**SERMON OUTLINE**

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| **SERMON TITLE:** | Jesus, Friend of Sinners |
| **SERMON REFERENCE:** | Luke 15:1-22 |
| **LWF SERMON NUMBER:** | #2472 |
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1. INTRODUCTION
   1. In Luke 15, the Lord Jesus shared a story about how much God loves us.
   2. You may think that you’ve sinned too much, have gone too far, and have refused so long that God has written you off.
      1. You may think that there is no hope for you.
         1. Today’s message will remove that idea from your mind.
   3. Luke 15:1
      1. Notice that he said “publicans and sinners”.
         1. In that day, it was almost like one word.
         2. The publicans were the tax collectors.
            1. They were hated.
            2. Most of them were crooks.
      2. They were coming to hear the Lord Jesus Christ.
   4. Luke 15:2
      1. The Pharisees were criticizing the Lord Jesus Christ for spending time with publicans and sinners.
         1. Every church sometimes has people who are critics.
         2. They were criticizing the very Son of God.
         3. Those who were doing the criticizing were the elite.
            1. They were the high society of religion in that day.

We might call them the upper crust.

* + - * 1. They were held together by religion.

But they didn’t have Jesus.

* + - * 1. They were the up and out.

The publicans and the sinners were the down and out.

* + 1. What the Lord Jesus Christ teaches in this passage is that He loves all.
       1. Wherever you may be, God loves you.
  1. Jesus is a friend to sinners.
     1. Where would we be if Jesus Christ was not a friend of sinners?
  2. When they criticized the Lord Jesus, He gave a parable.
     1. A parable is an earthly story with a heavenly meaning.
     2. Luke 15:3
  3. Some people think that in Luke 15 there are three parables, but it is really one parable with three parts to it:
     1. A lost sheep
     2. A lost coin
     3. A lost son
        1. Jesus speaks of their needs, and He tells why He loves them.
  4. In today’s message, we will look at the three parts to this parable, as we look at the sinful nature of man and the saving nature of God.

1. the sinful nature of man (luke 15:4, 8-9, 11-19)
   1. The sinful nature of man is our nature.
   2. The weakness of man without God:
      1. We are weak like a lost sheep.
         1. Luke 15:4
         2. A sheep is one of the weakest animals around.
         3. A sheep is dumb.
            1. If we go to the circus, then we might see a trained elephant, a trained lion, or a trained horse.

But we will never see a trained sheep.

* + - * 1. We may sometimes think that because we are sheep, we are being praised.

But this is not the case.

We are sheep, but a sheep is dumb.

* + - * 1. Because a sheep is dumb, he cannot find his way home.

He will browse here, nibble there, and eat here until he gets further and further away.

* + - * 1. A sheep strays; therefore, it needs a shepherd.
        2. Romans 3:11

If you are without the Lord Jesus Christ, then you do not understand the things of God.

* + - * 1. Without Jesus, you are like a sheep.
      1. A sheep is defenseless.
         1. A horse can run.
         2. The tiger can claw.
         3. The wolf can bite.
         4. The cat can scratch.
         5. What can a sheep do?
         6. This is an earthly story with a spiritual meaning.

Jesus was saying that the devil’s coyotes and vultures are after you.

You will not escape.

* + - 1. A sheep is dependent.
         1. Matthew 9:36
         2. It has been said that after sheep feed on grass, they will lie down and stretch out to digest their food.

But if there is a crevice or a hollow place, sometimes the center of gravity will shift, and the sheep will find himself on his back.

A sheep does not have enough agility to get up, and he just paws the air.

When he does that, he begins to bloat, and the circulation is cut off to his legs.

After a while, he will die.

It is so dependent upon the shepherd, and so are we.

* + - * 1. The good shepherd gets back to the fold at night, and he counts his sheep.

He has one hundred sheep.

Ninety-nine are there, but one is missing.

He goes out to find the missing sheep who is so dependent upon the shepherd to put him back on his feet.

Luke 15:4

* + - * 1. Jesus was asked why He kept company with sinners.

He said that they are weak like a sheep.

* + 1. We are worthless like a lost coin.
       1. Luke 15:8-9
          1. Jesus was talking here about lost silver.
          2. Here was woman who lost a valuable coin.

She needed that coin and wanted that coin.

