

GIVING THE BEST
Luke 15:1-10

I. LESSONS ON LOSTNESS

- A. *“What man of you, having a hundred sheep, if he has lost one of them, does not leave the ninety-nine in the wilderness ... Or what woman, having ten silver coins, if she loses one coin, does not light a lamp and sweep the house ...” (Luke 15:4&8)*
- B. Who is lost?
 - 1. God is not lost!
 - 2. We are the sheep, the coin, the prodigal son.
- C. What is lost?
 - 1. A sense of meaning, purpose and direction.
 - 2. Our integrity, character, morals, and values.
 - 3. Our marriage or our love for ourselves and others.
 - 4. Our devotion to the church.
 - 5. Our soul.

II. TWO WAYS TO LOSTNESS

- A. We nibble our way to lostness! (Michael Yaconelli)
 - 1. “The death of a soul is never quick. It is a slow dying, a succession of little deaths that continues until we wake up one day...beyond the adventure of God’s claim on our lives.”
 - 2. “First comes the tuft of education, then the tuft of marriage, then children, a new home, and one day we wake up to discover that we have nibbled our way to lostness.”
- B. Lost by another’s carelessness.
 - 1. We don’t know the long-reaching consequences of our actions.
 - 2. Whom we do send out on search-and-rescue missions?

III. ONE WAY TO BE FOUND

- A. God is a rescue worker.
 - 1. The shepherd and the woman show us what God’s love is like.
 - 2. There is no mention of condemnation or conditional status, just joy and celebration.
 - 3. God alone turns sinners into saints.
- B. Four paths to the future and being found.
 - 1. The pleasure-seeking path.
 - 2. The ethical path.
 - 3. The search for truth path.
 - 4. Being found by God.

Prayer Concerns: Members – Burney Biesel, Eddie Burks, Alton Creasy, J.W. Davis, **John Hamilton**, Dorothy Miles, Jim Mohead, Carolyn Perkins, Carol Webb ... **Friends** – Melinda Banks, Henrietta Beckmann, Pat Bryan, Pat Dean, John Fumbanks, Brandon Funderburk, Margaret Hayes, Ed Henson, Gary Hinson, **Gene Hrcir**, Matt Jennings, **Jeff Joyner**, Kim Evans Lee, Judy Malaquias, Durward Webb ...

Christian Sympathy is extended to **Avis Prince and family** in the death of her husband, **Jim Prince**, who died on Saturday, October 27 ...

PASTORAL PRAYER

Gracious God, we've all been there. We have been lost, out of pocket, unable to find the way, wandering aimlessly, misplaced. We feel forgotten, forsaken, helpless and hopeless. It's a lonely place filled with dark shadows of doubt. Despair is our only companion. Maybe we brought it on ourselves or perhaps it was due to the carelessness of others. Maybe we didn't know where we were headed until it was too late and we were there.

Loving God, when we feel lost and alone, help us to feel your presence as you come to find us. When we wander away from your love and grace, help us return in faith. When we have forgotten how to accept your love, lead us back to the warmth of your embrace so that we might live in peace.

Holy God, when we're found and rescued, help us to give that feeling to others by our mission and service to your world. When we're confident and feel the glow of our faith family caring for us, help us to spread that feeling to all those who are lost and alone somewhere.

We ask these things in the name of the One who seeks the lost sheep, the lost coin, the lost children, Jesus Christ our Lord, who taught us to pray ...

THE LORD'S PRAYER: Our Father who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom come, thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread; and forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors; and lead us not into temptation but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever. Amen.

LUKE 15:1-10

Now the tax collectors and sinners were all drawing near to hear him. And the Pharisees and the scribes murmured, saying, "This man receives sinners and eats with them."

So he told them this parable: "What man of you, having a hundred sheep, if he has lost one of them, does not leave the ninety-nine in the wilderness, and go after the one which is lost, until he finds it? And when he has found it, he lays it on his shoulders, rejoicing. 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.' 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.

"Or what woman, having ten silver coins, if she loses one coin, does not light a lamp and sweep the house and seek diligently until she finds it? 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.' Just so, I tell you, there is joy before the angels of God over one sinner who repents."

SERMON SCHEDULE

In the Sanctuary:

November 11	<i>It's Not About the Money</i>	Luke 16:1-13
	Veterans' Day	
November 18	<i>Fatal Mistakes</i>	Luke 16:19-31
	Commitment Sunday	
November 25	<i>Unbelievable</i>	Luke 18:9-14
	Congregational Meeting	

On the Radio (1450 AM):

November 11	<i>It's Never Enough</i>	Ecclesiastes 5:10-20
November 18	<i>"Give" Is a Four-Letter Word</i>	Mark 10:17-27
November 25	<i>Are You Prepared?</i>	Matthew 25:1-13