Lesson 15 Luke 15

1Now the tax collectors and sinners were all gathering around to hear Jesus. **2**But the Pharisees and the teachers of the law muttered, “This man welcomes sinners and eats with them.”

**3**Then Jesus told them this parable: **4**“Suppose one of you has a hundred sheep and loses one of them. Doesn’t he leave the ninety-nine in the open country and go after the lost sheep until he finds it? **5**And when he finds it, he joyfully puts it on his shoulders **6**and goes home. Then he calls his friends and neighbors together and says, ‘Rejoice with me; I have found my lost sheep.’ **7**I tell you that in the same way there will be more rejoicing in heaven over one sinner who repents than over ninety-nine righteous persons who do not need to repent.

**8**“Or suppose a woman has ten silver coins and loses one. Doesn’t she light a lamp, sweep the house and search carefully until she finds it? **9**And when she finds it, she calls her friends and neighbors together and says, ‘Rejoice with me; I have found my lost coin.’ **10**In the same way, I tell you, there is rejoicing in the presence of the angels of God over one sinner who repents.”

**11**Jesus continued: “There was a man who had two sons. **12**The younger one said to his father, ‘Father, give me my share of the estate.’ So he divided his property between them.

**13**“Not long after that, the younger son got together all he had, set off for a distant country and there squandered his wealth in wild living. **14**After he had spent everything, there was a severe famine in that whole country, and he began to be in need. **15**So he went and hired himself out to a citizen of that country, who sent him to his fields to feed pigs. **16**He longed to fill his stomach with the pods that the pigs were eating, but no one gave him anything.

**17**“When he came to his senses, he said, ‘How many of my father’s hired servants have food to spare, and here I am starving to death! **18**I will set out and go back to my father and say to him: Father, I have sinned against heaven and against you. **19**I am no longer worthy to be called your son; make me like one of your hired servants.’ **20**So he got up and went to his father.

“But while he was still a long way off, his father saw him and was filled with compassion for him; he ran to his son, threw his arms around him and kissed him.

**21**“The son said to him, ‘Father, I have sinned against heaven and against you. I am no longer worthy to be called your son.’

**22**“But the father said to his servants, ‘Quick! Bring the best robe and put it on him. Put a ring on his finger and sandals on his feet. **23**Bring the fattened calf and kill it. Let’s have a feast and celebrate. **24**For this son of mine was dead and is alive again; he was lost and is found.’ So they began to celebrate.

**25**“Meanwhile, the older son was in the field. When he came near the house, he heard music and dancing. **26**So he called one of the servants and asked him what was going on. **27**‘Your brother has come,’ he replied, ‘and your father has killed the fattened calf because he has him back safe and sound.’

**28**“The older brother became angry and refused to go in. So his father went out and pleaded with him. **29**But he answered his father, ‘Look! All these years I’ve been slaving for you and never disobeyed your orders. Yet you never gave me even a young goat so I could celebrate with my friends. **30**But when this son of yours who has squandered your property with prostitutes comes home, you kill the fattened calf for him!’

**31**“‘My son,’ the father said, ‘you are always with me, and everything I have is yours. **32**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.’”

1. What types of people were gathering around Jesus to hear Him teach? Who else was listening?

2. Read verses 3-7 where Jesus tells a parable about a lost sheep, the first of three companion parables in this chapter. How does this parable relate to the muttering of the Pharisees, and what is Jesus’ point?

3. Read the second parable about the lost coin. Verse 8 starts with the word “or”, indicating that the two parables are linked. The lost sheep represented one lost sinner whom the shepherd found. What do you think the lost coin represents?

4. Have you ever wandered away from the Lord? If so, how did God bring you back? Do these parables give you hope for friends or loved ones who have strayed? Explain. (Please remember: anything of a personal nature that’s shared in your group is to remain strictly confidential.)

5. Read one of Jesus most well-known parables – the Parable of the Prodigal Son in verses 11-32. Jot down the stages that the younger son went through, including what brought him to his senses and what he did after that.

6. What could a mother, grandmother, friend or spouse of a wayward person learn from Jesus’ parable about how to treat a person who is wandering away from the Lord?

7. Have you ever “hit rock bottom”? What happened?

8. If you had been the parent of that prodigal son, what do you think your attitude would have been, and what would you have said, when he finally returned home? Would you have treated him as the Father in Jesus’ parable did?

9. What do you think the robe, ring and sandals in this parable stand for:

Robe:

Ring:

Sandals:

10. Who does the older brother stand for in Jesus’ story? What was the older brother’s attitude and did this please the Father?

11. Journal this passage SOAP style.