

ENGAGE

This week we are looking at several passages in Luke and other Gospels related to the Kingdom of God.

- Today we are trying to wrap up the Gospel of Luke. The central, if not them verse, of Luke is Luke 19:10.
- Two focuses of today are:
 - The Heart and laser-like focus of God for those who are lost.
 - Our heart energies toward adjusting our lives to SEEK out the lost.

EXAMINE

Luke 19:10

And Jesus said to him, "Today salvation has come to this house, because he also is a son of Abraham; for the Son of Man has come to seek and to save that which was lost."

Very often, human beings will exert a great deal of effort to find something that they value or something that they love when it has been lost. If we think we have lost our wedding ring down the kitchen drain, for example, we will crawl under the sink and disassemble the pipes in order to rescue our beloved possession. Dog owners will spend a great deal of time searching if their pet goes missing. They will walk or drive through their neighborhood for hours looking for the lost animal. They might even put up pictures of the missing dog on telephone poles, bulletin boards, and online message boards, promising a reward for the safe return of their pooch.

Tragically, we frequently do not go to the same effort to find lost souls. Fear of rejection, the responsibilities of life, the seemingly overwhelming task of world missions, and other factors make it easy for us to become complacent, to leave to others the task Jesus gave us of discipling the nations (Matt. 28:18–20). Generally, our failures to engage in evangelism and missions are not motivated by malice, but the deep self-centeredness that we possess as long as sin abides and leads us to overlook the need of others to know Jesus. We put up a church building and attend regularly, thinking somehow that people will just see Christian activity going on and visit of their own initiative. To some degree, that does happen, but if we are not actively seeking out lost people in order to give them the message of salvation, we cannot be surprised when they do not show up at our doors.

If we are to imitate God in the task of missions and evangelism, we must show at least the same effort—indeed, greater effort—in finding the lost as we do in looking for lost pets or valuables. After all, aside from His glory, human beings are more important to our Creator than anything

Sources

studylight.org

blueletterbible.org

Ligonier.org

newjerseyubf.org

else. He has a passion to seek and to save the lost, for that is why Christ became incarnate (Luke 19:1–10). Moreover, Luke 15 shows us that there is great joy in heaven when one sinner repents. The Lord throws a “party,” as it were, whenever lost people are found—whenever they believe on the Lord Jesus Christ.

We, too, were once lost in sin before the Lord found us (Eph. 2:11–12). And Christ found and saved us through the ministry of others, whether through our parents, a friend, attending church, or many other means. Let us seek to be used of Him to seek and save the lost.

God cares about the souls of His image bearers and so must we. Our friends, family, coworkers, neighbors, and acquaintances who do not know Christ will endure God’s wrath forever if they do not trust Jesus before they die. Let us pray that God would send lost people our way and that we would be ready to preach the gospel to them. Let us also look for the lost among those whom we know so that we can share the gospel with them.

The most significant structural difference between Mark and Luke is what is variously called Luke’s “Travel Narrative,” “Journey to Jerusalem,” or “Central Section” (Luke 9:51–19:27).

In Mark, we first learn Jesus is heading towards Jerusalem in Mark 10:32, and he arrives half a chapter later, in 11:1–11. In Luke, by contrast, Jesus heads toward Jerusalem in Luke 9:51, but doesn’t arrive for ten chapters (Luke 19:28)! Jesus does not head straight for Jerusalem, but instead moves around from place to place. Yet Luke repeatedly reminds the reader that Jesus is on his way to Jerusalem (Luke 9:51–56, 13:22, 13:33, 17:11, 18:31, 19:11, 19:28, 19:41). In short, though not a straight-line trip, the journey motif represents a theological theme, stressing Jesus’ resolve to reach his Jerusalem goal.

These ten chapters of the Travel Narrative contain many of Jesus’ most famous parables, such as the Good Samaritan, the Rich Fool, the Great Banquet, the Prodigal Son, the Rich Man and Lazarus, the Persistent Widow, and the Pharisee and the Tax Collector. They also contain many memorable stories, including the meal at the home of Mary and Martha, the healing of ten men with leprosy, and the story of Zacchaeus. This section has sometimes been called “the Gospel for the Outcast,” since so many of the stories and parables relate to God’s love for the lost and the outsider.

The center point of the Travel Narrative is chapter 15

The Lost Sheep

¹Now all the tax collectors and the sinners were coming near Him to listen to Him. ²Both the Pharisees and the scribes began to grumble, saying, “This man receives sinners and eats with them.” ³So He told them this parable, saying, ⁴“What man among you, if he has a hundred sheep and has lost one of them, does not leave the ninety-nine in the open pasture and go after

Sources

studylight.org

blueletterbible.org

Ligonier.org

newjerseyubf.org

the one which is lost until he finds it? ⁵When he has found it, he lays it on his shoulders, rejoicing. ⁶And 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!' ⁷I tell you that in the same way, there will be more joy in heaven over one sinner who repents than over ninety-nine righteous persons who need no repentance.

