

**SERIES: PARABLES OF JESUS**  
**LESSON 2—THE LOST SHEEP, COIN AND SON**

**Bible References:** Luke 15:1-23

**Key Verse:** Luke 19:10—“The Son of Man came to seek and save those who are lost.”

**OVERVIEW**

- Opening Activity
- Bible Lesson—a special three-group activity
- Key Verse
- Small Group Activities
- Review
- Prayer Part

**ITEMS NEEDED:**

- Craft items for Paper Sack Puppets including white paper sacks, construction paper, felt, materials, yarn, wiggle eyes, etc.
- A Paper Sack with images of a sheep, coin and son. (See the back of this lesson.)
- A small strip of paper with today’s key verse on it to hide somewhere in the room.

**OPENING ACTIVITY**

Show the students that you have three things in the paper sack: The image of a coin, a sheep and a son.

**ASK: What do these three things have in common?**

**SAY:** Today we’re going to learn about three parables that Jesus told that have to do with these three objects.

**ASK: What is a parable?** (It’s a story that teaches a spiritual truth.)

**ASK: Who remembers the last parable we talked about? Tell me about it.** (The Good Samaritan)

**ASK: What is the spiritual truth of the parable of the Good Samaritan?** (Take several answers.)

**SAY:** In today’s parables I want you to look closely and try to figure out the spiritual truth but first we’re going to divide into three groups. Each group will get a parable to read and then act out for the rest of the class.

## **BIBLE LESSON**

*(Based on Luke 15:3-7, Luke 15:8-10, Luke 15:11-23)*

*(For Older Students—Show them how to find the Gospel of Luke in the Bible. Let them read the story along with you. Each of the parables in this series will be coming from Luke's Gospel.)*

-Assign Group #1 to develop a drama that presents **Luke 15:1-7**

-Assign Group #2 to develop a drama that presents **Luke 15:1-3, 8-10**

-Assign Group #3 to develop a drama that presents **Luke 15:1-3, 11-23**

*Give the groups a time limit. When they are done, remind your students as they watch to show the respect for each group that they will want the others to show for them.*

IMPORTANT: After each drama, briefly summarize what happened but don't share the spiritual point yet.

WHEN ALL THE SKITS ARE FINISHED, ASK: **Is there anything common that you find in these three stories?**

SAY: In each of these stories, something is "lost." There is a lost coin, a lost sheep and a father who has lost his son.

ASK: **What is Jesus communicating in these stories? What is the spiritual truth?**

SAY: Sometimes when you're looking at a parable, it helps to know to whom Jesus was talking. Sometimes He's talking to his disciples, sometimes to a crowd that is following Him and sometimes to other groups.

ASK: **Who is the audience for these stories?** (Take a few answers...There are Pharisees and scribes [religious leaders] in the crowd.)

SAY: Every group read these three verses at the beginning of your story. Not only does it help to know to whom Jesus is speaking but also to know the situation He is addressing.

ASK: **What situation is Jesus addressing?** (Take a few answers...The Pharisees and scribes were complaining that Jesus welcomed and was talking to and teaching tax collectors and sinners.)

SAY: There's one last thing that will help you to understand better what is going on...**What's the background? In other words, why did the religious leaders have problems with what Jesus was doing? What can you tell me about the Pharisees and scribes?** (Take a few answers...The Pharisees believed they were better than everyone else and that God loved them more because they were more righteous. Most of the religious leaders wouldn't talk to a person they considered to be a "sinner" and many wouldn't even look at a tax collector because tax collectors were traitors who worked for the Roman government and many of them were thieves too.)

HOLD UP THREE FINGERS: When you're reading the Bible, it helps to know to three things:

- Hold up one finger*—Who is talking and to whom are they speaking.
- Hold up two fingers*—What's the situation or setting? What's going on here?
- Hold up three fingers*—What's the background? What caused this situation?

**ASK: How were the Pharisees and Jesus different?** (Take a few answers.)

**ASK: Knowing all this now, who do you think the lost sheep, coin and son represent?** (They represent the people whom God loves who are lost because like the son and the sheep, they have wandered away and are living a life of wrong things.)

