

# **The Passion of the Christ**

## **Lesson 2**

Luke 15:1-32

April 4, 2021

### **You Matter to God**

#### **Introduction**

These three parables clearly point to the fact that we matter to God. The first parable points to the fact that God searches for those who have strayed from His flock. He won't give up on those who have wandered away and desires for them to be found and return to His flock. The second parable focuses on the search. God is diligently looking for those who are lost, tasking His disciples with the search. The third parable focuses on the sinner recognizing his sin and returning to God. But this third parable has the added twist of the angry older brother who feels slighted that his father was so forgiving and willing to welcome his younger brother home.

We tend to be like the older brother. We look at what a person has done and judge them on their actions. But Jesus looks at the heart. It doesn't matter if we are more like the older brother or the younger brother. What does matter is that we are not worthy of the grace that God willingly extends to us. What matters is Jesus willingly died so that we could be found. What does matter is that we recognize our sin, repent of our sin, and run home to our loving Father, who will always welcome us home with joy and celebration.

***Memory verse: "My son,' the father said, 'you are always with me, and everything I have is yours. But we had to celebrate and be glad, because this brother of yours was dead and is alive again; he was lost and is found.'"***  
**—Luke 15:31-32**

Pray and read Luke 15:1-32. What questions or observations do you have about this passage?

**What does the passage say?**

1. Who was gathered around listening? (Luke 15:1)
2. What did the person who lost a sheep do? (Luke 15:4-6)
3. According to Jesus, what happens in heaven when one sinner repents? (Luke 15:7, 10)
4. What does the woman who lost her silver coin do? (Luke 15:8-9)
5. What did the younger son ask of his father? What did he do with his portion? (Luke 15:12-13)
6. What did the younger son do when after he had spent all that he had? (Luke 15:15, 17-21)
7. How did his father react? How did his brother react? (Luke 15:22-24, 28-30, 31-32)

## What do the passages mean?

1. Reread Luke 15:1-2. The tax collectors and sinners gathered around Jesus, as well as the Pharisees and teachers of the law. But the tax collectors and sinners were there to *hear* Jesus. How can we really hear God? (Psalm 32:8; Luke 11:28; John 8:47; 2 Timothy 3:16-17)
  
2. Jesus tells two parables about finding things that are lost (Luke 15:3-10). Those who had lost items searched until those items were found. Upon finding them, they celebrated with feasts, sharing in the joy with their friends and neighbors. What does God do when we are lost? (Ezekiel 34:12; Isaiah 41:10; Luke 5:32, 19:10)
  
3. In the parable of the prodigal son (Luke 15:11-32), the younger son had clearly sinned. In the parable, Jesus does not minimize the sin or say that it was okay to sin. Rather, Jesus showed the devastating consequences of sin and the result of his repentance. What can we expect to happen when we repent from our sins? (Acts 2:38, 3:19; 2 Peter 3:9; 1 John 1:9)

4. The prodigal son's father longed for his son to return and was overjoyed when he did. God, like the son's father, longs for sinners to return to Him. How does God feel about those who come to Him? (Psalm 149:4; Isaiah 62:5; Zephaniah 3:17; Luke 15:7, 10; John 15:11)
  
5. The older brother was angry that his father welcomed the lost son back. The older brother already had his father's approval. His self-righteous pride got in the way of recognizing the grace his father was extending. How do we receive God's grace—through works like the older brother? (Romans 3:23-24, 11:6; Ephesians 2:8-9; 2 Timothy 1:9; Titus 3:5)

### **Applying the passages**

1. What keeps you from hearing God? Sin? Fear? Misunderstanding? Doubt? Pride? Busyness? Shame? Other people? Why does that stand in the way of being able to hear God?

