Parable: The Lost Sheep

February, 28 A.D.

Luke 15:1-7
Parable: The Lost Sheep

Note 1: This chapter deals with the lost under the figures of the lost sheep, the lost coin, and the lost son. The prime mission of Jesus was to seek and save the lost.

Note 2: There are various ways of becoming lost: viz., (as illustrated here) by inadvertently wandering away, by no fault of your own but through the carelessness of others, and by overt and willful disobedience as illustrated by the sheep, the coin, and the son respectively.

Text:

Luke 15:1-7,

1. Then drew near unto him all the publicans and sinners for to hear him.
2. And the Pharisees and scribes murmured saying, This man receiveth sinners, and eateth with them.
3. And he spake this parable unto them, saying,
4. What man of you, having an hundred sheep, if he lose one of them, doth not leave the ninety and nine in the wilderness, and go after that which is lost, until he find it?
5. And when he hath found it, he layeth it on his shoulders, rejoicing.
6. And when he cometh home, he calleth together his friends and neighbors, saying unto them, Rejoice with me; for I have found my sheep which was lost.
7. I say unto you, that likewise joy shall be in heaven over one sinner that repenteth, more than over ninety and nine just persons, which need no repentance.
Commentary:

Luke 15:1, 2, Then drew near unto him all the publicans and sinners for to hear him. And the Pharisees and scribes murmured saying, This man receiveth sinners, and eateth with them.

I. All (great numbers of) the Publicans and sinners came near to hear Jesus.

II. However, both the Pharisees and scribes murmured against Jesus accusing him of receiving and eating with sinners.

A. Jesus did not approve of the actions of sinners but received them socially and ate with them for the purpose of converting them, seeking the lost to bring them to repentance and salvation.

B. This accusation was actually an unintentional high praise for Jesus!

C. Sinners Jesus will receive; sound this word of grace to all who the heavenly pathway leave, all who linger, all who fall. Sing it o’er and o’er again: Christ receiveth sinful men; Make the message clear and plain: Christ receiveth sinful men!

D. These Pharisees and scribes thought they were too righteous to associate with “sinners.” Theirs was the greater sin!

Luke 15:3-7, And he spake this parable unto them, saying, What man of you, having an hundred sheep, if he lose one of them, doth not leave the ninety and nine in the wilderness, and go after that which is lost, until he find it? And when he hath found it, he layeth it on his shoulders, rejoicing. And when he cometh home, he calleth together his friends and neighbors, saying unto them, Rejoice with
me; for I have found my sheep which was lost. I say unto you, that likewise joy shall be in heaven over one sinner that repenteth, more than over ninety and nine just persons, which need no repentance.

I. Which one of you Pharisees and scribes, if one of your sheep should be lost, would not do his utmost to find and save it?

   A. All would have sought their lost sheep.

   B. Why not seek with equal vigor the salvation of lost human souls?

II. Analogies:

   A. The man with the 100 sheep – Christ the Good Shepherd.

   B. Lost sheep – backsliders from the faith.

   C. Finding the lost sheep – Christ saving sinners.

   D. Putting the found sheep on his shoulder – uplifting the fallen.

   E. Rejoicing of the shepherd – Christ’s joy when a lost soul is saved.

III. The bottom line is: There will be great joy in heaven when a lost soul is found, saved!

Note 3: Jesus is intent on the salvation of every single individual soul! No exceptions!
Mixedaneous Observations:

I. The wilderness with the shepherd was a place for grazing. A sheep in the wilderness without the shepherd was in real trouble, however. We need Jesus if we are to safely get through life in our earthly wilderness fraught as it is with dangers on every side.

II. Sheep (saved people) can wander away from the fold and shepherd and become lost (again).

III. Sheep are not like horses, carrier pigeons and dogs who can find their way home. Sheep could never find their way home on their own.

IV. The sheep alone in the wilderness is absolutely defenseless amid dangers and snares of the devil.

V. God’s people today are to diligently seek the lost.

   A. We are not to think we can afford to lose one sheep because we have 99 others.

   B. We are to treat each sheep as if it were the only one we have.

VI. When the lost soul is found (no matter who the person is), God’s people are to truly, genuinely rejoice!
The Lost Sheep

Questions

1. Great numbers of the ________ and ________ gathered to hear Jesus. The ________ and ________ ________ saying, “This man receiveth ________, and ________ with them.”

2. Do we ever feel we are “above” the “publicans” and “sinners”? Do we ever have the attitude of the Pharisees and scribes? ________

3. Analogies in the parable of the Lost Sheep: Man with the 100 sheep - ________; Lost sheep - ________; Seeking the Lost Sheep - ________; Putting the found sheep on his shoulders - ________; Rejoicing of the Shepherd - ________.

4. Instead of murmuring, the ________ and ________ should have been busy helping ________ save the ________ and ________.

5. Are we among the murmurers? ________ Which were greater sinners, the publicans or the Pharisees and scribes? ________