

ALL CHRISTIANS' FELLOWSHIP INTERNATIONAL

Study to show "The Way of True life,"

Bible Study Outline

TOPIC: The Lost Sheep, the Lost Coin and the Lost Son

TEXT: *Luke 15:1-32*

Instructions: *Instructions: - Let the above passages be read each time you come together to study this topic so that everyone could participate fully. The teacher should provide additional background information on the topic and come up with follow-up questions. Participants should be brief in their responses and use relevant Bible references to illustrate their points. They should be careful not to dominate the discussion to allow everyone to have an equal opportunity to participate.*

Introduction: If people really knew me, they would reject me." To avoid this risk, we often wear masks we think people will like. We hide who we really are, putting ourselves under constant strain. We often feel this same way about God. We think we are rejected and condemned rather than welcomed and loved. We do our best to please him but feel that we never measure up. In these three parables Jesus sets us straight about God's attitude toward sinners. The result is a startling picture of God.

Discussion Questions:

1. In each of the following pairs of words, which one more accurately describes your image of who God is? Sad or joyous? Searching or waiting? Welcoming or judging? Explain your answers.
2. In the scripture read, what would you say bothered the Pharisees and teachers of the law (the Jewish religious leaders), and why Vs. 1-2)?
3. We sometimes feel bothered by the behavior of other Christians in a similar way. Can we say that we are simply demonstrating the same attitude as those religious leaders today?
4. When reading stories or parables, it helps to imagine the sights, sounds, smells, and feelings. What comes to mind when you read the parables of the lost sheep and the lost coin (Vs. 4-10)? Describe an incident when you lost or misplaced something valuable to you to illustrate the intense reactions of the shepherd, woman, and father to their losses and to their finds?

5. Who is represented by the central characters in each of the three parables? Can we equate the emotion of this person with ours? Discuss.
6. Let us look more closely at the third parable. How might the Pharisees and teachers of the law have felt about each of the actions of the younger son (Vs. 13-16)?
7. How might they have expected the father to respond when the son returned home? Why?
8. What do the details in verses 20-24 reveal about the feelings of our Father in heaven?
9. How can this portrait of God help us to feel fully accepted by the Father, despite our sin?
10. Instead of concluding the story in verse 24, Jesus goes on to describe the reaction of the older son (Vs. 25-32). What additional point do you think Jesus wants to make to the Jewish leaders, and why?
11. How can this parable motivate us to seek those who are lost?