

The Moral of the Story: The Lost Parables

March 23-24 2019

Remember, small groups are primarily for growing closer relationships with other believers. We can learn wonderful things in this environment but keep relationships first.

- **The Moral of the Story**
- What is a parable? Why did Jesus talk in parables?
 - o Explain spiritual things by using common experiences.
 - o Seekers vs Stiff Necked. Be a seeker! God wants you to find Him!!
- **This Week: The Lost Parables**
- Three Parables that make a very similar point: people, even those people, are extremely valuable to God.
 - o Context: Jesus was talking about the cost of being a disciple.
 - o Then we get **Luke 15:1-2**
 - Instead of focusing on how they can follow God better, these religious leaders were criticizing Jesus for spending time with sinners.
 - Don't criticize others. Spend your energy on following Jesus better.
 - o Jesus responds with parables. **Luke 15:3-10**
 - Why the repetition? Aren't the parables of the lost sheep and the lost coin the same? Sure. Repetition is for emphasis.
 - Point: God greatly prizes those who are far from Him.
 - We, as followers of Christ, should too!
 - Compare this to consumer Christianity.
 - All believers have a part to play in this cause of Christ.
 - Don't abdicate your responsibility or bog down the church by being a mere consumer. Bear some fruit.
 - Strategy: GO! This is **Matthew 9:35-38**. Jesus sent out his disciples!
 - This is evangelism. Go to them! Compel them to come in!
 - o Then there is another parable. **Luke 15:11-32**
 - **11-24** is about the prodigal son.
 - Sometimes people choose to make their own mistakes.
 - o Hey, learn from other's mistakes as much as possible!!
 - When he came to his senses he knew where to go.
 - Point: God won't reject you when you come home. Not even close.
 - **25-32** is about the priorities of the church. Direct response to v1-2.
 - Working for the Father is good! (all I have is yours, 31)
 - Daniel's point: older brother should have gone after younger.
 - o Serve God, but don't demonize those far from God.
 - Point: Don't be a hypocrite. Love like the Father did!
 - Strategy: Be worth coming home to.
 - Receive and also Reflect the love and forgiveness of God.
- If you want to come home God won't reject you. We won't either.
 - o In fact, you will find something wonderful. **Matthew 13:44-45**
- If you need to become worth coming home to, we can pray for you as well!
- Pray for each other before you finish up!