

STORIES JESUS TOLD



The Sheep That Was Lost

Jesus was a master story teller. He used everyday situations and familiar ideas to teach deeper truths about Himself, about His Father and what it meant to live in the Kingdom of God. These stories were called **PARABLES**. Each one had contained within it truth that Jesus wanted those who were genuinely seeking Him to be able to understand. However these stories often exposed the heart of the listeners who were only listening in order to criticise and condemn. Before we look at our first parable together, let's look at some verses that tell us what kind of teacher Jesus was.

John 7:32,45-46

³²The Pharisees heard the crowd muttering these things about him, and the chief priests and Pharisees sent officers to arrest him.

⁴⁵The officers then came to the chief priests and Pharisees, who said to them, "Why did you not bring him?" ⁴⁶The officers answered, "No one ever spoke like this man!"

Luke 4:16,20

¹⁶And he came to Nazareth, where he had been brought up. And as was his custom, he went to the synagogue on the Sabbath day, and he stood up to read.

²⁰And he rolled up the scroll and gave it back to the attendant and sat down. And the eyes of all in the synagogue were fixed on him.

Matthew 7:28-29

²⁸And when Jesus finished these sayings, the crowds were astonished at his teaching, ²⁹for he was teaching them as one who had authority, and not as their scribes.

Luke 15:1-3

¹Now the tax collectors and sinners were all drawing near to hear him. ²And the Pharisees and the scribes grumbled, saying, "This man receives sinners and eats with them." ³So he told them this parable:

This helps us to set the context for this parable. Knowing who Jesus is speaking to and what is going on helps us to find the truth in the story.

READ the following passages and in each one note the crowds response to Jesus teaching.

READ John 7:32,45-46.

What had the officers been sent to do?

Why did they not do it?

READ Luke 4:16,20.

What is Jesus doing and what impact does it have on His audience?

READ Matthew 7:28-29.

*How do the crowd respond to Jesus's teaching?
Why?*

Who does Matthew contrast Jesus with?

How would you sum up Jesus's skill as a teacher?

Jesus was a master teacher. In Mark 2:1-2 we read that once people heard Jesus was home they packed His house simply to hear Him teach. So let's explore our first story.

READ Luke 15:1-3. Mark "him" (Jesus) with a

What type of people are attracted to Jesus?

*How do the Pharisees respond to this?
What is their complaint?*

How does Jesus respond?

Luke 15:4-7

⁴“What man of you, having a hundred sheep, if he has lost one of them, does not leave the ninety-nine in the open country, and go after the one that is lost, until he finds it? ⁵And when he has found it, he lays it on his shoulders, rejoicing. ⁶And when he comes home, he calls together his friends and his neighbours, saying to them, ‘Rejoice with me, for I have found my sheep that was lost.’ ⁷Just so, I tell you, there will be more joy in heaven over one sinner who repents than over ninety-nine righteous persons who need no repentance.



Isaiah 53:6

⁶All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned - every one - to his own way; and the LORD has laid on him the iniquity of us all.

ASTRAY - Strongs - 8582 to wander, to err, to stray, be seduced, be deceived

Mark 6:34

³⁴When he went ashore he saw a great crowd, and he had compassion on them, because they were like sheep without a shepherd. And he began to teach them many things.

READ Luke 15:4-7. Mark the man (including pronouns) with a  and mark the 1 sheep with a 

V4 What do we learn about the sheep and the Shepherd?

V5-6 How does he respond on finding the sheep?

What does this tell you about how he feels for this sheep?

V7 What truth does Jesus draw from this story?

What was He trying to teach the Pharisees?

Three times Jesus talks about rejoicing / joy in this short story. What causes this joy?

Let us look at some other verses in the Bible that will help us to understand what Jesus is teaching.

Let us look at the sheep first.

READ Isaiah 53:6. Mark “we/ us” with a 

How are we described? What 2 things have we done?

What do you think it looks like to go astray?

What did the LORD do in response to this?

READ Mark 6:34.

How does Jesus view the crowd? And how does he feel about them?

How does all this relate to the parable Jesus told about a sheep that was lost?

In Luke 15 the Pharisees and the Scribes looked down on those they saw as sinful and unclean. From all you have studied so far, in what ways did this sharply contrast with the heart of God?

John 10:11,27-30

¹¹ I am the good shepherd. The good shepherd lays down his life for the sheep.

²⁷ My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me. ²⁸ I give them eternal life, and they will never perish, and no one will snatch them out of my hand. ²⁹ My Father, who has given them to me, is greater than all, and no one is able to snatch them out of the Father's hand. ³⁰ I and the Father are one."

Hebrews 12:1-2

¹ Therefore, since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses, let us also lay aside every weight, and sin which clings so closely, and let us run with endurance the race that is set before us, ² looking to Jesus, the founder and perfecter of our faith, who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is seated at the right hand of the throne of God.

Jude v24-25

²⁴ Now to him who is able to keep you from stumbling and to present you blameless before the presence of his glory with great joy, ²⁵ to the only God, our Saviour, through Jesus Christ our Lord, be glory, majesty, dominion, and authority, before all time and now and forever. Amen.

Revelation 7:15-17

¹⁵ "Therefore they are before the throne of God, and serve him day and night in his temple; and he who sits on the throne will shelter them with his presence. ¹⁶ They shall hunger no more, neither thirst anymore; the sun shall not strike them, nor any scorching heat. ¹⁷ For the Lamb in the midst of the throne will be their shepherd, and he will guide them to springs of living water, and God will wipe away every tear from their eyes."

Let's spend some time looking at the Shepherd in the story.

READ John 10:11,27-30. Mark every reference to the Shepherd, including pronouns with a

V11 How does Jesus describe Himself? What does He do for His sheep?

V27-28 List all the things He says about His care for those who are His?

How do these things keep us from wandering?

V29-30 How secure are we as His sheep?

We have read that Jesus sought and laid down His life for His sheep. The shepherd in the story also rejoiced. Is this true of Jesus too?

READ Hebrews 12:1-2. Mark Jesus including pronouns with a and mark "joy" with a ◇

V2 How is Jesus described?

What helped Him to endure the cross?

From the parable, what do you think this joy was?

READ Jude v24-25. Mark "joy" with a ◇

What is Jesus able to do and how is He going to do it?

In these verses Jude sees this truth as a reason to praise and thank God. What is your response to this truth?

In the book of Revelation we have a picture of the future in heaven.

READ Revelation 7:15-17.

What are the Shepherd's plans for His sheep in the future?

How does this parable about the lost sheep help you understand the heart of God? Take what you have learned to Him in prayer.