Lord and His church (see **1 Timothy 5:14**).

Parable Of The Lost Son

Luke 15:11-32 tells the famous story that has been called “The Prodigal Son.”

Here is a son who *voluntarily* leaves the safety, security, and bliss of *fellowship* with his Father to go wallow in the filth of the world. He takes all the blessings of the Father and turns them into foolish pleasure, thinking this is “real living.” It is only *after* the effects of sin have set in – lost wealth, lost friends, lost happiness, and lost well-being – that he comes to himself (**v. 17**). Of course this represents the child of God who forsakes the Lord and His church for the temporary pleasures of sin. He ends up yearning for the hog slop of Satan’s pen, and is only a shadow of the man he used to be. Sin harms the body (**1 Corinthians 6:18**), dulls the moral uprightness (**Ephesians 4:18-19**), and sears the conscience (**1 Timothy 4:2**) if left alone. In time it may be that even a child of God cannot remember his way back to God, having fallen so far away from truth and right (see **Hebrews 6:4-6**). Fortunately for this son he comes to his senses and returns to the father in sorrow and penitence, asking not for restoration

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