

Sermon Reflections

Three Lost Things? Rejoicing or Grousing? (Luke 15)

Summary: Don't be an older brother – rejoice over the repentance of all who come to Christ.

1. Three Lost Things (Luke 15: 3-6, 8-9, 11-22)

- In each of these stories, Jesus ends the parables with rejoicing over what was “lost and found.” What is another word for rejoicing? How did each of the finders express their joy?
- In the third parable, the father runs to his lost son and seeks him out. Jesus is clearly making the point that He is also seeking out those who are lost. Where are other examples of Jesus seeking out and welcoming those who are lost or undesirable?
- In the parable of the lost sheep, the shepherd finds the lost sheep and puts it on his shoulders. The shepherd is claiming the sheep as his own. What meaning is Jesus conveying to the Pharisees about the sinners and tax collectors gathering to hear Jesus? What does this mean for those who are “found” in Christ?

2. Three Reactions (Luke 15: 6-7, 9-10, 25-32)

- At the end of the first parable, Jesus states that all of Heaven celebrates more over the repentance of one sinner than many righteous people who don't “need” to repent. What is Jesus saying about repentance? Bear in mind that Jesus is addressing these parables to the Pharisees, who consider themselves righteous by the law.
- The older son in the parable refused to go in and celebrate with his father, citing his own righteousness and good behavior. Was he truly righteous in his response? When was a time that you responded (or someone responded to you) with bitterness over someone receiving unmerited grace or favor?
- As with the end of the book of Jonah, Jesus leaves the third parable hanging on the point of the story and leaves it to the hearer to respond. Looking at Luke 16:14 and other interactions Jesus had with them:
 - How did the Pharisees respond to Jesus' teaching?
 - How are we supposed to respond?
 - What should be our reaction and posture to anyone coming to true repentance in Christ?