So, she searched for that coin.

* + - 1. We are worthless like a lost coin.
         1. When a coin in minted, it is meant to be spent or treasured.

It is not to be lost.

* + - 1. God made us to serve Him.
         1. Until we serve Him, we are not only weak like a lost sheep, but we are also worthless like a lost coin.
      2. Without Jesus, we are worthless.
         1. We have all gone out of the way.
         2. Together, we have become unprofitable.

If a coin is lost, then it is not profitable.

A treasure that is lost is no treasure.

* + - 1. We may think that we are very profitable, but this is talking about the Kingdom of Heaven.
         1. The Lord was talking about the worthlessness of man without God.

God created us to know Him, to love Him, and to serve Him.

* + - 1. How did this coin get lost?
         1. It was lost in the darkness.

Luke 15:8

This coin, like every unsaved person, is in darkness.

Because the god of this world has blinded their minds.

* + - * 1. It was lost in the dirt.

Luke 15:8

She was sweeping the house, disturbing the dirt, hoping to find the coin.

* + - * 1. It was lost in disgrace.

Luke 15:8

Jesus speaks of ten pieces of silver.

He does not say, “*Which of you having a piece of silver loses it*.”

He talks of ten pieces of silver, and one is lost.

Ten is the complete number, like seven is the perfect number.

In Bible symbolism, “ten” means “completeness”.

Why was it lost in disgrace?

Back in this day, a husband would give to his wife ten pieces of silver.

There would be a hole in the center of each piece of silver with a ribbon that would go through them.

The husband would engrave his name on it.

The wife would wear these coins across her face.

This was similar to our wedding rings and engagement rings of today.

They spoke of the loyalty of her husband to her and she to him.

If she was unfaithful, then they would take a coin right out of the center.

There would be a hideous gap there.

She would be disgraced.

We can understand why she was frantically seeking this coin.

God loves us, and He wants us to be His.

But the devil wants to make us a disgrace to God.

* + - 1. Jesus was asked why He kept company with sinners.
         1. This is why He did it.
    1. The wretchedness of man away from God:
       1. The third thing that Jesus told was a story of a lost son.
       2. Luke 15:11-12
          1. Both sons got the same amount.
          2. The inheritance was normally given when the father died, but the younger son wanted his now.

It was a way of saying the following to his father:

I wish you were dead.

I don’t need you.

I don’t want your love.

I don’t want your fellowship.

I don’t want your authority over me.

I just want what you have; I don’t want you.

* + - 1. There are many people just like this today.
         1. They don’t want God, but they want what God has.

They walk on God’s green Earth.

They breathe God’s fresh air.

They live on the abundance that God has given, including the rain and the sunshine.

But they don’t want God.

* + - 1. He was a wretched boy because he was away from home.
         1. Luke 15:13
         2. He went to a far country.

There, he wasted what his father had given him, living high, wide, and handsome.

He spent money like it was water in his hands.

* + - 1. Luke 15:14-19
         1. What is the fruit of this kind of sin?

There was depression.

There arose a famine in that land.

“Famine” in Luke 15:14 is just another word for “depression”.

Some say that they are not in depression; they have a lot in the bank.

Soon it will leave them, or they will leave it.

Don’t boast about what you have, about your strength, about your friends, or about your intellect.

Jesus said that there will be a depression.

There was degradation.

This young Jewish man went to work for a stranger who had him feeding pigs.

Luke 15:14-15

Jesus gave this parable to the Pharisees.

It was a Jewish audience.

This was a Jewish boy.

A self-respecting Jew would not touch a pig.

In this parable, he was slopping the hogs and wanting some of the swill that the hogs ate.

Luke 15:16

There was dissatisfaction.

He was hungry.

He didn’t have anything to satisfy his deepest longings.

Jesus was talking in a spiritual sense.

Without the Father, there is a gnawing hunger inside every person.

You may be wearing a mask today.

You may be laughing and going on your way.

But down in your heart, if you don’t know the Lord Jesus Christ, then there is a hunger for God.

If you don’t know Jesus, then there is a God-shaped vacuum in your heart.

* + 1. In this parable, the Lord talked about the following:
       1. The weakness of man without God is like a lost sheep.
       2. The worthlessness of man is like a lost coin.
       3. The wretchedness of man away from God is like a lost son.
          1. Jesus said that this is why He kept company with sinners.

