

# Parable: The Lost Sheep

## The Building Blocks of the Lesson

### Bible Reference



Luke 15: 1-7

### Memory Verse:

Luke 15: 7

### Theological Themes



Forgiveness, repentance,  
grace and joy \_\_\_\_\_ (your ideas, too)

\_\_\_\_\_.

### Catechism Connection



Apostles' Creed – First Article;  
God sustains, provides and  
preserves

Lord's Prayer – daily bread; preserve us  
from evil

Baptism – repentance, remember who  
you are.

### Objectives



Help participants to understand . . .

- \*God is the shepherd who searches for those who are lost.
- \*God values each of us, even though we sin.
- \*We belong to a special community because Jesus loves us.

### Music



“Create in Me a Clean Heart” –  
Lutheran Book of Worship Settings 1, 2, and  
3 or in With One Voice #732

“If I Were a Butterfly”; Brian  
Howard@1973 Fisherfolk/Net Product, Inc.,  
PO Box FF, Woodland Park, CO 80863

### Additional Resources



Have someone from a nearby nursing home come and talk about strategies they use to help residents keep from losing items. Additionally, have the representatives from the long care facility offer a variety of volunteer opportunities for the participants. Perhaps your folks will plan a class servant event.

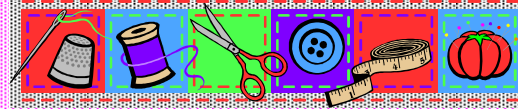


## Context

Jesus is journeying towards Jerusalem (Lk 9:51 – Jesus sets his face towards Jerusalem). The tax collectors and sinners have come to listen to Jesus, and the Pharisees are grumbling because Jesus welcomes sinners and eats with them. The tax collectors were despised because they were Jews who collected taxes for Rome and who made a great profit in doing so. Sinners were rejected by the Pharisees because they were unclean; they did not (and in many cases could not) obey the rituals and purity laws of the Jewish faith. The Pharisees represented one branch of Judaism which emphasized the ritual and purity laws of Moses. They are often characterized in the New Testament as self-righteous, hard-hearted, and always trying to trick Jesus. We need to keep in mind that this is just a characterization and is not descriptive of every Pharisee or Jew, most of whom faithfully sought to obey God and worship him. One complaint that the Pharisee held against Jesus was that if Jesus is a holy man, he would not have associated with sinners and tax collectors, for then he, too, would be unclean.

Jesus tells this parable in response to the Pharisees' grumbling. The shepherd in Jesus' day was a lowly, second-class citizen, but he cares for his sheep. If just one sheep is lost, he will leave the other 99 in the dangerous wilderness to go searching for the lost sheep. When the shepherd finds the sheep, he carries it on his shoulders and rejoices. He throws a party!

## Activity



Conduct a Scavenger Hunt that you design. Have students search for hidden "sheep" using riddle clues.

You may want to have the class prepare the scavenger hunt and invite the families to become the hunters.

### OR

Have students put together a jigsaw puzzle (unaware that you are withholding one piece). When they have finished except for the "lost" piece, ask participants to talk about how they feel when one piece is missing. Make the analogy that we are pieces of the body of Christ. How does God feel when we are missing from the "picture"?

## ??? Discuss /Ask???

Have you ever been lost? What happened? How did you feel when you were found?

Have you ever lost something special to you? How did you feel? Did you find it?

Who is Jesus speaking to? How do they respond to Him? What does the shepherd in the parable do? What happens when he finds the sheep?

What are some of the ways we stray from Jesus? What does this parable tell us about Jesus? (He loves us even when we mess up and He is out looking for us. We can't push God away, no matter how bad we are).

Who are the "sinners and tax collectors" today? What does this parable say about them? How should we respond?



## Sending

At home, talk about how it feels when one of the family is missing from the dinner table. Retell the Lost Sheep parable to your family.

## Prayer



Thank you, Lord Jesus that you love us and forgive us. Help us to reach out to others who are lost and need to be loved. AMEN.