The Lost Coin

⁸"Or what woman, if she has ten silver coins and loses one coin, does not light a lamp and sweep the house and search carefully until she finds it? ⁹When 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!' ¹⁰In the same way, I tell you, there is joy in the presence of the angels of God over one sinner who repents."

The Prodigal Son

¹¹And He said, "A man had two sons. ¹²The younger of them said to his father, 'Father, give me the share of the estate that falls to me.' So he divided his wealth between them. ¹³And not many days later, the younger son gathered everything together and went on a journey into a distant country, and there he squandered his estate with loose living. ¹⁴Now when he had spent everything, a severe famine occurred in that country, and he began to be impoverished. ¹⁵So he went and hired himself out to one of the citizens of that country, and he sent him into his fields to feed swine. ¹⁶And he would have gladly filled his stomach with the pods that the swine were eating, and no one was giving anything to him. ¹⁷But when he came to his senses, he said, 'How many of my father's hired men have more than enough bread, but I am dying here with hunger! ¹⁸I will get up and go to my father, and will say to him, "Father, I have sinned against heaven, and in your sight; ¹⁹I am no longer worthy to be called your son; make me as one of your hired men." ' ²⁰So he got up and came to his father. But while he was still a long way off, his father saw him and felt compassion for him, and ran and embraced him and kissed him. ²¹And the son said to him, 'Father, I have sinned against heaven and in your sight; I am no longer worthy to be called your son.' ²²But the father said to his slaves, 'Quickly bring out the best robe and put it on him, and put a ring on his hand and sandals on his feet; ²³and bring the fattened calf, kill it, and let us eat and celebrate; ²⁴for this son of mine was dead and has come to life again; he was lost and has been found.' And they began to celebrate.

²⁵"Now his older son was in the field, and when he came and approached the house, he heard music and dancing. ²⁶And he summoned one of the servants and began inquiring what these things could be. ²⁷And he said to him, 'Your brother has come, and your father has killed the fattened calf because he has received him back safe and sound.' ²⁸But he became angry and was not willing to go in; and his father came out and began pleading with him. ²⁹But he answered and said to his father, 'Look! For so many years I have been serving you and I have

Sources

studylight.org

blueletterbible.org

Ligonier.org

newjerseyubf.org

never neglected a command of yours; and yet you have never given me a young goat, so that I might celebrate with my friends; ³⁰but when this son of yours came, who has devoured your wealth with prostitutes, you killed the fattened calf for him.' ³¹And he said to him, 'Son, you have always been with me, and all that is mine is yours. ³²But we had to celebrate and rejoice, for this brother of yours was dead and has begun to live, and was lost and has been found.' "

These stories demonstrate God's love for sinners, his desire for them to be restored, and the free forgiveness available to those who come to him in repentance and faith.

The climax of the Travel Narrative is the Zacchaeus episode (Luke 19:1–11), where a chief tax collector responds to Jesus' call. Tax collectors were hated as traitors because of their collusion with the Roman rulers and their reputation for extortion. A chief tax collector who oversaw other tax collectors would be viewed as the worst of the worst. Yet when Zacchaeus responds to Jesus' call, Jesus states, "Today salvation has come to this house, because this man, too, is a son of Abraham. For the Son of Man came to seek and to save the lost" (Luke 19:10–11). This statement epitomizes Luke's central theme. With the coming of Jesus the Messiah, God's end-time salvation has arrived. It is available to all who respond in faith, whatever their past life, social status, or ethnicity.

The story of Zacchaeus ends with the great words, **the Son of Man came to seek and to save that which was lost.**

Define LOST

We must always be careful how we take the meaning of this word lost. In the New Testament it does not mean damned or doomed.

1. People are eternally Lost if they never come to a knowledge and faith in Jesus.
2. Judgment is held at this point.... So no one is damned. But on a lost path going to a lost state.

It simply means in the wrong place. A thing is lost when it has got out of its own place into the wrong place; and when we find such a thing, we return it to the place it ought to occupy.

A man is lost when he has wandered away from God; and he is found when once again he takes his rightful place as an obedient child in the household and the family of his Father.

QUESTIONS

1. How well do you give directions to destinations?

Sources

studylight.org

blueletterbible.org

Ligonier.org

newjerseyubf.org

2. How well do you receive directions to destinations?
3. What elements are important if you are giving directions?
4. What steps are you taking to befriend a lost person?
5. What barriers are you breaking through to build relationships and bring light to lost people?
6. What does Jesus teach about his purpose in coming in 19:10?
7. How is this a precise expression of God's own heart (Lk 5:31-32; 15:20)?
8. What does this mean to us?
9. What can we do to begin SEEKING the Lost?

Sources

studylight.org

blueletterbible.org

Ligonier.org

newjerseyubf.org