1. the saving nature of god (luke 15:17-22)
   1. In this parable, there were three who would go out and seek that which was lost:
      1. The shepherd
      2. The woman
      3. The father
   2. We will learn something about the nature of God as we look at these people.
      1. The shepherd represents the Lord Jesus Christ.
      2. The woman represents the Holy Spirit.
      3. The father represents the loving Father in Heaven.
   3. The shepherd is the Lord Jesus Christ.
      1. The sheep is lost; the shepherd is Jesus.
      2. The Good Shepherd gives His life for the sheep.
         1. John 10:11
      3. The nature of Jesus is to seek the lost.
      4. Why did Jesus come to this Earth?
         1. He didn’t come primarily as a teacher.
         2. He didn’t come as a healer.
         3. He came as a Savior.
            1. Luke 19:10
            2. 1 Timothy 1:15

That is the nature of the Lord Jesus.

* + 1. If Jesus is in your heart, then you are going to want to go out after the lost.
       1. If you don’t care about lost people, then you had better check up on that thing you call salvation.
          1. Because the nature of Jesus is to rescue the perishing.
    2. He is the seeking Savior.
    3. When the Lord told this story, He spoke of a shepherd who represented Him.
    4. In the shepherd, we see the rescuing nature of God.
  1. The woman represents the Holy Spirit of God.
     1. Not only do we see the rescuing nature of God in the shepherd, but in the woman, we see the revealing nature of God.
     2. What this woman did was to light a candle because the coin was lost in the darkness.
        1. This is what God the Holy Spirit wants to do in your heart.
           1. To light a candle so that you can see the light of the glorious Gospel of Jesus Christ.
     3. Without the Holy Spirit, you will never understand.
        1. It is the Spirit who gives light.
        2. It is not a sermon or an outline that gives light.
           1. It is the Holy Spirit of God.
        3. God wants to light the candle of hope in your heart.
     4. She lights a candle, and she begins to sweep.
        1. The candle speaks of illumination.
        2. The broom speaks of disturbance.
           1. This is conviction.
           2. She begins to sweep and to stir up all of the filth and dirt.
        3. If God is working on you, then you will see the candle, and you will feel the broom.
           1. If you do not have that, then wait before God until He sends it to you.
     5. The coin was lost in darkness, lost in dirtiness, and lost in disgrace.
  2. The father represents God the Father.
     1. This is the receiving nature of God the Father.
     2. The son was down in the pigpen, and he came to himself, realizing that his father’s servants were better off than he.
     3. Luke 15:17-22
        1. The ring was a sign of sonship.
        2. The slaves did not wear a robe or shoes.
        3. The father was receiving back his lost son.
           1. It is one of the most moving pictures in all of the Bible.
     4. The father had been longing for his son.
        1. When he saw his son, he began to run down the road to meet the boy.
           1. This is a picture of God the Father.
     5. In the Bible, God moves with deliberate majesty.
        1. In every other place when we read about God the Father, He is never late, and He is never in a hurry.
           1. We are told to wait on God.
        2. But here is a picture of God in a hurry.
           1. We can see the father as he gathers up his robes and runs to meet the boy coming home.
           2. If you want to come to Him, then God will run to receive you.

He loves you.

1. CONCLUSION
   1. Why did Jesus keep company with sinners?
      1. They are weak like sheep.
      2. They are worthless like a lost coin.
      3. They are wretched like a lost son.
         1. That is the nature of sinful man.
   2. The nature of Almighty God:
      1. There is the rescuing nature of God the Son.
      2. There is the revealing nature of God the Spirit.
      3. There is the receiving nature of God the loving Father.
   3. God loves you.
   4. The Good Shepherd is seeking you.
   5. The Holy Spirit is shining light on you.
   6. God the Father has His arms open wide.
      1. “Whosoever will may come.”
         1. Revelation 22:17
   7. Do you know Jesus personally? If not, you can pray to Him today by asking Him to come into your life.
   8. Call upon Jesus today. Repent (turn) from your sins, and turn to Jesus. Ask Him to forgive you of your sins, and acknowledge Him as Lord of your life.
      1. Romans 3:23
      2. Romans 10:9-10
      3. Romans 10:13
      4. Acts 16:31
      5. John 3:16