SAY: This might surprise you but it will also show you how understanding the background of a Bible story helps you better understand what the Lord is teaching—Some religious leaders even taught that God rejoiced when He threw a tax collector into Hell. **Is this true? Does God rejoice in this?** (Of course NOT!)

**ASK: In the stories, when did Jesus say there was rejoicing?** (When a sinner repents and comes back to God. Jesus was directly opposing what the religious leaders usually taught.)

**ASK: Tell me again what Jesus is teaching in these stories. What's the spiritual truth here?** (That God seeks to save those who are lost and rejoices when someone repents and returns to Him.)

**ASK: Did understanding who is speaking and to whom, the situation and the background help you understanding how these three stories tie together to teach a very important truth?**

**ASK: Did Jesus teach this truth just to them or is this truth meant for us today?**

SAY: God's truth is incredible. No matter how people dress, what language they speak or what their culture is, truth is truth and God's truth is for all people of all time. The same truth Jesus taught then is just as true today as it was back then. God still seeks to save those who are lost and there is rejoicing when one turns from their sins and turns to God.

## **KEY VERSE**

*(IMPORTANT: Be sure to hide today's key verse somewhere in the room before this segment. Consider hard places such as inside a cabinet door or beneath a chair or on the bottom of your shoe. Give them hints as they search if they need them.)*

SAY: In today's lesson, a shepherd looked for his sheep and a lady looked for her coin and a father's heart longed for his son. Consider how God seeks to save those who are lost and since we're talking about seeking, you now get to seek for today's key verse. It's hidden somewhere in the room. Let's see if you can find it...Ready, set, go!

ASK: **How did you feel when you found the verse?** (Happy)

ASK: **What happens when someone who is "lost" returns to God?**

STORY—If you have one, share a story about something you lost and looked for. How did you feel when you found it...or didn't find it? Many people say that the angels rejoice when someone is saved and this is true but Luke 15:10 says that there is rejoicing in the "presence of God's angels." The implication here is that God Himself is rejoicing. When a "lost" person is found, God rejoices.

**READ today's verse (Luke 19:10) and have your students REPEAT it after you.**

ASK: **What were the three things we said help you to understand what you're reading in the Bible better?**

SAY: Let's use these to understand this verse better:

-**Who is speaking and to whom:** Jesus is speaking about Himself (The Son of Man) to a crowd of people who were unhappy about what He had done.

-**What is the situation:** Zaccheaus, a tax collector, had climbed a tree to see Jesus as He passed by but Jesus stopped and told Zaccheaus that He would eat with him.

-**What is the background:** You already know the background—**Why did this upset people? How did they feel about tax collectors and why?**

SAY: Do you see how understanding what is going on helps you to understand the truth that God wants you to put in your own life?

**RE-READ today's verse (Luke 19:10) and have your students REPEAT it after you.**

ASK: **What truth does God want you to see from this verse?**

ASK: **And Who are you supposed to be like?** (The Bible says that we should live just like Jesus.)

SAY: If Jesus came to seek and save those who are lost, then we too should look for ways to "seek and save" those who are lost. We can look for ways to point people to Jesus who is the one who can save them from their sins.

REPEAT after Me: "The Son of Man / came to / seek and save / those who are lost / I can be like Jesus too!

### **Dismiss to Small Groups**

SAY: Right now it is time for our small groups, so I'm going to dismiss you one row at a time.

*Dismiss rows of chairs to the tables in the rooms. Give them specific directions where to go.*

## **Small Groups**

### **SMALL GROUPS—Paper Sack Puppets**

*Give each student a sack and items to decorate a sack puppet. Let them know that you'll be using their sack puppets to review today's stories. They might, but don't have to, make a character from one of today's stories—i.e., a sheep, a lady, a father, a son, a pig, etc.*

### **REVIEW**

*(The follow activities can take place either in a large group or a small group setting)*

-Lead your students in using their puppets to act out their favorite story from today's lesson.

-Ask your students questions from today's lesson.

-Also take time to review today's key verse the spiritual truth of today's parables.

### **PRAYER TIME**

-Take prayer requests and pray

### **EXTRA TIME**

Help your students memorize today's key verse.



***SON***

\*Sources unknown