

found

introduction

Before anyone arrives at the meeting room, hide three pennies somewhere in the room. Begin the meeting by asking the students to find all the pennies in one minute. Reward those who find a penny. (For rewards—be creative. You can give them a small gift. See if some of the local churches could sponsor the gifts.) After finding the coins and giving out the awards, tell the reason the coins were found is that someone took the time to look. Today's discussion is taken from Luke 15.

message

There was once a father who looked everywhere for his three-year-old daughter. The more he looked, the more desperate he became. He could not find her anywhere. Because of a miscommunication, the father did not know that the little girl's mother had taken her shopping. The little girl was safe, never in danger. Still, until the father knew where she was, he continued to diligently search. This is just a glimpse into a father's heart. In Luke 15, we find three stories about someone or something that is lost.

1. **The Lost Sheep** (Luke 15:4-7): The shepherd searches for the lost sheep. After finding the lost sheep, the shepherd joyfully goes back to the flock of 99 and to his friends. There is rejoicing because one sheep has been found.
2. **The Lost Coin** (Luke 15:8-10): A woman has lost a coin. She looks and looks until she finds it. Jesus said the joy of finding the coin is like the joy of angels in heaven who rejoice over one person accepting Christ as Savior.
3. **The Lost Son** (Luke 15:11-32): This is the story of the prodigal son. Note in Luke 15:24, the father says his son was lost, but now is found. Evidently, the son went wayward, came to his senses, came home and was gladly received by his dad. Again, the son was lost, but now is found.

There is a lot we could talk about in this great chapter, but today we are going to focus on the word "lost." In all three stories, the word lost has an interesting meaning. It means "lost with the glad prospect of being found." Think about it. The sheep, the coin and the son were lost with the glad prospect of being found. It says a whole lot about the Father's love for you and me.

Do we discover God by accident? When we accept Christ as Savior and Lord, does it kind just happen? No. We are lost because of sin, but the Bible says God sent his Son "to seek and to save what was lost" (Luke 19:10). We need a savior. We are lost, but not without hope. We are lost with the glad prospect of being found. While we may say that we have found God, it is just as true to say that the loving Father has found us. He has been there all the time.



salvation appeal

God's love is beyond comprehension. So much, in fact, that God sent His Son Jesus to die on a cross for us. Have you accepted the love of God? Like the earthly father who gave his son gifts when he returned home (Luke 15:22-23), God is ready to welcome you home too. He is ready to empower you. Today, come home by allowing God's Son, Jesus Christ, to become the Lord and Savior of your life.

challenge

The essence of this chapter is that without Christ, we are lost, without hope and destined to die spiritually and never go to heaven. The good news is that God longs to have a relationship with us. What love the Father has for you and me! Share the message of Luke 15 with your friends. Make a list of at least five friends who need to hear the message of God's love. Pray for them and be sure to invite them to the next meeting!